



Tsunami Evaluation Coalition

Impact of the tsunami response
on local and national capacities

Thailand country report

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April 2006

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**IMPACT OF
THE TSUNAMI RESPONSE
ON LOCAL AND
NATIONAL CAPACITIES**

Thailand Country Report

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with contributions from
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April 2006

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ACRONYMS

ACHR	Asian Coalition for Housing Rights
ADPC	Asian Disaster Preparedness Center
BBC	British Broadcasting Company
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, United States Department of Health and Human Services
CODI	Community Organizations Development Institute
DAD	Development Assistance Database
DDMP	Department for Disaster Mitigation and Prevention, Ministry of Interior, Thailand
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GTZ	<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH</i>
ICMH	International Centre for Migration and Health
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SAN	Save the Andaman Network
TAG	Tsunami Action Group
TEC	Tsunami Evaluation Coalition
TICA	Thai International Cooperation Agency
TRC	Thai Red Cross
UN	United Nations
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination [team]
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The 26 December 2004 tsunami was the worst natural disaster in Thailand's history, affecting six provinces along the Andaman coast line: 5,395 persons died, 2,817 disappeared and 8,257 were seriously injured; 3,302 houses were totally destroyed and 1,503 were partially damaged; more than 35,000 families lost their livelihoods. The damage was localised and varied from scarcely visible in some areas to total destruction in others.

The tsunami response in Thailand was characterised by seven distinct factors:

- 1) Thailand declined international financial assistance yet welcomed technical assistance;
- 2) Thailand activated the 1979 Civil Defence Act, bypassing the need to create a new tsunami coordination office. This freed up resources and maximised the capacities of national and local line ministries;
- 3) Thailand did not need large-scale infrastructure repair, due to the localised nature of tsunami damage;
- 4) Thai public and its private sector responded to the disaster with unprecedented cash and in-kind donations;
- 5) International agencies providing assistance maintained focus on their core mandates of participatory planning, inclusion of vulnerable groups, child protection and disaster risk reduction (as opposed to coordinating immediate relief efforts such as food distribution, for example, as was the case in other tsunami-affected countries);
- 6) The loss of more than 3,330 foreign lives in Thailand led to amplified International attention, presence and support of the humanitarian relief effort; and
- 7) Local and international media played a key role in helping claim-holders acquire equal access to tsunami assistance and advocating for indigenous people's rights in land disputes.

This evaluation reviews the impact of the international tsunami response on Thailand's national and local capacities. Because Thailand declined international financial assistance, the review analyses only government coordination and private-sector response. Given such special circumstances, the review team was reduced to two members, and the timeframe of the mission was limited to 10 days.

General Conclusions

Capacity to deliver

The Thai government executed an efficient immediate emergency and early recovery response. It included the prompt provision of health services, a major forensic operation, construction of temporary shelters and permanent houses, compensating survivors, the use of military assets to support recovery and mobilising public funds and attention to disaster management.

Seven success factors were identified in interviews with the government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and United Nations (UN) officials. Further confirmed by a May 2005 UN workshop on Best Practices, these were:

- 1) The pre-tsunami existence and timely activation of Thailand's Civil Defence Act;
- 2) The leading role of central coordinating committees and different line ministries;
- 3) The pressure placed on government performance by the media and foreign nations, which lost a large numbers of their citizens in Thailand;
- 4) The clarity of time-frames and budget lines;
- 5) The strength of the national government, which centrally managed emergency operations;
- 6) The support to disaster preparedness capacities and review of environmental protection policies; and
- 7) The focus on long-term reconstruction, with emphasis on technical skills, development and ownership.

The national government activated its existing Civil Defence Act emergency system, which successfully mobilised and directed the human and financial resources of relevant line ministries to the affected areas. Therefore, ad hoc central coordination mechanisms were unnecessary. This made the Thai tsunami response more appropriate and efficient than that of the other countries reviewed as part of the TEC Local and National Capacities Evaluation (which also included Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka).

In the first and second emergency phases, the strong national-level coordination temporarily bolstered the capacity of district authorities to deal with the search, recovery and repatriation of tsunami victims, and to provide compensation to affected populations. However, the national tsunami response has not had a lasting impact on local capacity. The role of district authorities in the coordination and monitoring of the

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reconstruction phase was very limited. Furthermore, the reconstruction phase failed to systematically include claim-holders in the planning and implementation of reconstruction programmes.

The reconstruction and development phases will require an approach that is more participatory and rights-based, in order to reach the same levels of efficiency as the preceding phases of the Thai tsunami response. Strong, centralised control worked well in the emergency phase, but tended to overlook the interests of poor communities. Some key areas of focus during the reconstruction phase include:

- Priorities of the medium-scale business community;
- Land disputes, with an emphasis on the unintended dependency of affected individuals engaged in such disputes on the generosity of NGOs and volunteers;
- Government-provided housing, particularly the suitability thereof to the livelihoods of the poor; and
- Transitional assistance to unregistered migrant workers.

International agencies efficiently provided technical support in coordination. As such agencies were not involved in large-scale operational work, they continued to address sensitive issues of community participation and the needs of vulnerable groups. Abundant tsunami donations have given international agencies a window of opportunity to pilot alternative sustainable development approaches with communities. However, this window is of limited duration, and agencies would do well to give greater emphasis to advocacy with the national government, in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of tsunami programmes.

An additional consideration for international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) operating in Thailand's current context is the tensions that exist between international actors and local NGOs and community-based bodies. A few international agencies with previous operational programmes in Thailand had spurred concerns about presumed religious activities of all INGOs.

Capacity to access

The capacity of claim-holders to access services at the district and community levels is a complex issue requiring further study. Overall, most communities managed to access services from the government or other sources – with the exception of unregistered migrant workers, who were not entitled to official support and were afraid of deportation. The national government provided temporary shelters within the first month, and construction of permanent houses commenced in the second. However, conflicts over

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land have dominated the rehabilitation process, and most government support to affected districts and communities was poorly coordinated at the district level. Some communities claim to have received no assistance, or not to have received the *level* of assistance to which they were entitled. Complaints about the corruption of village leaders, such as adding non-affected families to the lists of those requiring post-tsunami assistance, were frequently heard. District offices were ill-equipped – understaffed and under-resourced – to monitor assistance in the field, and had limited insight into the activities undertaken by line ministries.

Capacity to ensure equality and accountability

The national tsunami response in Thailand paid insufficient attention to internal oversight and public accountability. Clear information on private-sector donations, often awarded directly to provinces, is lacking. Private donations were not publicly accountable or recorded, fuelling suspicions that funds were applied 'liberally'. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has established a Development Assistance Database, which is expected to make an important contribution to increased transparency of reconstruction and development programmes in the affected areas. However, neither government nor private-sector donations were fully included in the system, and it has yet to be translated into Thai.

The media and national human rights NGOs are playing an important role in highlighting the plight of the poor and advocating for the most vulnerable, but there still remains a crucial need to incorporate lessons on exclusion and inequality in the tsunami reconstruction effort. The conflict between Buddhist and Muslim communities was overlooked in the international agencies' post-tsunami programmes. As ethnic and religious balance in the south remains fragile, a major contribution of the reconstruction process is to show a new approach to sustainable development.

Conclusions in relation to core messages

The review identified three cross-cutting core messages related to international aid:

1. Sustain a respectful engagement with local and national capacities

The international tsunami response in Thailand focussed on technical assistance in two main areas: assistance to recovery and reconstruction and identification and repatriation of the deceased. The latter involved 40 different countries and constituted the largest forensic operation in history. It proved difficult for the Thai government to manage, as teams were unprepared to work in a coordinated fashion. However, local forensic expertise has improved, and Japan is currently providing technical assistance to train professional search, rescue and recovery teams in each of the six Andaman Coast provinces.

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The Thai decision to request only technical assistance had several key benefits:

- *Strengthening of local and national capacities:* technical assistance is *de facto* aimed at strengthening capacities. For example, Thailand's increase in forensic capacity was due to the influx of international technical expertise;
- *Utilising established agency infrastructure:* Assistance was largely provided by agencies with a long-term pre-tsunami presence in the country and good comprehension of the local context, thus improving efficiency and connectedness;
- *Exploiting international agencies' core competencies:* Technical assistance was in line with the providing agencies' primary mandates, thus facilitating better linking of contextual and sectoral knowledge; and
- *Targeting assistance efforts:* Agencies providing post-tsunami technical assistance were not hindered by development issues faced by other affected countries (for example, rebuilding lost infrastructure in Indonesia), resulting in a more targeted and, subsequently, more effective level of assistance.

Technical assistance was appropriately adjusted to the shifting needs of different emergency phases. During the immediate relief phase, UN agencies provided technical and logistical assistance to government authorities, while INGOs catered to the needs of the vulnerable communities excluded from the official response. UNDP assisted in setting up the international coordination committee; the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) helped provide immediate immunisation, psychosocial support and assistance with repairing and reopening schools. During the recovery phase, international attention shifted to assessments and participatory planning for reconstruction, safeguarding the inclusion of most vulnerable groups. Most INGOs provided financial support to local NGO networks, while UN agencies addressed inclusion and protection issues.

The third phase of transition from recovery to reconstruction and development commenced in April with a shift in coordinating agencies and sectoral focus. Bilateral agencies were asked to assist with alternative livelihood development, in order to diversify the region's economic base. Such agencies also advised on environmental protection, disaster preparedness and risk reduction. Additionally, the launch of UNDP's Development Assistance Database was aimed at assisting Thai authorities in the coordination of international development assistance and increasing downward accountability.

2. Improve equity, inclusion and downward accountability

International assistance in Thailand prioritised inclusion of vulnerable groups, and some INGOs assisted such communities in the purchase of resettlement land near their original villages. In addition, international actors lobbied for clemency and the inclusion of unregistered workers in national recovery efforts. However, some vulnerable groups' interests could have been addressed more effectively.

The special needs of women were included in international agencies' project designs, but the evaluation team did not encounter efforts specifically designed to strengthen the capacity of – or to promote opportunities for – Thai women in official decision-making structures. UNICEF was the only international agency that identified the increased vulnerability of women and children toward sexually risky behaviour, in order to compensate for lost livelihoods.

Although UNDP's Development Assistance Database system was intended to increase accountability to claim-holders, it did not resonate with national authorities due to lack of an online component, Thai translation or inclusion of the local government and private-sector programmes. The system is expected to have little affect on downward accountability practices in the country.

While the conflict between Buddhist and Muslim communities intensified in neighbouring provinces, international agencies did not include conflict considerations in their post-tsunami work. Agencies should devote more attention to the process of equitable inclusion of marginal Muslim communities. This would provide a means of learning good practices that could then be applied in the recovery and peace-building efforts in the three southern provinces.

The absence of clear documentation and monitoring of private-sector donations highlighted key areas for further study:

- 1) A clear definition of tsunami recovery funding is required to distinguish between humanitarian assistance and charitable business engagement;
- 2) Attention is needed to candidate eligibility criteria and decision-making procedures applied to disbursing private-sector donations, many of which are made in the form of grants and soft loans designed to restore livelihoods; and
- 3) Registration and monitoring private-sector donations would provide further downward accountability, for example, by addressing rumours of corruption.

3. Foster an enabling policy framework and safe environment

The international tsunami response in Thailand has emphasised inclusive policies for vulnerable and marginalised communities. Media and national NGO networks are playing a crucial watchdog role, enhancing protection of the rights of affected marginal communities. However, the international community could do more to strengthen the capacity of community organisations to advocate for basic rights and implement an advocacy agenda – by setting up partnerships between international and local actors. While tsunami response placed these issues on the agenda and created a mechanism that could form the basis for accountable information-sharing, further efforts are required to improve public transparency and accountability.

Recommendations

In relation to the core messages, the recommendations are:

1. Sustain a respectful engagement with local and national capacities

- At the national level, there is a need to recognise and value local capacities at the individual and community levels, adopting more participatory policy and practice frameworks.
- There is a need for transparent planning and monitoring of national and private contributions to the tsunami reconstruction phase, particularly in the livelihoods sector.
- The process of sharing information with claim-holders needs to be improved to create space for increased participation, ownership and sustainability.
- To enhance local development, international agencies should play a more prominent role in facilitating partnerships between Thai authorities and local NGOs during the reconstruction and development process.

2. Improve equity, inclusion and downward accountability

- Housing and resettlement programmes need to acknowledge indigenous land claims and apply culturally appropriate planning solutions that incorporate indigenous lifestyles.
- International agencies have been targeting vulnerable groups to overcome exclusion and inequality issues, but more strategic policy advocacy is needed to incorporate valuable pilot experiences into development frameworks.

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- There is an opportunity to integrate conflict and disaster prevention assistance. Projects that increase participation and reduce inequality in service delivery to poor Muslim communities could provide valuable models for peace building in the south.
- There is a need for more gender-sensitive programming, particularly in the area of women's participation in public decision-making in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals. There is also a need to make information accessible to female claim-holders.
- Systematic mechanisms of downward accountability and transparency are not in place. International agencies could assist authorities in developing such mechanisms, in order to monitor the reconstruction process and strengthen accountability at the community level.
- The Development Assistance Database system does not strengthen downward accountability in its present form. It needs to be translated into Thai and include government and private-sector donations.

3. Foster an enabling policy framework and safe environment

- International assistance was appropriately geared toward enabling local capacities and empowering claim-holders. It included context-sensitive communication strategies and sustainable disaster preparedness systems. However, the fostering of inclusive and gender-sensitive governance modalities requires continued attention for sustained, meaningful participation.
- Continued support for human-rights NGOs and local NGO networks will be required in the future, in order to develop and implement an advocacy agenda set up by claim-holders to address land disputes, child protection, political participation, corruption and transparency, as well as to promote independent watchdog movements.
- Mutually accountable partnerships between Thai authorities, communities and community-based organisations need to be developed and strengthened to enable meaningful and informed participation in decision making at all levels.
- Thailand made commendable headway in establishing disaster awareness and preparedness systems at the national, district and community levels. It is now important to incorporate globally accepted benchmarks on participation and inclusion of vulnerable groups.

INTRODUCTION

The 26 December 2004 tsunami was the worst-ever natural disaster in Thailand, affecting six provinces (Phuket, Phang Nga, Krabi, Ranong, Trang and Satun) along the 400 kilometre-long Andaman coastline. The devastation wrought on the Thai communities was unprecedented: 5,395 persons died (of whom 2,436 were foreign nationals), and 2,817 went missing (896 of them foreign). An additional 8,257 persons, including 2,392 foreigners, were seriously injured.¹

Entire communities were either severely affected or destroyed: 292 villages in 24 districts were seriously damaged, with 3,302 houses completely decimated and 1,503 houses partially damaged. Over 35,000 families lost their livelihoods.² The joint assessment report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), published in early January 2005, concluded that the damage caused by the tsunami was very localised and varied from scarcely visible to total destruction. The affect was the worst in settlements located at low elevations, which were exposed to high waves in bays with steep sloping seabeds – and without natural barriers like coral reefs or islands. Other disaster-prone sites included crowded settlements in the immediate proximity of the shore, which were mostly tourism-related facilities and fishing communities that boomed in recent years with lack of urban planning. The worst-affected town, Ban Nam Khem in the Phang Nga province, lost about half of its registered population of 6,000 household heads, 80 per cent of its houses and nearly all fishing boats and equipment. Most foreign casualties were in the resort town of Kaolak and on the 'paradise island' of Phi Phi in Krabi Bay.

Seven unique characteristics of the tsunami response in Thailand made a differential impact on national and local capacities:

- 1) Thailand declined international financial assistance yet welcomed technical assistance;
- 2) Thailand activated the 1979 Civil Defence Act, bypassing the need to create a new tsunami coordination office. This freed up resources and maximised the capacities of national and local line ministries;
- 3) Thailand did not need large-scale infrastructure repair, due to the localised nature of tsunami damage;
- 4) Thailand's private sector responded to the disaster with unprecedented cash and in-kind donations. Sizeable cash donations were made through the call centre of the Thai Department of

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Disaster Mitigation and Prevention. Some of the donations have been placed in a fund managed by the Central Bank, while others were sent directly to affected provinces;

- 5) International agencies providing assistance maintained focus on their core mandates of participatory planning, inclusion of vulnerable groups, child protection and disaster risk reduction (as opposed to coordinating immediate relief efforts);
- 6) International attention, presence and support of the humanitarian relief effort increased due to the loss of more than 3,330 foreign lives, involving Thai authorities and the diplomatic community in an unprecedented international forensic effort that lasted for months; and
- 7) Local and international media played a key role in helping claim-holders acquire equal access to tsunami assistance and advocating for indigenous people's rights in land disputes. The tsunami recovery process highlighted long-standing land-use conflicts in burgeoning coastal provinces in southern Thailand, where the interests of private investment in tourism, environmental preservation and indigenous people's rights clash.

This report is part of the TEC Local and National Capacities Evaluation (which also included case-studies in Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka). It focuses on five sets of stakeholders: claim-holders, communities, formal and informal civil society institutions including community-based organisations (CBOs), local and national government, and international agencies. Differences in capacities and experiences of women, men and other vulnerable groups were considered at each stakeholder level. The review assesses baseline capacities in place for response to the relief and recovery needs of those affected at the time of the tsunami and immediately thereafter.

Three sets of national and local capacities are reviewed:

- 1) The capacity to *respond* to the disaster as shown by those affected, CSOs, local women's organisations and local and national government. This includes the capacities of women, men and other vulnerable groups in the affected communities to participate in decision-making related to relief and recovery efforts, local governance, resource mobilisation, planning, protection, advocacy, training and livelihoods recovery;
- 2) The capacity of community members to *access* services and markets for livelihoods. This includes access to relief- and recovery-related services of government, and the capacities of the private sector to recover and create livelihoods; and
- 3) The capacity of community members, CSOs and local governments to *ensure* accountability and quality of service delivery.

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Two team members, Smruti Patel and Elisabeth Scheper, spent a total of 15 days (5 and 10 days, respectively) in Thailand. Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in ministries, United Nations (UN) agencies, Bangkok-based international and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the local government, CBOs and communities in three districts. The team sought to address six core questions:

- 1) How local and national capacities changed as a result of the tsunami response;
- 2) How well international actors engaged with local and national capacities in providing relief and recovery assistance;
- 3) What intended and unintended changes to local and national capacities occurred as a result of the tsunami response by international actors;
- 4) To what extent the transition, risk reduction and recovery programming – planned and implemented – influenced local and national capacities;
- 5) What lessons can be learned for efforts to strengthen local and national capacities for future crisis response and recovery; and
- 6) What gender differences occurred and how the experiences of women and men varied.

The team made three-day field visits to the worst hit provinces of Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi between 27 October and 10 November 2005. Project sites were selected in consultation with the government, the Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI), Thai Law Society, Oxfam International, UNDP and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) officials. Sites selected for field visits included:

- 1) Sites with projects that addressed various vulnerable groups, such as unregistered Burmese workers, sea gypsies, marginal Muslim fishing communities and villages in violent land disputes.
- 2) Severely damaged sites with different geographic and economic baseline characteristics, including: locations depending on tourism (Kao Lak), marginal fishing villages (Lam Pom), economic boom towns (Ban Nam Khem) and more remote islands (Koh Lanta);
- 3) Sites with existing programmes supported by Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) member organisations. Such programmes include the CODI housing initiative using privately purchased land, the UNDP participatory planning processes locations and the district office of Thai Muang, which dealt with international forensic response and received direct UNICEF support; and

The first visit, to Phang Nga and Krabi, was facilitated by UNDP and focussed on vulnerable groups (such as displaced sea gypsies, poor fishing villages and unregistered migrant communities). The villages

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visited included project sites of CODI, the Thai Foundation, World Vision International, local NGOs and UNDP. The second visit, to Phang Nga and Phuket, was facilitated by UNICEF and focussed on national and local government responses. Visited locations included the offices of the provincial and district authorities and local line ministries (health and education), UNICEF and Save the Andaman Forum.

The Thailand evaluation had a limited timeframe from the onset. Additionally, unforeseen complications with the Sri Lanka review meant that team members commuted between Thailand, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, thereby fragmenting the Thai evaluation. In the limited time between government and field meetings, it proved difficult to obtain appointments with international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), which were often engaged in workshops outside of Bangkok. Some conversations were handled over the phone, as it proved impossible to meet with the senior management of Oxfam International, World Vision International and the Thai Sustainable Development Foundation. The role of private donations and direct private-sector investments was not systematically documented and would require a more in-depth study, which was beyond the timeframe and resources allocated to this review.

The remainder of this report is divided into four chapters. Chapter One provides a brief overview of national and local capacities at the time of the tsunami, accompanied by a first assessment of the impact of the disaster. Chapter Two presents the evaluation team's conclusions on the effectiveness of international and local humanitarian responses during three relief phases (immediate relief, recovery and transition from recovery to reconstruction). In addition, the chapter links conclusions from the Thai study to the three key regional messages on engaging local capacities, addressing inclusion and equality issues and fostering an enabling environment. Chapter Three analyses the impact of the tsunami response on five cross-cutting regional themes (land, migrant labour, the conflict and tsunami nexus, vulnerability and marginality, empowerment of women and disaster risk reduction). Chapter Four summarises the findings and good practices in three core capacities: the capacity to deliver, the capacity to access and the capacity to ensure quality of services and accountability. It concludes with recommendations.

CHAPTER ONE: NATIONAL AND LOCAL CAPACITIES AT THE TIME OF THE TSUNAMI

1.1. Coastal Development and Land Issues

The Andaman seacoast is an area where tourist industry developments alternate with fishing villages and protected reserve land. The coast's rapid economic development attracted large numbers of migrant workers to the region, predominantly poor peasants from northeast Thailand and unregistered Burmese. They work in construction, rubber plantations and fishing – under poor conditions with little economic security. With young Thai nationals from fishing communities moving to the more profitable tourism-related jobs, Burmese migrant workers have become the predominant labour force of the fishing industry. An estimated 60,000 of these Burmese migrant workers have been affected by the tsunami. Although exact data is not available, it appears that the majority of the workers on commercial trawlers operating out of Phuket and Phang Nga provinces are of Burmese nationality. Burmese migrant workers are also reported – by both official and business sources – to represent the majority of the workforce in the construction industry, shrimp farms and rubber plantations.

Increased tourism has provided new sources of income and new markets for local products. At the same time, tourism's growth has reduced economic diversification and weakened an increasingly exploited and fragile ecosystem. Traditional fishing communities have started supplying restaurants and resorts with high-priced reef fish and seafood products. Boat trip tours around the reefs are commonplace, as are diving and other, often engine-assisted, tourist water activities and sports. All of this contributes to the increasing degradation of marine resources, even in protected areas.

Another consequence of the tourist influx is increasing pressure on land rights and ownership. During the 1960s, most coastal land had been given out on long-term leases to companies engaged in low-intensity exploitation of natural resources such as rubber. This had little impact on fishing communities. Over the past decade, this has dramatically changed: investors have driven up the price of coastal land, resulting in numerous land-related disputes. Companies holding long-term leases have begun to carve up their properties and sell them to well-connected Thai investors, including politicians. Many of these new property owners have taken indigenous villagers to court to have them forcibly relocated. At the time of the tsunami, land-dispute cases were pending in the courts of most of the affected districts. In some high-profile land disputes, post-tsunami assistance was withheld from poor local victims.³

1.2. Governance and Civil Society

Thailand has a long tradition of strong, centralised government. In 2002, to improve performance and increase self-sufficiency at the provincial level, the current prime minister, Mr. Thaksin Shinawatra, introduced a new governance approach, popularly known as 'CEO Governors'. This transformed the provincial leadership approach and focussed on economic performance and reaching annual targets. The governors are subject to annual assessments by a corporate audit firm. A bonus system rewards economic success. This overarching emphasis on economic indicators has, in turn, marginalised social welfare services such that social service budgets are often cut. Another major implication of this governance approach has been the weakening of district-level government. Lack of systematic data collection and evidence-based policy further undermines the development of inclusive and equitable development policies.⁴

In Thai culture, school teachers traditionally have close relationships with their pupils and play an important community role. Religious leaders also make a vital contribution to the social capital of the region; Buddhist monasteries care for vulnerable groups, while the social networks surrounding mosques in Muslim villages provide protection to the poor. The Andaman Coast has an active set of CBOs mobilised around professional activities (fisheries, for example), religious institutions and schools, but there are few local NGOs active in the region. Most local NGOs work for the interest of specific target groups. For example, the Haka Baptists Church works with Burmese migrants, and Southern Fisherfolks Network supports poor Muslim fishermen.

CODI was founded in 1943 as a public-private organisation assisting the state in building capacities of local communities. It is directly accountable to the Committee of Human Security and Social Development in the ministry of the same name. This NGO works in close cooperation with its sister agency, the Thai Community Foundation.

1.3. Conflict

The ethnic and religious tensions building in southeast Thailand had not spread to the tsunami-affected area at the time of this evaluation. However, there is growing national concern over the conflict, as it is likely to eventually affect both the population of the Andaman Coast and tourism development. In this context, equitable tsunami assistance to affected claim-holders may be particularly important, highlighting the need for a closer look at the conflict itself.

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The violent conflict originates in three southeastern Thai provinces, all of which border Malaysia and the Gulf of Siam. Thailand annexed the former Muslim Kingdom of Pattani, including Yala and Narathiwat, in 1902. The Malay-Muslim community has since expressed dissatisfaction with what it perceives as cultural and economic discrimination, straining relationships between Thailand's Muslim population and the central authorities. The current cycle of violence started in January 2004, and the death toll has exceeded 1,000 persons, most reportedly victims of attacks by suspected militants. The victims include teachers, community leaders, rubber tappers, soldiers and policemen – from both Buddhist and Muslim communities. Over 1,000 teachers transferred out of the region for fear of their lives, as more than 80 teachers had been killed since January 2004. Security was increased in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat provinces when schools reopened after the October break.

Government forces in the region number 15,000 soldiers and 18,000 policemen. Members of these security forces are known to have committed brutalities, including the death by suffocation of 78 young Muslim men, rounded up after a protest in the southern town of Tak Bai in October 2004. Human-rights groups have expressed concern over reports of torture while in police custody and the continuously increasing number of disappearances of Muslim youths.

A culture of fear is said to be spreading in the south. Muslim families tend to send their adolescent sons to the north to prevent them from getting involved in the conflict or being preventatively arrested. Normal village life is disrupted, because emergency laws in effect discourage public assembly. This affects the simplest of routines, such as neighbours meeting over coffee in the market or gathering at a mosque.

Among those working toward building peace, the National Reconciliation Commission seeks to address claims of economic underinvestment. Thus far, the Commission has generated some level of public trust, as its agenda has a long-term focus and is aimed at building bridges between religious communities.

1.4. Gender Issues and Vulnerable Groups

Thailand has made great strides toward gender equality in education. Despite female literacy rates having reached 98 per cent, gender disparities remain apparent. Women remain behind in wages and working conditions, receiving lower pay and limited promotion opportunities compared to men. Likewise, female political participation is low, with women representing only 9.6 per cent of voters in the 2001 national elections. In local elections, the number of female participants was even lower (8.6 per cent). Further, very few women stand in elections, due in part to physical protection remaining a grave concern. The number of reported cases of gender-based violence – such rape, prostitution and trafficking – continues to rise, and incidents of cross-border trafficking, as well as cyber-stalking and harassment are increasing as well.

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The national percentage of people living below the poverty line was 14.2 per cent in 2000, and is expected to decrease to 13.8 per cent by 2015.⁵ Three vulnerable groups commonly identified in the south include the poor Muslim fishing communities, indigenous 'sea gypsies' and unregistered Burmese migrant workers. Sea gypsies, locally known as *Moken*, *Moklen* or *Urak Lawoi*, are indigenous people who live off and with the sea. They have retained their traditional lifestyles, living in semi-permanent housing in remote habitats that have been designated as nature conservation zones over the past decades. The remote indigenous sea gypsy communities tend to lack legal identity and ownership papers; as a group, they have been traditionally marginalised by mainstream development efforts. In contrast, Burmese migrant workers take a more active – yet not a more legitimate – part in the local economy, as they provide cheap labour and a competitive advantage to the local businesses sector.⁶

1.5. Disaster Preparedness

Thailand's national disaster management system has been in place since the 1990s, soon after a typhoon hit the country's southern communities in 1989. In 2002, the Department for Disaster Mitigation and Prevention (DDMP) was created in the Ministry of Interior. This department is said to have incorporated lessons learned from the 2001 landslide disaster in Patchabon province. In collaboration with the Asian Disaster Management Centre in Bangkok, DDMP has been developing disaster risk assessment and preparedness plans at the national and provincial levels. A disaster emergency relief fund of 50 million Thai Baht (US \$1.2m) was set up in each of the 36 provinces in order to enhance immediate response capacity. In case of major calamities, the governor is authorised to increase the grant from provincial budget sources to launch an adequate response. At the district and community levels, civil defence volunteers are trained to assist the authorities to reach communities in times of disaster. Prior to the tsunami, approximately 40,000 volunteers had been trained around the country.

1.6. Immediate Effect of the Tsunami

The immediate effects of the tsunami on local capacities were highly localised. Most fatalities occurred in three places: Kaolak/Ban Nam Khem, Ban Ne Rhai and Krabi Bay (Koh Pipi). The scale and scope of the disaster in Thailand becomes more pronounced when data on physical damage and economic loss is compared to the three other tsunami-affected countries reviewed at the same time. In Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives, the ratio of physical damage to economic loss (as a function of the total damage and loss) is an average of 70 to 30, while in Thailand, the ratio is reversed – at 23 to 77. A comparison of the estimated impact of the tsunami on the economies of worst-affected provinces – Phang Nga in Thailand and Aceh in Indonesia – offers a further contrast, with 8 per cent of GDP for Phang Nga' versus 97 per cent for Aceh. Comparing figures of damage to private and publicly owned property confirms that

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Thailand's public infrastructure suffered little damage. More than 97 per cent of Thailand's damage was incurred by private properties, indicating that most damage and loss occurred in the tourism industry.⁷

With over 3,330 foreigners killed on Thailand's territory, the focus on advanced search and rescue, forensic identification and repatriation was unprecedented. Monasteries were transformed into temporary morgues. International search and rescue teams arrived from 30 countries and worked around the clock using advanced DNA testing to identify victims. This unique feature of the Thai tsunami response resulted in intense diplomatic involvement, absorbing an enormous amount of the Thai authorities' capacity during the relief stage and reinforcing the need for disaster preparedness in the recovery and reconstruction phases.

The effect of the tsunami on children and families was severe. UNICEF reports that over 1,200 children lost one or both parents, and over 200 schools serving 50,000 children lost teachers, pupils and buildings, causing psychosocial suffering on a large scale. The loss of livelihoods and the transfer to transitional housing projects has disrupted traditional community protection networks in schools, mosques and extended families, making children more vulnerable. Shelters offer few activities for children and young people, thereby increasing the risk of children and youth engaging in high-risk behaviour (for example, sexual activity that carries the risk of an HIV infection).⁸

An estimated 60,000 Burmese migrant workers were affected by the tsunami. Some Thai and foreign migrants have moved back to their home communities; they feared another tsunami and were faced with the slump in employment opportunities immediately after the disaster. Other vulnerable groups – such as poor fishing communities and sea gypsies – lost their livelihoods when they were relocated to temporary shelters inland.

On a positive note, sea gypsy communities on the island of Surin and in Rawai Beach recognised the impending tsunami danger through centuries-old indigenous knowledge of the sea and oral history. The withdrawal of the sea gave advanced warning to these communities, who managed to escape to higher ground with a minimal loss of life. The Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok had been studying the traditional ways of these indigenous peoples. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) are collaborating in a project to document the oral history of the tsunami and include it in primary school curricula.

CHAPTER TWO: FINDINGS

2.1. National Responses

Through activation of the Civil Defence Act of 1997, a swift national government response was set in motion, putting in place an emergency structure to coordinate assistance among the six key line ministries and releasing staff, budgets and army resources.⁹ Senior central government officials were sent to coordinate relief efforts in the most affected provinces and provide support to local authorities that did not have sufficient capacity. The prime minister also assigned various ministers to regions to 'inspect, direct, command and solve' problems.¹⁰ The Monitoring Committee, chaired by the deputy prime minister, met twice a week. The Civil Defence Committee, chaired by the minister for the interior, met daily via videoconference to resolve multiple coordination problems.

Much of the initial relief effort at the district level concentrated on identification of the dead, treating the injured, evacuating foreign tourists and sheltering displaced locals. The Ministry of Health mobilised over 200 doctors in a day and set up a command centre for the south in Phuket, coordinating health services and epidemic surveillance. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Human Security helped set up temporary shelters and provided psychosocial support to children. The Thai Army, Navy and Air forces played key roles in the initial search and rescue efforts and assisted in building temporary shelters for affected communities.

Under the joint command of the Thai and Australian Police, international disaster victim identification teams united 500 local and international experts from 30 countries. Each team brought its own equipment, procurement and shipments. The coordination of this largest-ever international forensic operation became a major challenge for the Thai Ministry of Health, even more so because of the reluctance of international teams to agree to a standardised method of forensic work. The Department for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) issued instructions that established police teams to facilitate the collection of DNA to identify missing people. DDPM also created guidelines on repatriating bodies and the issuance of death certificates.

In Bangkok, DDPM and the Civil Defence Committee set up the Earthquake/Tsunami Relief Centre on 26 December. Its purpose was to manage an international and domestic call centre and a public donation centre (24 hour operation to receive donations both in cash and essential supplies), and to mobilise personnel and equipment. The Ad Hoc Tsunami Disaster Task Force was formed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 27 December to coordinate foreign technical assistance.

2.2. International Responses

The UN system mobilised funds and technical assistance. A Flash Appeal was launched on 30 December. UN agencies commissioned several joint assessment missions to assist in the planning of recovery efforts. For example, to provide a general overview of the disaster area the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and a United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team undertook a joint mission from 28 December to 2 January 2005. There was also the Joint Tsunami Disaster Assessment Mission of UNDP, World Bank and FAO (4–5 January). It covered the medium to long-term impacts of the tsunami and identified possible areas of partnership between national and local capacities, both in the government and local NGOs. In particular, the Assessment Mission identified roles for the World Bank and UN agencies in livelihood recovery and environmental rehabilitation. The UN Joint Needs Assessment Mission (10–13 January) focussed on the two most affected provinces, Phuket and Phang Nga, while the UN and International Office for Migration (IOM) mission of late January was aimed at assessing the needs of unregistered migrant workers.

UNICEF provided emergency grants to local district and line ministries to restore facilities, aiming to return children to school and provide a safe environment for recovery and counselling. Most schools in the six provinces reopened on 4 January. UNICEF's subsequent relief efforts were concentrated on the three worst affected districts in the Phang Nga province, and focussed on education, child protection and health services (including HIV/AIDS prevention) in collaboration with the Health and Education line ministries. While district offices waited for national financial allocations during the first weeks after the tsunami, UNICEF provided financial aid. This financial aid accelerated efforts of water purification, school repair and other urgent tasks. In total, 77 non-governmental, bilateral and UN organisations worked together in the immediate aftermath of the disaster.

The UN Joint Assessment report identified working with local authorities on sustainable development as a priority in the very early stages of tsunami response:

Local governments visited have indicated that there is a need for support, especially in building bridges with communities and improving participation as noted above and this could be in the form of fielding experts to work with local government structures and community bodies which could strengthen the ongoing efforts and ensure a more sustainable approach.

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This assessment reflected concerns among local NGOs over the weak capacity of local authorities to coordinate and absorb the supply of donor and relief efforts. In early January, for example, the district of Kuraburi received assistance from CARE International, Adventist Development & Relief Agency International, World Vision International, Seub Foundation, Wildlife Fund Thailand, Thailand Research Fund, Federation of Southern Fisher Folk, Population and Community Development Association, UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO. Relief goods were distributed without consultation, resulting in duplication of efforts and causing confusion among local communities. The Thai Muang district officer recalled that, as officials were very busy with search and rescue and accommodating displaced victims, most INGOs went directly to communities without consulting or coordinating with district authorities.

2.3. Local Responses

The Thai public contributed generously by donating cash, clothing, blood and bottled water, as well as by providing meals at crisis centres. Thai volunteers poured in to help in the search and rescue operation, working in the mortuaries, cooking and distributing food, water and clothes to the displaced. The Thai Red Cross (TRC) assisted in coordinating the delivery of public donations to affected communities and was inundated with in-kind donations. TRC established four relief centres within 24 to 48 hours of the disaster area and deployed 20 nurses. TRC coordinated well with provincial authorities and had free access to Thai Air Force transport for supplies and personnel. Families whose houses were destroyed or damaged were evacuated to camps where emergency shelter, food and health services were provided.

Humanitarian assistance to migrants excluded from the national relief efforts was initially provided through NGOs. Local NGOs that had been working with unregistered Burmese migrants formed the Tsunami Action Group (TAG)¹¹ to make joint assessments and provide relief supplies. IOM and World Vision International assisted workers who wished return to Burma and worked with the Thai government to facilitate the returnees. The estimates of the numbers of Burmese victims vary widely, from an initial Ministry of Labour estimate of 102 persons, to between 1,000 and 7,000, according to later UNDP estimates. Depending on how the numbers of workers on lost ships and the populations of shantytowns are calculated, the figure is most likely between 5,000 and 7,000 dead and missing Burmese. The UN and IOM joint migrant assistance mission (20–25 January) concluded that at least 7,000 Burmese had been affected by the tsunami (meaning deceased, injured, lost employment or moved to another location).

Box 2.1: District office in Takuapa, Phang Nga Province

The district health office of Takuapa, located next to the tourist resort of Kaolak and the boom-town Nam Khem, was operational two hours after the police radio call announced the disaster. It started to search and recover the missing, dead and wounded. The district health staff suffered no fatalities and only a few wounded. Transportation and communication, however, were problematic – no systems were functioning. In the afternoon, provincial and national health directors flew in, and military personnel began to recover the dead, who were brought to two makeshift centres. On 27 December, national assistance began to arrive, including doctors, nurses, mental health specialists, 200 ambulances and 10 army helicopters to transport the wounded to hospitals around the country.

The first days were reportedly chaotic. International assistance arrived from World Vision International, IOM, UNICEF, Médecins sans Frontières and IFRC. Medical teams from Japan, Korea, the United States and Germany arrived two days later to assist in the search and rescue effort. In the district office, INGOs set up a 'war room' that remained operational through mid-February. Mobile medical teams were in place after a week, monitoring the sanitary situation, ensuring disease control, providing psychological counselling and addressing prenatal, maternal and paediatric concerns. A mental health project was set up to monitor the most vulnerable groups over a period of two years. Unregistered migrants received equal medical treatment during the emergency phase. The government sent senior managers to assist in the coordination of health services. The managers remained through mid-March, offering the much-needed competence of organizing and running relief and recovery operations.

The district health office made recommendations for better preparation for future disasters. The recommendations included: having rapid response teams trained and equipped with stocks of emergency communications gear (such as radios), and maintaining a source of medical equipment and relief supplies stored at the provincial level. A medical emergency plan for the district is now in place, and five ministries (including DDPM and the Ministry of Health) are working together to train community volunteers in disaster preparedness.

2.4. Early Recovery Phase

In the early recovery phase (two weeks to three months after the disaster), government attention at the provincial level concentrated on four areas:

- 1) housing and social protection;
- 2) livelihood recovery;
- 3) environmental rehabilitation; and
- 4) disaster preparedness.

Housing and social protection

During the third week after the tsunami, the Thai government announced it would provide free housing to all affected households. Construction work was divided between six agencies: the Thai Army, Navy and Air forces, National Housing Authority, Defence Ministry, the Province and the private sector¹². DDMP

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continued to oversee shelter construction with the help of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and the Thai Defence Force.

The Thai government's strongly centralised approach continued into the recovery phase. Temporary shelters, made of corrugated iron sheets or plywood, were erected on vacant public land. The authorities predicted that people would have to live in these shelters for about six months. The cabinet assigned the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security to coordinate the housing programmes with various government agencies and private companies. A budget of 506 million Baht was approved for the construction of 3,616 permanent houses at an estimated cost of 141,000 Baht (US \$3,700) each. The government decided to use the opportunity after the disaster to regulate land use planning and building codes and regulations. A key strategy in all six provinces is to relocate families without legal land tenure to public sites where tenure will be based on long-term, low-rate rented housing.

The housing policy gives those families with legal tenure the options of transferring to a new site, remaining on their existing plot in a house built by the state, or receiving cash compensation. The situation of people without secure land title remains uncertain. For example, the sea gypsy fishing communities of Sireh Island have resettled on private land without legal land tenure. Local residents of village four of Koh Siren have raised strong objections to plans to relocate their village to a degraded mangrove area approximately two kilometres away from shore.

The government requested that CODI assist in the necessary community organisation and facilitate community participation in resettlement. CODI coordinated three relief centres and temporary shelters in Phang Nga. In addition, CODI assisted in the process of mobilising community and CBO inputs in developing a master plan for the affected communities in Phuket – in partnership with Plan Architect, a private architecture company. To promote people's participation in the planning of housing and livelihood reconstruction programmes, CODI and a group of local NGOs conducted local seminars. For 900 affected people, these seminars provided access to information and an opportunity to share and discuss ideas. The seminars were attended by all relevant government agencies, departments and ministries. Public booths were set up around meeting venues by such departments and agencies, in order to both disseminate and gather information.

At the time of this evaluation, the rehabilitation process for permanent shelter had started in the six provinces of the southern coast. The government, INGOs and charitable foundations are developing varied housing projects. The Thai government's housing programme budgets for permanent 6,000 houses,

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built based upon two to three very straightforward house designs. Construction costs are funded by relief donations, freeing claim-holders from financial responsibility for their houses. Each house comes with an accompanying lease contract for the land it is built on. However, during the programme's planning stages, the government did not involve or consult intended claim-holders.

Most of such state housing projects are four to five kilometres inland from original – destroyed – village sites. In Ban Nam Khem, a 32 square-metre, two-room 'shop-house' costing US \$3,000 is one of two models built by contractors; it is only available to those who had formal land title before the disaster. Once built, each house bears a plaque crediting the entity that funded its construction.

A survey carried out by an NGO network demonstrated that 70 per cent of the affected people do not want to move inland, even if they were to get land leases and free houses. Such relocation plans are very unpopular among the fisher folk, whose livelihoods mandate proximity to the sea – and who are not used to urban settings. Further, such plans do not address family business needs; not only would it be impossible to transport or store fishing boats, but there are also no provisions for keeping cattle or growing coconut palms. As such, many houses are still empty.

In contrast, houses built by the survivors themselves (and funded by directly accessed donations) are bigger, cheaper, better ventilated and designed to meet the needs of those who will live in them. Such houses cost US \$2,000–3,750, depending on designs chosen by communities.

To help communities develop plans for rebuilding their houses and settlements, CODI mobilised architects, planners, design students, professors and architectural associations from around the country. Samsook, the director of CODI said, 'We have to start with what people want. The professionals' role is to help them realise it through the planning and negotiating process.'

Livelihood recovery

Loss of productive assets and a dramatic drop in tourism gravely affected the Thai economy. Therefore, rebuilding tourist facilities and guaranteeing personal safety of foreign visitors became top priorities, along with diversifying Thailand's economic basis, exploring alternative, more resilient means of income and developing an elaborate early warning system. To assist those who lost their jobs – many of who worked in the previously thriving tourism industry – the Ministry of Labour organised a programme that combined conferring compensation with new skills training for the unemployed.¹³

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In contrast, most tsunami-affected Burmese workers remained without any form of assistance. According to a survey by the Burmese Lawyer Council, the workers' main grievances included the lack of: effort to identify Burmese dead, protection for Burmese tsunami survivors, compensation for lost relatives or lost employment, relief or housing assistance and general effort to improve the legal status of migrants. A July 2005 UN study concluded:

Within a month of the tsunami, 675 workers had been repatriated ... The task of assessing the impact of the tsunami and its aftermath on migrant workers was greatly complicated by the government's attempt to deport many of them. Many of those not apprehended went into hiding or moved to other provinces.¹⁴

Other minorities also suffered. The government's compensation scheme promised fishermen who lost registered boats 60,000 Baht (US \$1,500) for each small boat and 200,000 Baht (US \$5,000) for larger vessels. But most *Moken* (sea gypsies) and Muslim fishermen had not registered their boats, and consequently, were not entitled to any compensation. Together with a group of CSOs united under the umbrella of the Save the Andaman Network (SAN, see Box 2.2), CODI is working with poor fishing communities to draw up their own restoration plans and manage them as a group. The first community boatyards were set up at Sang Kha-U on Koh Lanta Island in Krabi. The boatyard was managed by committees of local fishermen, who made their own rules as to how to use grant funds. The committee also set criteria for the order of disbursement of new or repaired boats to fishermen.

In Ban Nam Khem, a boatyard was set up at the Bang Muang relief camp with a CODI grant of 100,000 Baht (US \$2,500). This initial sum was not enough to finish even one boat (which costs 130,000 Baht), but once the project got underway and people saw results, additional funds were raised. Fishermen from Krabi were hired to pass on their skills to the local fishermen. Villagers were nominated to take on various tasks in the boat-building process, acting as builders, assistants, procurement managers, bookkeepers and community bankers. By mid-May 2005, 34 community boatyards had been set up in six affected provinces, and 700 boats had been built or refurbished. At the time of this evaluation, there were 1,300 damaged boats awaiting restoration.

Environmental rehabilitation

With support of the World Bank and UNDP, the prime minister established a Sub-Committee for the Coordination of International Assistance on 14 January. Three working groups were formed to map, coordinate and seek additional technical assistance in three areas:

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- 1) Coastal and marine environmental restoration (UNDP);
- 2) Geophysical hazards including seismic activities, landslide and saline incursion (FAO); and
- 3) Livelihood restoration (World Bank and UNDP).

Box 2.2: Save the Andaman Network (SAN)

After the tsunami, Thai civil society organisations formed the Coalition Network for Andaman Community Support, commonly known as the Save the Andaman Network (SAN). SAN, together with the Collaborative Network for the Rehabilitation of Andaman Communities and Natural Resources, a network uniting 44 NGOs, played an active role in bringing immediate relief and psychosocial support to the affected populations. SAN's intentions were to stay close to its core development mandate, in addition to responding to the humanitarian agenda. The Network views itself as a companion of communities in times of crisis, building their capacities to govern their own relief system, receive assistance in a way that maintains their dignity and remain generally self-reliant. SAN works to ensure a fair, equal and transparent distribution of aid among community members.

Among other initiatives, SAN developed Community Revolving Funds. In some cases, this project built on existing savings groups; in others, SAN itself provided start-up capital. Where necessary, SAN has focussed on group formation, moving on to building capacities in areas where skills were lacking, such as accounting. Members of the revolving fund scheme are able to take loans to finance, for example, the repair or replacement of a boat or fishing gear. Members are responsible for repaying the loan to the fund after an initial repayment-free period.

The intention is that these Community Revolving Funds will not only support rehabilitation, but will also become a long-term resource for other developmental, environmental and welfare-related activities. With a similar long-term view, SAN not only provides access to micro-finance, it also seeks to strengthen the internal organisation of communities and people's participation in decision-making processes.

Disaster preparedness

DDMP has commenced the development of an early warning system in six affected provinces. As part of this system, DDMP plans to construct 62 warning towers, provide training in disaster risk reduction to local officials and develop disaster preparedness and evacuation plans for each district. A Disaster Prevention Centre was set up in Phuket, with the first phase of the project aimed at monitoring risk of earthquakes around the Nicobar fault line and assisting districts in training and formulating disaster plans. The long-term aim of this project is to broaden the earthquake-monitoring activities in the Pacific region, eventually developing itself into a 'Regional Alert Centre'.

International agencies have contributed to disaster preparedness by initiating their own programmes and projects. GTZ, a Germany-based international cooperation enterprise for sustainable development, has a programme advising on building resilient communities. The programme is aimed at introducing disaster

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risk management strategies at the community level, and at curriculum development for the Disaster Management Academy. The Japan International Cooperation Agency became the primary partner in training district search and rescue teams, while UNDP and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) are continuing their work of developing early warning systems – partnership with DDMP and with the collaboration of the Pacific Disaster Center in USA. Thailand's National Disaster Warning Centre opened on 30 May, with the priority of developing of a national early warning system.

At district and *Tambon* level, 40,000 civil defence volunteers have been trained to inform the public, educate communities during evacuation drills and assist local authorities in community evacuation operations. DDMP plans to train an additional 960,000 volunteers in the course of a year.

Box 2.3: The Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI)

CODI is a public-private NGO directly accountable to the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. The government of Thailand requested that CODI assists with organising communities and resettlement of tsunami-affected households. With its NGO partners and with support from Misereor, CODI set up six relief camps in the worst hit areas. These camps were used as focal points for delivering aid, but they also functioned as places to gather survivors from the same villages and organise them to take charge of their own rehabilitation processes. The camps became vital experiments in collective, community-driven relief and later helped organise and strengthen coastal communities.

In partnership with the People against Poverty network, CODI helped rebuild the *Moken* (sea gypsy) village at Kheuk Khak. This community had little or no official documents, including land title deeds and identity papers. Many did not want the standard houses offered by most relief organisations, and they did not receive support from the government. CODI assessed the costs of materials necessary to rebuild 71 houses in the style the community preferred. The NGO then solicited donations of building materials and helped organise the community in building these houses on their own. A similar approach was used to rebuild the villagers' fishing boats. The project successfully negotiated with the government for a communal title deed to be issued for the area of land on which the village had been reconstructed. A village market, cultural centre, child development centre and organic vegetable garden are also underway. Save the Children and the Swiss UBS Bank have provided significant additional support.

CODI also organised several exchange visits between tsunami-affected communities in Thailand and in the wider region. Supporting this kind of horizontal learning has helped build new networks among affected communities and enabled such communities to solve common problems as a combined force.

2.5. Transition to Reconstruction

After three months, the Thai authorities ended the emergency phase with the transfer of responsibility for coordination of international technical tsunami assistance to the Thai International Cooperation Agency (TICA), which is part of the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The decision to decline international financial assistance reflected the comparatively limited amount of damage and Thailand's ability to finance its own recovery. The decision also reflected a desire to foster national pride, and may have been

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further influenced by diplomatic considerations, particularly Thailand's plan to make a bid to enter the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

During the transition phase (third to the eighth month following the tsunami), government priorities for international technical assistance were:

- Alternative livelihoods;
- Donor coordination; and
- Disaster preparedness.

Alternative livelihoods

The decline in revenues from tourism and the impact of environmental protection measures on small fishing communities contributed to a sense of urgency in the need to diversify the economy. TICA sought technical assistance from abroad to develop specific alternative livelihood skills, using an approach that matched skills with regions. Bilateral donors from the Far East Asian region were asked to focus on health and vocational training. China is providing alternative medicine training centres, while South Korea focuses on additional vocational training capacity. European donors assist in environmental conservation, sustainable livelihoods and community health centres. UN agencies focus on planning and coordination support to national and local stakeholders. International financial institutions support micro-finance and sustainable tourism rehabilitation. On 12 September, the World Bank and four NGO partners (the Population and Community Development Association, Thai Community Foundation, World Vision International and Local Development Institute) signed three grants, totalling US \$3m. The aim is to restore livelihoods, protect the environment, strengthen community leadership, address the needs of vulnerable groups and improve access to legal services in Ranong, Phang Nga, Krabi and Satun provinces.

Donor coordination, accountability and transparency

On 28 October the review team attended the ceremonial launch of the Development Assistance Database (DAD) system at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹⁵ This is intended to generate donor overviews by sector and geographical area as a critical government instrument to meet the needs of communities. It aims to increase public accountability and transparency and to lead to greater efficiency in programme allocations. At the time of the presentation, however, data equivalent to only US \$120m, mostly from multilateral and bilateral donors, had been entered. This is only a fraction of the total, estimated to be around US \$1.5bn, indicating a number of limitations. There is an urgent need to incorporate

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contributions from the Thai government and the private sector. The Memorandum of Understanding stipulates that the system should be bilingual and TICA is to provide an online Thai translation, but this has yet to happen. The DAD system lacks benchmarks to assess the overall progress and performance against indicators. But in the review team's meetings with TICA officials, these issues were not identified as priorities. To the Foreign Ministry, DAD is primarily a system to coordinate and monitor the performance of international aid.

Disaster preparedness

In May, UNDP sponsored a TICA and DDMP study tour to OCHA, Geneva. During their visit, Thai officials acquired new tools for coordination and financial tracking from their more experienced UN colleagues. The agenda was designed with a view of strengthening Thailand's disaster risk reduction capacity.

CHAPTER THREE: CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Land Disputes, Displacement and Relocation

With respect to the poor and vulnerable groups of the affected Andaman Coast, land disputes have been at the core of many recovery and reconstruction efforts. As one report concluded:

The [t]sunami was an answer to [a] prayer for some of groups of businessmen and politicians. It wiped the coastal areas clean of the communities which had previously stood in the way of their plans for resorts, hotels, casinos and shrimp farms. To them, all these coastal areas are now open land. All they have to do is stop people coming back to their old villages and they are using their influence to get higher-politicians and authorities to agree to this.¹⁶

Among the most notable affects of the disaster is the high percentage of displaced communities: Of the 43 badly affected, 32 have serious land problems.¹⁷ Yet fishing communities remain determined to go back to the lands they occupied before the tsunami, with 70 per cent refusing to move to inland sites, even if given a free house.

However, displaced villagers are not the ones trying to claim the lands they used to occupy. The tsunami has exposed conflicting interest between such indigenous communities and privately owned tourism and real estate businesses, who are lobbying to take over these lands due to their particular suitability to such businesses. Environmental concerns, such as the need for stronger coastal environmental controls advocated by local activists, also play a part in decisions affecting coastal land ownership.

Thus far, the media and CBOs played a key role to help bring land ownership and related issues to the public arena.¹⁸ The government's response included the creation of a subcommittee – within the National Committee on Land – to examine the situation of tsunami-affected communities. The subcommittee created a list of the 20 most difficult cases, where communities were facing serious land ownership conflicts after the tsunami. At the time of this evaluation, the committee had reported that six of such cases were solved.

Box 3.1: Lam Pom Village

In early 2004, the villagers of Lam Pom received notice to vacate. The mining company that leased the coastal land had sold it to Thai investors, which included a high-ranking member of parliament.

The tsunami was particularly lethal to the children of Lam Pom: only 12 of the 70 children in the village survived. The surviving villagers had managed to run inland to higher ground. Adding to such devastation, the villagers' same-day attempt to return to the village to search for relatives was met with armed resistance. The new landowner had hired armed guards and given orders to prevent the families from returning to their homes. The area was fenced off, and the search and rescue effort was left to the military. After a public outcry, villagers were allowed to return on the third day after the tsunami.

Most Lam Pom families spent the first month in a temporary shelter away from the village. To secure their claims, 30 of the 52 families decided to return to the village in late January, foregoing relief aid from both national and international agencies. However, local NGOs and journalists came to their aid. Save the Andaman Forum provided the village with legal advice and built 15 houses on the contested land. *Bangkok Post* and BBC World Service journalists wrote articles and produced a short television documentary. The media attention caused a wave of local and international donations, and numerous volunteers arrived to assist in rebuilding houses. Assistance came from as high up as the Thai Ambassador to the United States of America, who donated materials for 15 houses.

However, loss of livelihoods poses another major challenge to the villagers of Lam Pom. Most of them are still unemployed, and international organisations are reluctant to invest in livelihood recovery support until land issues are resolved. Hoping to negotiate a settlement in which families give up agricultural land in exchange for land titles in the village proper, village leaders assert that the disaster has strengthened community spirit, in spite of the trauma and insecurity. Twelve families, however, have decided not to return and accepted permanent housing in new locations.

Source: Interview with Kun Daen (women village leader) and Kun Porn (female freelance journalist with *BKK Post* and BBC), 10 November 2005.

3.2. Migrant Labour

Before the tsunami, Burmese migrant labourers dispersed along the coast, living in poor conditions at construction sites and keeping a low profile because of their illegal status and fear of being arrested and deported by the authorities. The Thai NGO coalition reported that post-tsunami assistance to these migrant communities has been inadequate. Furthermore, some migrant workers were accused of looting in devastated towns after the tsunami. One report noted that, 'It was difficult to determine what their needs were or might be, and much of the work with unregistered migrant workers was left to NGOs that were more familiar with them.'¹⁹

Similarly, the July report by the International Office for Migration²⁰ concludes that, 'The task of assessing the impact of the tsunami and its aftermath on migrant workers was greatly complicated by the

government's attempt to deport many of them.' It adds that the recommendations made by the January UN/IOM joint mission had not been followed up. Such recommendations included taking measures to ensure that migrants had access to humanitarian assistance, including physical and mental health care, without fear of arrest. The report also proposed that government issue new papers to registered migrants and provide DNA testing to facilitate the identification of deceased Burmese workers.

3.3. Protection and Women's Empowerment

Compared to the tsunami programmes in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, there was a surprising lack of an explicit focus on gender in the agendas of international agencies operating in Thailand. Given the low political and public-life representation of women and their key role in community recovery processes, the evaluation team had expected more emphasis on increasing such participation in the decision-making processes affecting tsunami response. However, no such mandates were evident in either tsunami response documents or stakeholder interviews.

The most vulnerable groups include women with children or pregnant at the time of the tsunami, particularly those without official marriage certificates or legal status. Women employed as sex workers, often ethnic minority migrants from the north and Burma, were identified as another vulnerable group. At a workshop convened by the Women and Children's Network under the auspices of the Foundation for Women and the Foundation for Children in September 2005, serious concerns were highlighted and action requested. As summarised by Chortip Chaicharn, manager of the Foundation for Women, these are numerous:

- Unavailability of gender statistics on tsunami victims makes planning of projects for vulnerable women difficult;
- There is inadequate support for female migrant workers without legal documents;
- Children under three and those born to tsunami widows after the event have often been omitted from the list of people eligible for financial assistance;²¹
- Waste of aid money by heads of households, usually male, has led to a rise in domestic violence;
- There is a lack of mental rehabilitation and therapy programmes for adult victims;
- Programmes for providing small grants and occupational training for women to sustain their livelihoods in the long term are also lacking; and
- Widows and single mothers find it very difficult to work and take care of their children at the same time. Being given a chance to resettle near their kin or, if possible, in the communities where they grew up, would have great practical and psychological benefits.

An additional vulnerability was highlighted by UNICEF, who drew attention to the plight of women deprived of their livelihoods in the aftermath of the disaster and the risk of them being drawn into the sex industry. This is of equal concern with respect to the approximately 40 per cent of unregistered migrants' and internally displaced persons' (IDPs) children who are not attending school; the risks of them engaging in risky behaviours is particularly high. In its child protection programmes, UNICEF attempted to broaden the scope of government protection activities to include issues such as mother-to-child transmission of HIV, domestic violence and protecting children from drug abuse. Some children who worked in the tourist industry have moved to the east coast (Koh Samui), where tourism continued. UNICEF has established learning centres and continues its work on education and human rights in areas with migrant children.

3.4. Conflict

At the time of the evaluation visit in October and November 2005, the conflict in the south continued to escalate. There were bombings, extra-judicial killings and arrests under the Emergency Law that was extended in October. Two arson attacks on Buddhist monasteries in Pattani and the killing of a monk on 16 October received much attention and aroused national concern. The inability of the government to counter escalating violence seemed to deepen the divide between Thai Buddhists and Malay Muslims.

As the second anniversary of the violent conflict in the south nears, Thailand is at a crossroads: should it prolong the state of emergency and fight the insurgents with force – or promote peaceful solutions to create a safe environment for structural change and equitable development? The government has opted for a dual strategy, launching a comprehensive peace initiative to build a network of 'peace villages' along the Thai-Malaysian border. The military offensive strategy against the insurgents is to be reviewed.

Various encouraging initiatives involving a wider range of local stakeholders have been started in recent months. Academic institutions are engaged in field research and training on peaceful cessation of conflict; publishers and journalists are promoting evidence-based media coverage and conflict resolution; and national NGO leaders have engaged in dialogue to explore the role of Thai civil society as a whole in conflict prevention. Moderate Muslim NGOs, such as the Thai Muslim Volunteer Group, promote religious tolerance in their community development projects in the south and conduct dialogue among participants of different religious backgrounds.

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While the conflict had not yet spread to the tsunami-affected Andaman Coast, its geographic proximity and global prominence make coastal areas a potential target that could be used by insurgents to enforce their demands. The inclusion of poor Muslim minority communities in the tsunami reconstruction process could set a good example.

3.5. Disaster Preparedness

Disaster preparedness is one of three key technical assistance areas in the reconstruction phase. While securing the personal safety of foreign tourists was a strong motivating factor in establishing initial structures, more attention is now paid to generating awareness at the community level. All coastal districts are in the process of producing district emergency plans. The disaster risk reduction effort focuses on five areas:

- 1) Awareness-raising among authorities and the general public through knowledge sharing and education projects;
- 2) Installation of early warning systems;
- 3) Technical cooperation and technology transfer to monitor seismic activities;
- 4) Increased political commitment to disaster risk reduction as an integral part of national social and economic development plans; and
- 5) Documenting indigenous knowledge of the sea to potentially alert communities of impending dangers.

There have been numerous revisions to governance systems and regulations, including building codes, district disaster evacuation plans and training of search and rescue teams in every sub district. The Thai authorities have requested assistance with disaster management, such as developing curricula for prevention and mitigation, staff training (including internships with international disaster institutions), building search and rescue expertise and increasing the capacities of DDPM, the main local coordination and implementation agency for all disaster-related activities.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. General Conclusions

Capacity to deliver

The Thai government executed an efficient immediate emergency and early recovery response. It included the prompt provision of health services, a major forensic operation, construction of temporary shelters and permanent houses, compensating survivors, the use of military assets to support recovery and mobilising public funds and attention to disaster management.

Seven success factors were identified in interviews with the government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and United Nations (UN) officials. Further confirmed by a May 2005 UN workshop on Best Practices, these were:

- 1) The pre-tsunami existence and timely activation of Thailand's Civil Defence Act;
- 2) The leading role of central coordinating committees and different line ministries;
- 3) The pressure placed on government performance by the media and foreign nations, which lost a large numbers of their citizens in Thailand;
- 4) The clarity of time-frames and budget lines;
- 5) The strength of the national government, which centrally managed emergency operations;
- 6) The support to disaster preparedness capacities and review of environmental protection policies;
and
- 7) The focus on long-term reconstruction, with emphasis on technical skills, development and ownership.

The national government activated its existing Civil Defence Act emergency system, which successfully mobilised and directed the human and financial resources of relevant line ministries to the affected areas. Therefore, ad hoc central coordination mechanisms were unnecessary. This made the Thai tsunami response more appropriate and efficient than that of the other countries reviewed as part of the TEC Local and National Capacities Evaluation (which also included Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka).

In the first and second emergency phases, the strong national-level coordination temporarily bolstered the capacity of district authorities to deal with the search, recovery and repatriation of tsunami victims, and to provide compensation to affected populations. However, the national tsunami response has not had a

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lasting impact on local capacity. The role of district authorities in the coordination and monitoring of the reconstruction phase was very limited. Furthermore, the reconstruction phase failed to systematically include claim-holders in the planning and implementation of reconstruction programmes.

The reconstruction and development phases will require an approach that is more participatory and rights-based, in order to reach the same levels of efficiency as the preceding phases of the Thai tsunami response. Strong, centralised control worked well in the emergency phase, but tended to overlook the interests of poor communities. Some key areas of focus during the reconstruction phase include:

- Priorities of the medium-scale business community;
- Land disputes, with an emphasis on the unintended dependency of affected individuals engaged in such disputes on the generosity of NGOs and volunteers;
- Government-provided housing, particularly the suitability thereof to the livelihoods of the poor; and
- Transitional assistance to unregistered migrant workers.

International agencies efficiently provided technical support in coordination. As such agencies were not involved in large-scale operational work, they continued to address sensitive issues of community participation and the needs of vulnerable groups. Abundant tsunami donations have given international agencies a window of opportunity to pilot alternative sustainable development approaches with communities. However, this window is of limited duration, and agencies would do well to give greater emphasis to advocacy with the national government, in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of tsunami programmes.

An additional consideration for international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) operating in Thailand's current context is the tensions that exist between international actors and local NGOs and community-based bodies. A few international agencies with previous operational programmes in Thailand had spurred concerns about presumed religious activities of all INGOs.

Capacity to access

The capacity of claim-holders to access services at the district and community levels is a complex issue requiring further study. Overall, most communities managed to access services from the government or other sources – with the exception of unregistered migrant workers, who were not entitled to official support and were afraid of deportation. The national government provided temporary shelters within the

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first month, and construction of permanent houses commenced in the second. However, conflicts over land have dominated the rehabilitation process, and most government support to affected districts and communities was poorly coordinated at the district level. Some communities claim to have received no assistance, or not to have received the *level* of assistance to which they were entitled. Complaints about the corruption of village leaders, such as adding non-affected families to the lists of those requiring post-tsunami assistance, were frequently heard. District offices were ill-equipped – understaffed and under-resourced – to monitor assistance in the field, and had limited insight into the activities undertaken by line ministries.

Capacity to ensure equality and accountability

The national tsunami response in Thailand paid insufficient attention to internal oversight and public accountability. Clear information on private-sector donations, often awarded directly to provinces, is lacking. Private donations were not publicly accountable or recorded, fuelling suspicions that funds were applied 'liberally'. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has established a Development Assistance Database, which is expected to make an important contribution to increased transparency of reconstruction and development programmes in the affected areas. However, neither government nor private-sector donations were fully included in the system, and it has yet to be translated into Thai.

The media and national human rights NGOs are playing an important role in highlighting the plight of the poor and advocating for the most vulnerable, but there still remains a crucial need to incorporate lessons on exclusion and inequality in the tsunami reconstruction effort. The conflict between Buddhist and Muslim communities was overlooked in the international agencies' post-tsunami programmes. As ethnic and religious balance in the south remains fragile, a major contribution of the reconstruction process is to show a new approach to sustainable development.

4.2. Conclusions in Relation to Core Messages

The review identified three cross-cutting core messages related to international aid:

1. Sustain a respectful engagement with local and national capacities

The international tsunami response in Thailand focussed on technical assistance in two main areas: assistance in recovery and reconstruction and identification and repatriation of the deceased. The latter involved 40 different countries and constituted the largest forensic operation in history. It proved difficult for the Thai government to manage, as teams were unprepared to work in a coordinated fashion.

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However, local forensic expertise has improved, and Japan is currently providing technical assistance to train professional search, rescue and recovery teams in each of the six Andaman Coast provinces.

The Thai decision to request only technical assistance had several key benefits:

- *Strengthening of local and national capacities:* technical assistance is de facto aimed at strengthening capacities. For example, Thailand's increase in forensic capacity was due to the influx of international technical expertise;
- *Utilising established agency infrastructure:* Assistance was largely provided by agencies with a long-term pre-tsunami presence in the country and good comprehension of the local context, thus improving efficiency and connectedness;
- *Exploiting international agencies' core competencies:* Technical assistance was in line with the providing agencies' primary mandates, thus facilitating better linking of contextual and sectoral knowledge; and
- *Targeting assistance efforts:* Agencies providing post-tsunami technical assistance were not hindered by development issues faced by others (for example, rebuilding lost infrastructure in Indonesia), resulting in a more targeted and, subsequently, more effective level of assistance.

Technical assistance was appropriately adjusted to the shifting needs of different emergency phases. During the immediate relief phase, UN agencies provided technical and logistical assistance to government authorities, while INGOs catered to the needs of the vulnerable communities excluded from the official response. UNDP assisted in setting up the international coordination committee; the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) helped provide immediate immunisation, psychosocial support and assistance with repairing and reopening schools. During the recovery phase, international attention shifted to assessments and participatory planning for reconstruction, safeguarding the inclusion of most vulnerable groups. Most INGOs provided financial support to local NGO networks, while UN agencies addressed inclusion and protection issues.

The third phase of transition from recovery to reconstruction and development commenced in April with a shift in coordinating agencies and sectoral focus. Bilateral agencies were asked to assist with alternative livelihood development, in order to diversify the region's economic base. Such agencies also advised on environmental protection, disaster preparedness and risk reduction. Additionally, the launch of UNDP's Donor Assistance Database was aimed at assisting Thai authorities in the coordination of international development assistance and increasing downward accountability.

While the choices of interventions in different stages were strategic, the cost efficiency of some international assistance initiatives is questionable. Prior to the tsunami, most agencies with a presence in Bangkok had regional mandates, with their national development programmes having ended or having been sharply reduced in the late 1990s in response to Thailand's development performance. At the same time, strategic partnerships developed with local NGOs through the pilot projects will be valuable in advocating for change in policy frameworks and practices at provincial and national levels.

2. Improve equity, inclusion and downward accountability

International assistance in Thailand prioritised inclusion of vulnerable groups, and some INGOs assisted such communities in the purchase of resettlement land near their original villages. In addition, international actors lobbied for clemency and the inclusion of unregistered workers in national recovery efforts. However, some vulnerable groups' interests could have been addressed more effectively.

The special needs of women were included in international agencies' project designs, but the evaluation team did not encounter efforts specifically designed to strengthen the capacity of – or to promote opportunities for – Thai women in official decision-making structures. UNICEF was the only international agency that identified the increased vulnerability of women and children toward sexually risky behaviour, in order to compensate for lost livelihoods.

Although UNDP's Donor Assistance Database system was intended to increase accountability to claim-holders, it did not resonate with national authorities due to lack of an online component, Thai translation or inclusion of the local government and private-sector programmes. The system is expected to have little affect on downward accountability practices in the country.

While the conflict between Buddhist and Muslim communities intensified in neighbouring provinces, international agencies did not include conflict considerations in their post-tsunami work. Agencies should devote more attention to the process of equitable inclusion of marginal Muslim communities. This would provide a means of learning good practices that could then be applied in the recovery and peace-building efforts in the three southern provinces.

The absence of clear documentation and monitoring of private-sector donations highlighted key areas for further study:

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- 1) A clear definition of tsunami recovery funding is required to distinguish between humanitarian assistance and charitable business engagement;
- 2) Attention is needed to candidate eligibility criteria and decision-making procedures applied to disbursing private-sector donations, many of which are made in the form of grants and soft loans designed to restore livelihoods; and
- 3) Registration and monitoring private-sector donations would provide further downward accountability, for example, by addressing rumours of corruption.

3. Foster an enabling policy framework and safe environment

The international tsunami response in Thailand has emphasised inclusive policies for vulnerable and marginalised communities. Media and national NGO networks are playing a crucial watchdog role, enhancing protection of the rights of affected marginal communities. However, the international community could do more to strengthen the capacity of community organisations to advocate for basic rights and implement an advocacy agenda – by setting up partnerships between international and local actors. While tsunami response placed these issues on the agenda and created a mechanism that could form the basis for accountable information-sharing, further efforts are required to improve public transparency and accountability.

4.3. Recommendations

In relation to the core messages, the recommendations are:

1. Sustain a respectful engagement with local and national capacities

- At the national level, there is a need to recognise and value local capacities at the individual and community levels, adopting more participatory policy and practice frameworks.
- There is a need for transparent planning and monitoring of national and private contributions to the tsunami reconstruction phase, particularly in the livelihoods sector.
- The process of sharing information with claim-holders needs to be improved to create space for increased participation, ownership and sustainability.
- To enhance local development, international agencies should play a more prominent role in facilitating partnerships between Thai authorities and local NGOs during the reconstruction and development process.

2. Improve equity, inclusion and downward accountability

- Housing and resettlement programmes need to acknowledge indigenous land claims and apply culturally appropriate planning solutions that incorporate indigenous lifestyles.
- International agencies have been targeting vulnerable groups to overcome exclusion and inequality issues, but more strategic policy advocacy is needed to incorporate valuable pilot experiences into development frameworks.
- There is an opportunity to integrate conflict and disaster prevention assistance. Projects that increase participation and reduce inequality in service delivery to poor Muslim communities could provide valuable models for peace building in the south.
- There is a need for more gender-sensitive programming, particularly in the area of women's participation in public decision-making in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals. There is also a need to make information accessible to female claim-holders.
- Systematic mechanisms of downward accountability and transparency are not in place. International agencies could assist authorities in developing such mechanisms, in order to monitor the reconstruction process and strengthen accountability at the community level.
- The Development Assistance Database system does not strengthen downward accountability in its present form. It needs to be translated into Thai and include government and private-sector donations.

3. Foster an enabling policy framework and safe environment

- International assistance was appropriately geared toward enabling local capacities and empowering claim-holders. It included context-sensitive communication strategies and sustainable disaster preparedness systems. However, the fostering of inclusive and gender-sensitive governance modalities requires continued attention for sustained, meaningful participation.
- Continued support for human-rights NGOs and local NGO networks will be required in the future, in order to develop and implement an advocacy agenda set up by claim-holders to address land disputes, child protection, political participation, corruption and transparency, as well as to promote independent watchdog movements.
- Mutually accountable partnerships between Thai authorities, communities and community-based organisations need to be developed and strengthened to enable meaningful and informed participation in decision making at all levels.

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- Thailand made commendable headway in establishing disaster awareness and preparedness systems at the national, district and community levels. It is now important to incorporate globally accepted benchmarks on participation and inclusion of vulnerable groups.

¹ Interviews with officials from Ministry of the Interior.

² Ibid.

³ Interviews with UNICEF, Lam Pom village and Thai Law Society.

⁴ UNICEF research into school attendance of children in the Thai border regions (ethnic minority populations, IDPs and migrants) revealed that more than 40 per cent of the children are not attending school, a fact that took Thai authorities by surprise. Only 20 per cent of the registered Burmese migrant children are attending Thai schools, and even this small group of students may not be granted a certificate upon completion. (International Migration in Thailand, 2005, p 64.)

⁵ UNDP and UN, 2004, p 11.

⁶ At the time of the tsunami, there were approximately 31,500 registered Burmese workers in Ranong, 27,300 in Phuket, 22,480 in Phang Nga and 2,586 in Krabi province – working in fisheries, construction, rubber and tourism industries. Estimates on the numbers of unregistered workers vary greatly, but are likely to be much higher than the registered numbers.

⁷ Data collated by TEC secretariat based on World Bank reports (See TEC, 2005).

⁸ UNICEF, 2005.

⁹ Task division is as follows: DDMP – relief and coordination; Health – identification of injured, psycho social assistance; Human Security and Social Development – vulnerable groups (orphans); Natural Resources – environmental damage; Finance – funding; Budget Bureau – soft loans; Agriculture – fisheries; and Labour – unemployed.

¹⁰ Minister of Interior: Phuket; Minister of Natural Resources: Phang Nga; Deputy Minister of Interior: Krabi and Deputy Prime Minister: Ranong.

¹¹ It is comprised of the Human Rights Education Institute of Burma (HREIB), MAP Foundation, Thai Action Committee for Democracy in Burma (TACDB), Grassroots Human Rights Education and Development Committee (Burma), World Vision International, Médecins Sans Frontières Belgium and Oxfam.

¹² UNDP, World Bank and FAO, 2005, p 9.

¹³ The following list includes details on the compensation programme:

- Income support for 22,000 unemployed persons of 175 Baht (US\$ 4) per day for 30 days;
- 23,000 unemployed persons were registered through Employment Services and received support in finding alternative employment;
- 1,200 affected unemployed workers received support to return home in other provinces;
- 10,000 persons received skills training, with priority on rebuilding and repair skills; and
- 28,340 employees owed back wages by previous employers received wage support.

¹⁴ Huguet and Punpuing, 2005, p 65.

¹⁵ The Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation is responsible for receiving multilateral and bilateral donor assistance. TICA was established two years ago and provides assistance and partnership to international agencies, referring to itself as a 'matchmaker' between supply and demand.

¹⁶ ACHR, 2005.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ CDC, 2005, p 392.

²⁰ See note 14.

²¹ Currently, the Ministry of Education is only offering a one-time grant to school-age children whose parent or parents were injured (15,000 Baht) or killed (25,000 Baht).

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ANNEX 1: REVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THAILAND

When	Where	What
Wed 5/10	Bangkok	09.00 Meeting UNDP, Hakan Bjorkman 10.00 Planning meeting Sirisupa 11.30 UNESCAP SG 15.00 Burmese Lawyers' Council, Mr. Aung Htoo, Director 18.00 Thai Law Society, Mr. Somchai Hamlaor, Director
Thu 6/10	Bangkok	10.00 UNDP, Thai Terms of Reference discussion 14.00 Forum Asia 16.00 Oxfam GB, Mr. Chalermak Kittirakul, Thailand programme officer
Fri 07/10	Bangkok	10.00 Dept Disaster Mitigation & Prevention, Mr. Bandit 14.00 UNDP budget and field visit planning Departure for Sri Lanka
8 – 26/10	Sri Lanka	Field review
Thu 27/10	Bangkok	08.00 arrival team 12.00 – 17.00 UNESCAP workshop on vulnerable groups and tsunami impact in Thailand
Fri 28/10	Bangkok	09.30 Ministry Foreign Affairs, attending the DAD launching ceremony and presentation 13.00 CODI and Thai Volunteer Foundation (ES, SP) 15.00 Ministry of Foreign Affairs/TICA, Mr. Apirath Vienravi and staff (ES)
Sat 29/10	Bangkok	Association for Women's Rights in Development conference, gender, sexuality and law reform in muslim societies workshop (ES) 16.00 APIK, Nurshyabani K. (ES/SP)
Sun 30/10	Phang Nga	Field visit CODI, Vulnerable people projects (SP)
Mon 31/10	Bangkok	10.00 11.00 Northwest Airlines travel adjustments 14.00 Bureau of Local Administration, Mr. Vicham Kulchanarat, director 15.00 idem, Mr. Wirat Thamnurasri, Head Research
	Krabi	Field visit Koh Lanta, with UNDP (SP)
Tue 1/11	Bangkok	10.00 DDMP, Anucha Mokkhavesa, Director General and team 14.00 Ministry of Social Welfare and Human Security, 16.00 UNESCAP conference presentation, Ms. Thelma Kay
	Krabi	Field visit Krabi province, return to Bangkok (SP)

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Wed 2/11	Bangkok	08.30 UN Resident Coordinator + UNDP Resident Representative , Mrs. Joana Merlin Scholtes and Staff Meeting (ES) 10.00 ADPC (SP) 11.00 UNDP DAD regional coordinator, Aiden Cox and team (ES) 15.00 UNICEF, Andrew Mores and Bastiaan van't Hoff (ES) Evening departure for Sri Lanka
3 – 6/11	Sri Lanka	
Mon 7/11	Bangkok	AM arrival in Bangkok PM meetings with UNICEF to replan field visits
Tue 8/11	Bangkok	10.00 Save the Andaman Forum, Ms. Nok Syamon 11.00 Telephone meeting Worldvision, mr. anusorn somsin 13.00 UNESCAP meeting IDO/ Thai recommendations 16.00 BCPR/DMU, Michael Ernst and staff
Wed 9/11	Phuket	Flight to South for field visit UNICEF 14.00 Meeting UNICEF Phuket field staff 16.00 Meeting UNICEF tsunami advisor
Thu 10/11	Phang Nga	Travel to Kaolak district 11.00 Chief District Health Officer Mr Virat Pohplook 13.00 Tour of Nam Khem project sites 15.00 Villagers discussion at Lam Pom, Save Andaman Network 17.00 Meeting Journalist Tsunami volunteer network at Lam Pom
Fri 11/11	Phang Nga/ phuket	Travel to Thai Muang district Tour of Baan Ne Rai village (Election day) 11.00 Meeting with Baan Ne Rai School teachers. Ms. 13.00 Meeting Chief District Officer of Thai Muang District, Mr. Praprot Otanand 15.00 Meeting Namkhem Tambon Administrative Authority, Mr.Bonoeu 17.00 return flight to Bangkok
Sat 12/11	Bangkok	10.00 Meeting Thai Muslim Volunteer Group, ms. walapa (Central Muslim Committee) 14.00 Meeting Engaged Buddhism Network trainer, Surapee Chuteracuul
Sun 13/11	bkk	Return to duty station

ANNEX 2: PHANG NGA PROVINCE FIELD VISIT REPORT

The Setting

The Phang Nga province is located along the Andaman Sea on the southwest coast of Thailand. The coast is about 239.25 kilometres long and comprises some 105 islands. These areas were the worst affected by the tsunami, especially in the Takuapa, Kuraburi and Taimuang districts. A total of six districts, 19 sub-districts and 69 villages were hit along this coastline. Up to 4,221 people died, 5,597 were injured and 1,770 remain missing. The worst affected coastal areas in Phang Nga included Koh Phra Thong, Koh Kho Khao, Bang Sak beach, Pak Weep beach, Pakarang cape, Kuk Kak beach, Bang Neang beach, Nang Thong beach, Khao Lak beach and Tai Muang beach. Many fishing communities living on or near the beaches were affected, in terms of losses both human and material (including the loss of fishing gear and the destruction of fishing boats and houses). Affected fishing communities included those in Ban Khao Lak, Lum Kaen sub-district, Ban Kuk Kak, Ban Pak Weep, Ban Bang Neang, Kuk Kak sub-district, Ban Nam Khem, Ban Bang Muang, Ban Bang Sak, Ban Bang Maw, Bang Muang sub-district, Ban Koh Phra Thong and Koh Kho Khao sub-district.

In addition, the tsunami had a profound effect on the local environment and natural resources. The beaches and sea grasses in, for example, the Thung Nang Dam region and in Koh Phra Thong were severely damaged. Marine animals such as sea turtles, dolphins and dugongs suffered casualties and injuries. In some areas, coral reefs and mangrove forests were destroyed. Many shallow water sources, such as wells, were contaminated by salt water in Ban Kuk Kak and Koh Phra Thong, among others.

A village and Its Sub-District Office in Phang Nga Province

The village of Ban Nam Khem was the hardest hit in the Phang Nga province. According to Maitree Jongkrajak, the president of the community committee of Ban Nam Khem, the village lost half of its population of 6,000. Of 1,400 houses, only 40 survived with minor damage.

The sub-district office has set up a centre for coordinating relief. The committee of Ban Nam Khem has been set up to manage a community bank, funded by CODI, SAN and smaller donations. At present, the committee's livelihood rehabilitation projects total 13m Baht, assisting 23 groups. To date, 23m Baht have been disbursed for land and housing purposes. The committee's role is to ensure that the fund addresses the needs of affected groups. So far, it has been able to help 50 per cent of the affected communities in Nam Khem and hopes to eventually satisfy the needs of everyone. There are plans to extend this fund to social welfare for the elderly,

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support for education through scholarships and, eventually, set aside 5 per cent of the funds for a welfare programme. The committee provides full (100 per cent) project funding to community groups, with groups committing to pay back half the funding. The community and committee set the rate and time of repayment and use the other 50 per cent in their own revolving fund for community development.

Many Burmese migrants work in the Nam Khen area. Of the 900 who are registered, only 125 have received some type of compensation, possibly due to complications with their work permits. Though the committee is not specifically designed to work with migrants, some of its community assistance is area-based, thereby providing some benefits to migrant populations.

The committee also works with communities to resolve land conflicts, as the practice of intimidation over contested land is commonplace in the area. Businessmen making claims to coastal lands have been reported to hire gangs to threaten not only the local villagers, but also the sub-district office personnel. In the past, CODI has had to disengage from land-related proceedings due to the sensitive nature of some claims, occasionally involving significant political interests. In such cases, the issues may be taken up by other NGOs in the network.

Ban Muang Kung 1 – New Housing Development in the Nam Khem Area

A group of people who rented houses in the Nam Khem area and worked in small businesses and the local tourism industry are now living in temporary shelters built by the government in Bang Muang. Some came to the southern coast 25 years ago, but most have been living in the Phang Nag province for as long as 10 to 14 years. These people lost their homes and livelihoods, when the houses they rented were destroyed in the tsunami. Ten members of the community died. The official government policy following the tsunami was to rebuild the houses of people who had land titles, thereby leaving those who merely rented without redress.

Realising their predicament, community members requested assistance from the committee of Bann Naamkem. The committee worked with the group to help them get organised, form a savings group, open an account at the community bank and secure funding from CODI. The group has now agreed to move a few kilometres from where their homes stood, although some continue to look longingly toward the sea and say that they 'miss [its] open space'.

The government of Denmark donated 4m Baht to buy land. Land was located, and CODI facilitated purchase negotiations between the community and the landowner. CODI also agreed to

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extend the community a 15-year loan of 3m Baht. Over the next six months, the group hopes to build 50 houses, with the help of local and foreign volunteers.

One representative from each family will have to provide labour to build the house. The community decided how much to pay its own members, settling on a per diem of 200 Baht. The group worked with an architect to choose the design that suited them, settling on houses that are 30 square metres in size and cost 140,000 Baht (US \$3,900) each to build. All houses will follow the same master plan and will be set as a group in a landscaped area. The community has already received 30 per cent of the needed funds, and the rest will be forthcoming as construction commences and progresses.

The community will pay the labour costs for members that cannot do the work themselves, such as the elderly and single mothers. During the evaluation visit, these people expressed renewed feelings of hope; they visit the site of the planned development every day and are gratified to know that it belongs to them.

So far, this community's members have received livelihood tools from World Vision International. Before the tsunami, these people were involved in diverse livelihood activities. Now, have many new ideas, from fishing and fish farming to bakery enterprises, construction and motorcycle repairs. These are still in the planning stages.

The young leader of the group has been trained by the community network committee to manage financial affairs and attended personal development training. He admits that, before the tsunami, he did not particularly care about his community. Now he says, 'surviving the tsunami has made me see the importance of the community. We have to help each other. This has given me more responsibility.'

Women community members said they never dreamt they would be able to afford a house. Now, they are extremely grateful to be able to get credit assistance that made what previously seemed impossible a relatively near-future reality.

Of course, many practical concerns remain. For example, community members are apprehensive about a portion of their new land not being secured against landslides – but remain hopeful in researching additional resources to build protections. Living in temporary shelters, they all still get nervous every time the warning sirens go off and feel that their new community will need some kind of an early warning system.