



WEBHAMUVA
Report on
People's Consultations on Post Tsunami Relief,
Reconstruction and Rehabilitation in Sri Lanka

September 2006



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The reported was drafted by Divakar Goswami, LIRNEasia, from reports submitted by interviewers from Sarvodaya. Nishantha from Sarvodaya coordinated the field interviews; Indrajit Samarajiva designed and maintained the Webhamuva website; Luxman Siriwardena provided overall guidance. Financial support from the World Bank's Small Grants Program is gratefully acknowledged.

DISCCLAIMER: The contents of this report do not necessarily represent the views of the World Bank.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LIRNEasia and Sarvodaya initiated the *Webhamuva* program with assistance from the World Bank's Small Grants Program to give voice to the people whose opinions go unheard in the post-tsunami reconstruction work.

The program was activated in a number of Sarvodaya Service villages located in the Tsunami-affected districts. Trained staff from Sarvodaya visited villages in those districts and asked inhabitants about the effect of the tsunami on their lives, their views on the reconstruction and rehabilitation in their area, and about their current problems and needs. The answers were recorded in the local language and was later transcribed and translated into English. The reports from the villages were then published on www.webhamuva.org, which can be accessed by anyone from around the world.

Twenty four reports in English from six Tsunami affected districts (Colombo, Kalutara, Matara, Hambantota, Ampara and Trincomalee) were produced. Sinhala versions from three districts were also made available on the website as PDF downloads.

The findings from the report indicate that people are dissatisfied with the pace of reconstruction and rehabilitation. Most of the tsunami-affected spoken to have yet to recover their normal lives in terms of livelihood, permanent housing and their sense of safety and security. The feeling of helplessness and despair is quite prevalent especially when people do not have the capital or means to engage in sustainable livelihoods. Needs assessment from the donors has not been very effective because there seems to be a large discrepancy between what people need and what is supplied to them. Starting from housing issues to lesser significant things like utensils and victuals, what is supplied is often not what people want or need.

The tsunami seems to have had an impact that goes beyond economics and has reconfigured the social and cultural lives of those affected. The forced sharing of space in camps and flat-type housing has brought together people from different social backgrounds which have generated some apprehension and friction.

Below are excerpts, organized thematically, to highlight what the tsunami-affected think on key issues like livelihoods, housing, education and social-cultural impact.

People's voices on land, resettlement and housing

“flat” or apartment style housing that doesn't suit their way of life

- **Athagama** (Kalutara): *There are about five to seven houses in a row. They are in Parangiwatta. Oh, we can't stay in flats, no. What's the point of housing like that? They're giving for free, that's true. But they're useless for us.*

Because they're apparently making flats about seven connected to each other. The two floors are for two families. So there'll be fighting about everything. We are losing all our independence because of this. We don't know what kind of people we'll fall next to. Also, we'll be unable to leave a girl child in house by herself even in an emergency. We feel that we'll fall into a great difficulty.

- **Weligama** (Matara): *The people did not like the government houses because those houses will be flats.*

Houses relocated far from livelihood

- **Wadduwa** (Kalutara): *We're getting houses from Weragama. Next month, the people in the two front houses are going. We'll have to go to Weragama. But even then, we're going to have to come back here. We raise pigs and chicken. We make jardi. So we have to come back here to do the fishing work. Otherwise, what are we to stay home and do? If we don't earn something to buy that day's food, how are we to live?*
- **Thalpitiya** (Kalutara): *We're getting houses permanently from Weragama. However we can't tell when we'll be given them. It is very far from here to there. We have to go by bus to the area they call the Weragama Housing Scheme. There is only one bus on that road, that also only at some times. Weragama is on a side road off the Galle Road. So we have to go by three-wheeler. Even for the bus, a lot of money goes. We do fishing work. There they are building houses on ten perches for each. That's good for us. I'm thinking of doing a self-employment activity when I go there. It'll be too much trouble to come here for the fishing work.*

Housing Issues

- Issues surrounding land, resettlement and housing appear to be the most pressing issues.
- Resettlement in permanent housing has been slow and people are frustrated.

- Many people have suggested that they be given land and they will build their own houses
- Some housing schemes with 80+ houses have only 5 toilets, creating unsanitary and unsafe condition especially for women.

People's voices on livelihoods

- **Moratuwella** (Colombo dist): *All assistance we have received consists of victuals and clothing. We not wish to get any more of these. What we yearn for is assistance to strengthen our capacities to re-start a normal life.*
- **Payagala** (Kalutara dist): *I asked for a three-wheeler that I could drive easily. However, I'm not getting one. It is difficult for me to do a job with outsiders. What we really need is a way to earn.*
- **Gandara** (Matara dist): *We don't need any aid. Now at least give us a loan at an easy interest rate. We shall show the ocean that beat us down how we can get up by raising an income from that ocean itself. Now we want only that.*
- **Weligama** (Matara dist): *If you are going to help us now, give us a loan at a concessionary rate. We would like to once again live without being a burden to anyone.*

People's voices on education

- **Moratuwela**: *It is hard to comprehend how the school children residing at the camp can attend to their studies. They said that they are not mentally or physically relaxed to concentrate on their studies, and that they do not have enough space to play.*
- **Wadduwa**: *I have a younger brother too. Now neither of us goes to school. We stay with an aunt. My brother goes to pull in the fishing nets. We have nothing else.*
- **Wadduwa**: *We can't send our children to school. They say that school children were given bank savings books with Rs. 250, Rs. 500 in them. But our children didn't get this. At election time, they make a lot of promises to us. But after that they forget us.*
- **Kalamulla**: *It's been only two or three days since these people came to stay in these houses," she said. "Since the day they came, they play cassettes very loudly. There was a party even yesterday. We can't sleep*

at night because there is so much noise. I guess they can't let go of their old habits. But we have a child who is to sit for the exam. He can't study. How can one concentrate and study when there is this much noise? We're scared about what'll happen in the future.

- **Thalpitiya:** A group consisting of American university students have come here for a program in their final year of study. A similar group had come and stayed at the Thalpitiya school before and that one of the gentlemen in the group had taught English to the students.

People's voices on social and cultural impacts

- **Athagama:** We're Buddhist. Most of the people in this area are Christian. This Tsunami did one good thing. It brought together Christians and Buddhists. When the Christian father took the service on January 1st apparently he told everyone to go and worship the priest at the temple and come first. At the same time when the houses are distributed, the priest is sent for and the keys are distributed through him. Now the Christians are thinking a lot about how well the priest treated everyone at the time of the Tsunami. When the father is opening the houses, he always specially thanks the priest. This is a big thing.
- **Thalpitya:** Before the Tsunami every person did some kind of job; however when things were handed out free of charge after the Tsunami, people adapted too easily to this new lifestyle. Even when a society gives out loans, the recipients castigate them by saying they're loaning out money that was given as Tsunami aid. They do not understand anything correctly.
- **Wadduwa:** We do everything with the constant fear that the Tsunami will come. Our things, clothes are still stocked together. There is no way to keep a house beautifully, neatly. I can't think when we will be freed from these problems.
- **Modarawila:** The people who lived here might have stayed in small homes, but they were not used to living like shanty-dwellers. They were people who lived well. Now it has become a mud hole there. These are people who lived very peacefully with us in the village. They say that they are not used to this kind of living. There are even people who use drugs. They are scared to leave their girl children by themselves. They are living a very hard life now.
- **Thalpitiya:** There is no difference between night and day, outsiders are constantly coming here to buy drugs. They are helped by the police

andpolitically. We live in great fear. Also, a brothel is run in the same house...We have brothers, children. We need to keep them safe. We need to solve this problem and stop it from destroying our village.

INTRODUCTION

This project involved using community-based, participatory forums to record the thoughts of people displaced by the tsunami who are currently living in villages and camps along the Sri Lankan coast. Their thoughts were posted on www.webhamuva.org so that their brethren, civil society groups, media and government know what their wishes and concerns are.

After his visit to the region post the tsunami, former World Bank President, James Wolfensohn remarked that the local communities affected by the disaster must drive the rebuilding process. *"It's my judgment that to hurry that process without getting the people involved is probably not going to work. Their involvement is also an essential part of the healing process for the survivors."*¹

The involvement of people in the rebuilding process has not happened in a broad-based manner. The reports from the tsunami affected villages indicate that there is a disconnect between the rehabilitation and reconstruction activities undertaken by the Sri Lankan government and donors and the needs of the people. The lives of the tsunami affected remain in suspended animation after more than one year since the tragic event because housing and livelihood needs have not been met for a large proportion of those who have been interviewed. For those lucky few who have received housing or aid it has not come in the shape or form that meet their needs. But the foremost issue that comes out from the interviews is the need for a more systematic needs assessment from community to community in order to direct state and international resources more effectively to those who need it and in the form that they need it.

Although the primary objective of the *Webhamuva* project was to report what the tsunami affected had to say, it was also recognized that listening to them was an important part of the healing process. As Mr. Wolfensohn alludes to above, the very process of listening to the dispossessed living in camps and temporary shelters will hopefully contribute in some way to the healing process and empower them to the extent that their voices are heard beyond the confines of their tent.

Objectives

1

<http://www.worldbank.org.ph/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/EASTASIAPACIFICEXT/PHILIPPIN/ESEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20318541~menuPK:332988~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:332982,00.html>

The key objectives of the *Webhamuva* project were:

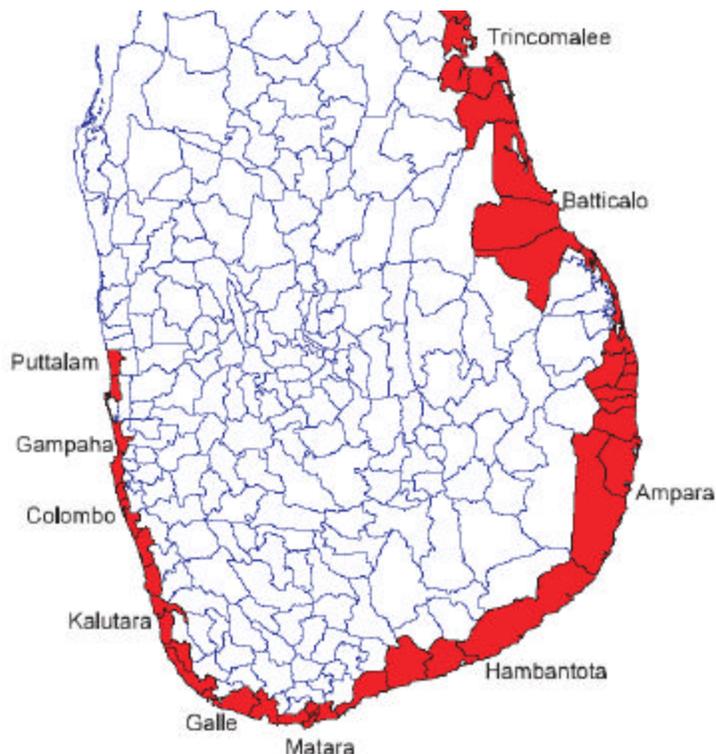
- To conduct consultations with tsunami affected people in a selection of Sarvodaya villages along the coast
- To disseminate the views of the tsunami affected on reconstruction and rehabilitation on a website specially designed for the purpose:
www.webhamuva.org
- To illustrate some of the gaps between people's needs and post-tsunami recovery activities.

Justification

This project was in response to the lack of any systematic initiative to involve the tsunami affected in the post-tsunami reconstruction and rehabilitation activities. It is hoped that this limited initiative will demonstrate the importance for involving local participation in the post-tsunami recovery process.

Project Location

Sarvodaya, the largest community action organization in Sri Lanka, ran temporary shelters for internally displaced people (IDP) all along the affected coast. They had camps in nearly all the tsunami affected districts, including Colombo, Kalutara, Matara, Hambantota, Jaffna, Ampara, Kalmunai, Batticaloa, Trincomalee and Gampaha. For this project, villages from Colombo, Kalutara, Matara, Hambantota, Ampara and Trincomalee districts were selected



Activities

The major activities of this project are schematically represented in Figure 1. Sarvodaya's personnel were first provided training before being sent to the selected tsunami affected villages to speak to the inhabitants. The notes from the conversations were sent from the field to Colombo where they were transcribed by individuals specifically hired for this project and then translated into English. LIRNE *asia* designed and hosted a website for the purpose of disseminating more widely the voices of the tsunami affected. As the English reports were filed, they were uploaded on www.webhamuva.org, designed as a weblog to allow interactivity. Two newspapers, the Daily Mirror and the Lankadeepa, wrote articles on the Webhamuva Project and highlighted some of the common themes that emerged from the displaced people. Some of the postings also made it to the Global Voices Online, a blog aggregator hosted by the Harvard University.

Training

CEPA assisted Sarvodaya in conducting training camps for its personnel who would be conducting the interviews with the tsunami affected people. The training sensitized the interviewers about the kinds of issues that were being faced by those living in temporary shelters. They were also provided training on how to ask questions and write the field reports. The training was put to test when the interviewers were taken on field visits to two tsunami affected villages in Koralawella and Moratuwella in Kalutara district.

Issues confronting the tsunami affected: 100 meter rule, loans availability etc



Brainstorming about interviewing strategies



Consultation with the tsunami affected

One of the ongoing activities of Sarvodaya in villages with temporary shelters is to hold *pavul hamuva* (the family gathering), where the tsunami-affected get together to share what is on their minds. Sarvodaya leveraged this activity by introducing the trained interviewer to the *pavul hamuva* to talk to the inhabitants about their aspirations on their future; their opinions on government proposals and plans that deal with their resettlement and rehabilitation; and their knowledge and solutions to various challenges that they face. This project expanded the *pavul hamuvas* online into a *Web Hamuva* where a global audience can get an insight on what the interests of the displaced people are and how they square with what the government has in mind.

Consulting the Tsunami-Affected



Disseminating the views of the Tsunami-affected

LIRNEasia team provided input in the development of the *Webhamuva* website that would host the reports from the tsunami-affected villages. The website has been designed as a weblog (Blog) with a view towards promoting interactivity and participation from interested stakeholders. Ease of navigation is also enhanced by the clean and intuitive design where clicking on the tsunami-affected districts on the map below would take the user to the relevant reports from that district. The number of reports available from the selected districts is also displayed below the map. The text is published with little or no editing to capture the tone and texture of the narrative from the tsunami-affected. Twenty four reports in English from six Tsunami affected districts (Colombo, Kalutara, Matara, Hambantota, Ampara and Trincomalee) were produced. Sinhala versions from three districts were also made available on the website as PDF downloads. As and when reports were submitted from the field, they were uploaded on the www.webhamuva.org website.

About Us

- Colombo (2)
- Kalutara (11)
- Matara (4)
- Hambantota (1)
- Ampara (1)
- Trincomalee (5)
- Sinhala (3)

Sarvodaya, the largest non governmental organization in Sri Lanka, is active all along the affected coast. They have a presence in villages in nearly all the tsunami affected districts, including Colombo, Kalutara, Matara, Hambantota, Jaffna, Ampara, Kalmunai, Batticaloa, Trincomalee and Gampaha. One of the key

Expanding the Pavul Hamuva (family gathering) online

Two newspapers, *Daily Mirror* in English and *Lankadeepa* in Sinhala, covered the *Webhamuva Project* and reported some of the common concerns voiced by the tsunami-affected. Among the issues covered, the newspaper article highlighted the difficulties faced by a number of families who were relocated so deep in the interior that they had difficulties to get to the sea for fishing or send their children to school. After reading that article, a good samaritan donated a few cycles to the affected community.

Extensive report on the Webhamuva Project in the Daily Mirror, January 10, 2006

Mirror Life

Survivors and their GRIEVANCES



Construction of a pre-school at Kalmunai

In Kinniya, Trincomalee, S. Shalique, a fisherman by vocation and the head of a six-member household, says that his family is housed at a school camp. Hot on the heels of the Tsunami, his latest catastrophe is the floods and his house is currently under two feet of water. To add to these woes, the mosquito menace is also perennial.

By Ravi Ladduwahetty

A year has passed since the most devastating experience. Dozens of governmental, non-governmental, and private organizations have spent the past 12 months engaged in projects to rebuild the lives of those who survived the giant waves, but lost their loved ones, homes, or livelihoods to the catastrophe. While these programs have been initiated and run with excellent intentions, there have been many allegations levelled at them. Foremost among these has been that most of them have ignored the suggestions, ideas, and wishes of the affected community. Individuals have expressed that organizations have often come into their villages and distributed items or set up programs according to their own beliefs rather than by making a needs-assessment among the affected people.

Sarvodaya has initiated and activated its development programs at the grassroots level, taking the ideas and suggestions of benefiting people as the foundation of the schemes and their active participation as the main component of the projects. However, the movement recognized that this might not be the way that all organizations conducting post-Tsunami work coordinate their activities. So in a bid to give voice



...Continued Extensive report on the Webhamuva Project in the Daily Mirror, January 10, 2006

In Kinniya, Trincomalee, S. Shafique, a fisherman by vocation and the head of a six- member household, says that his family is housed at a school camp. Hot on the heels of the Tsunami, his latest catastrophe is the floods and his house is currently under two feet of water. To add to these woes, the mosquito menace is also perennial.

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Sarvodaya has initiated and activated its development programs at the grassroots level, taking the ideas and suggestions of benefiting people as the foundation of the schemes and their active participation as the main component of the projects. However, the movement recognized that this might not be the way that all organizations conducting post-Tsunami work coordinate their activities. So in a bid to give voice to the people whose opinions go unheard in the reconstruction work, it set up the Webhamuva program.

Sarvodaya activated the Webhamuva program in 50 Sarvodaya Service villages located in all Tsunami-affected districts. Funded by the World Bank and run by LIRNEasia, this program is essentially an expansion of Sarvodaya's pavul hamuva or "family gathering" tradition to an online-scale. The 'avul hamuva' is a regular gathering of people in Sarvodaya villages at group discussions, where the participants converse about their lives, their village, and its development. Under the Webhamuva program, staff of LIRNEasia visit Tsunami-affected areas and question people about the effects of the tidal wave on their families and the village and the current status of their lives. They record these answers, transcribe and translate them, and publish the text on the regularly-updated website, www.webhamuva.org, which can be accessed by anyone from around the world. This article was written based on some of the ideas expressed on the website by people in the Eastern and Northern provinces.



Prelude to a housing scheme opening at Samudragama

People from the Eastern Province, especially Trincomalee district, were the most voluble about their experiences after the devastation. The cornerstone of the issues at hand is the lack of self employment opportunities, the delay on the part of the government to provide fishing equipment, the stoppage of food stamps, and the lack of bicycles for school children who have to trek vast distances to get to school. The same problems were manifest in the Northern Province as well. Individuals housed in the transit camps made the same observations. They are also disappointed that they did not get funding to replace their lost fishing equipment.

In Kinniya, Trincomalee, S. Shafique, a fisherman by vocation and the head of a six- member household, says that his family is housed at a school camp. Hot

All the reports from the Webhamuva web site were picked up by the Sri Lankan blog aggregator www.kottu.org and were more widely disseminated amongst the Sri Lankan expatriate community living abroad as well as Sri Lankans and aid workers located in Sri Lanka. Some of the reports were also picked up by Global Voices, hosted by the Harvard University, that highlights significant blogs with relevance to the global community.

Global Voices
The world is talking. Are you listening?

HOME ABOUT FAQ FOR BLOGGERS FOR MEDIA SUGGEST RESOURCES SITE FEED

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HUMANITARIAN feed

Recent news

WIKIPEDIA

Saturday, March 25th, 2006

Saddam ruled Iraq." and "we have hope and I see this hope even in the words of those that are cynical about the outcome of the political process". He ends defiantly: "And yes...Iraq will be the model."

Riverbend sees things differently:

"It has been three years since the beginning of the war that marked the end of Iraq's independence. Three years of occupation and bloodshed.

She fears the present:

"The real fear is the mentality of so many people lately- the rift that seems to have worked it's way through the very heart of the country, dividing people. It's disheartening to talk to acquaintances- sophisticated, civilized people-

LINKS

April 6th, 2006

South Asia
Pakistan, Humanitarian

Yasmine profiles the work of Islamic Relief.

You are here...

You are currently browsing the archives for the Humanitarian category.

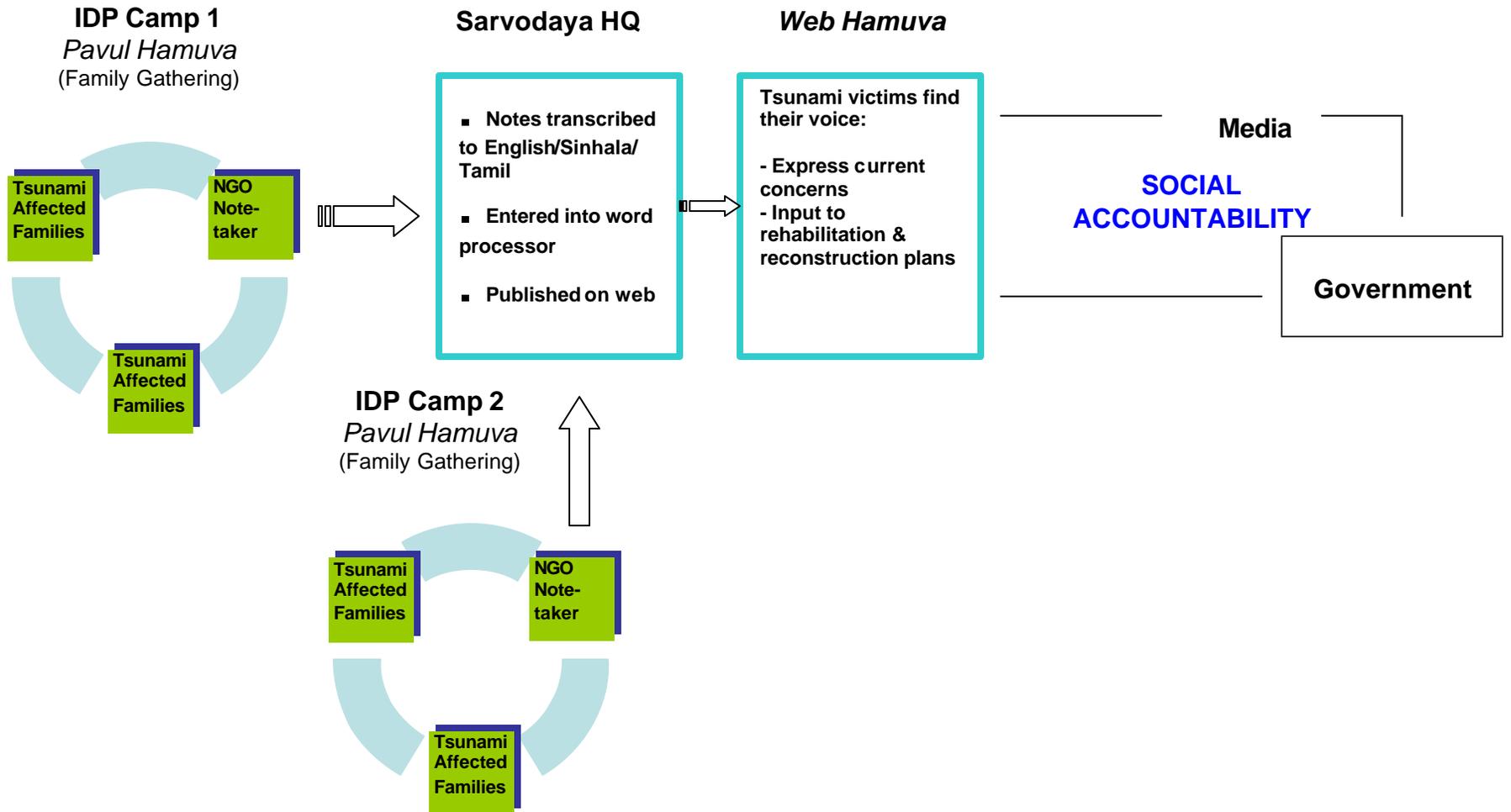
South Asia
Sri Lanka, Humanitarian

Webhamuva has an update from Wadduwa on post-Tsunami reconstruction.

Sub-Saharan Africa
Ethiopia, Food, Humanitarian

Meskel Square posts another report on drought stricken Oromia and Somali regions - a small amount of rain has fallen.

Figure 1. Project Web *Hamuva* Schematically



SHORTCOMINGS

Although the project generated a number of common themes from consultation with the tsunami affected, there were a few shortcomings that the project suffered from. We had expected to receive reports from more villages and in larger numbers. The expectation was that the trained interviewers would file reports on a bi-monthly basis from different villages on a voluntary basis. The budget for this project was not sufficient, despite investing more than double World Bank's initial grant, to pay salaries to the interviewers. The incentive structure did not encourage filing of more reports and hence reports trickled in not a regular basis and in much smaller numbers than was expected.

The second shortcoming observed from this project was that we can make it convenient for journalists by gathering the voices of the tsunami affected in one place (www.webhamuva.org) but we can't determine whether they write news reports based on the common themes that emerge from the interviews. We had brought the website to the attention of a number of journalists, both local and foreign, but the coverage that Webhamuva received was limited. Budget permitting, we would have organized a press conference to highlight the common themes that emerged from the tsunami voices. This would have ensured better media coverage.

The lessons from the above shortcomings indicate that when working with a relatively small budget it is important to keep expectations on project outcomes more realistic.

WEBHAMUVA: TSUNAMI VOICES



COLOMBO DISTRICT

Retrospection of Tsunami Survivors *Dec 23, 2005*

I went to an area affected by the Tsunami and met 39 year old Mr. P. Chandra Fernando. Fernando identified himself as a fisherman, social worker and a community leader. We should appreciate their determination for regaining themselves. Though he is a supporter of leftist politics, he does not approve of government actions. He has protested to the Divisional Secretary against injustices committed. He accuses that relief assistance was not equitably and fairly distributed. He praises Sarvodaya for conceiving the issue properly and correctly. All assistance received consisted of victuals and clothing. They do not wish to get any more of these. What they yearn for is assistance to strengthen their capacities to re-start a normal life.

They have not received anything like boats, fishing gear etc. Most of them suffer due to unemployment. That is a matter, which should receive immediate attention. He thinks that the government should pursue early action to re-settle the people who have expressed their willingness to move away to other safe places. These people may change their minds if action in this regard is delayed. When we asked him about his option he said, " I shall be the last man to leave this beach" .

Thereafter, we met Mrs. K. Ariyawathie Perera. She is 74 years old and is the mother of four children. She lives with her married daughter and sells powdered coffee as self-employment. She resides with six other members of the family in a partially damaged small house. She said that she received nothing but admitted that they received clothing and dry rations from Sarvodaya and Rs. 2500/- and Rs. 5000/- and a ration card from the government. When asked about her plans for self-reliance in the future, she said that her son- in- law is not physically fit to engage in the customary fishing industry and wished for someone to help him to start a retail business.

As her residence is not more that 10 meters away from the sea, she expressed willingness to be re-settled in another place if it is not far off.

It would be a great service if any organization volunteered to renovate their dilapidated house considering their miserable plight.

Tsunami Camp, Moratuwella
December 15, 2005

There were 83 families at the Tsunami camp at Moratuwella, which we had the opportunity to visit. These survivors expressed how they were enduring much hardship due to the unsatisfactory conditions at the camp. A survivor explained " We received temporary houses as a result of our agitation led by Mrs. R.A.D. Thamara. The insufficient number of only 40 tents meant that each tent had two families residing in it. Thereafter a foreigner who visited the area had donated the raw materials for them to build the houses.

It was visibly evident that the structures were not properly built and in turn they faced numerous setbacks. The insufficient number of facilities saw 83 houses being built with only five lavatories established for all of these 83 families. We need not stress on the unavoidable sanitary issues arising as all the occupants of the campsite used these. However it is necessary to say that there are energetic individuals among them who expect only some help to develop their vocations. It is hard to comprehend how the school children residing at the camp can attend to their studies. They said that they are not mentally or physically relaxed to concentrate on their studies, and that they do not have enough space to play.

The residents of the camp urge that they be given land to build their own houses, as economically they are not in a position to purchase land. As journalists we need to draw attention to the authorities about the survivors miserable plight and convince them about the need to help them recover and also prevent unfair treatment in the future.

KALUTARA DISTRICT

Wadduwa Tsunami Update
March 15, 2006

K. Janaki - Station Road, Wadduwa

They're making houses in Weragama for a lot of people. But there are those who aren't getting houses too. The grama sewaka sir says that they will be given somewhere else. But up till now, they haven't got anything. It's the same for us. So we still stay here. We do fishing work, make jardi. Fisher folk were given close-by housing like in Weragama or Mahawadduwa. It's we who still haven't got a solution. There are no more than about twenty who still don't have houses. Four of us families stayed together. My older sister bought a piece

of land and got a house built on it through Seth Sarana. My parents are with my other sister. They stay about 100 meters from the sea. We're about 200 meters from it.

H. Nanny Cooray

We're getting houses from Weragama. It's my daughter who doesn't have a place to stay. The houses were opened, but apparently there are a few things missing in them like electricity and water. Next month, the people in the two front houses are going. We'll have to go to Weragama. But even then, we're going to have to come back here. We raise pigs and chicken. We make jardi. So we have to come back here to do the fishing work. Otherwise, what are we to stay home and do? If we don't earn something to buy that day's food, how are we to live? Some times there are days when we don't have money even to go to Weragama. We have taken loans from societies. Because of the Tsunami, we were given a relief period in which to pay those back. Now that period is over. Now, of course, we have to pay back the full amount. We're in a situation where we can't lift our heads.

Meanwhile the people who live towards the beach ran away even past the railroad saying that another Tsunami is coming. We also stood in the yard and watched. There is a benefit in going to live far away. We'll be able to live without fear. But how will we earn any money then?

The Weragama houses are being constructed with Italian aid. The Father is building houses with German aid. Our government hasn't made a single house for Wadduwa. I read in the "Gnanapradeepa" newspaper that our country was given 700 million rupees of aid. What happened to that?

Larny Padmakanthi - Shri Wickrama Road, Wallebada, Wadduwa

We got semi-damages. Now we live with a lot of difficulty. Now a Tsunami larger than the original Tsunami has happened to us. Except for the Rs.50,000 we haven't gotten any other aid. We don't have a place to live. They haven't taken any step about the 100 meters yet. They're doing everything for those in the 200 meters. Even today I went to the Provincial Secretary's office and asked for some sort of relief. There is no end of illness and sadness. Now I've got sick of it. Wherever we get, I will go now.

Mallika

Now I must have filled about 100 applications. But we haven't got anything. We have fallen to this way like animals. It doesn't matter where this is said. We got some tinned foods. But even those were expired. They give some flour. But it would be much better if we got some rice instead. We live with great difficulty. We asked for a bicycle to sell fish. We didn't get that either.

Pushpawathi Dias

Now I'm fifty-two years old. There you can see my small store on that rising. Even though I've been in the village for fifty-two years, I haven't received anything. Everyday they come and write things down and go. We also say things with the hope that some time we might receive some sort of relief. We took a loan and started this store on a small scale. What else to do?

Dilini Randika

I lost my mother when I was very small. Father went to the Tsunami too. Now I'm seventeen years old. I received Rs.15,000 for Father. I have a younger brother too. Now neither of us goes to school. We stay with an aunt. My brother goes to pull in the fishing nets. We have nothing else.

Sujeeva Priyanthi

This child is one year and five months old. He's ill since the day he was born. He's in the hospital all the time. He can't walk or eat or drink. We only give him liquids through a tube. Even at the time of the Tsunami I was in the hospital with the child. Because of that I didn't receive anything.

Mallika

At the time of the Tsunami we were in the Vijaya Kumarathunga Theater. A foreign gentleman gave money saying to give Rs. 200 to each person. Even that money was not given to some people and stolen. We were left destitute. We can't send our children to school. They say that school children were given bank savings books with Rs. 250, Rs. 500 in them. But our children didn't get this. At election time, they make a lot of promises to us. But after that they forget us. We don't even have a place to go. The only place we have left to go is the cemetery.

Athagama Tsunami Update March 14, 2006

K. Charlotte Silva - Janaprabodha Avenue, Athagama

Our houses were destroyed. We have still not been given homes. We got full damages. We stay in a house that our son rented on Galle Road. Our son does fishing work. We're going to receive housing from what World Vision is building. There are apparently eighty-six houses there. There are about five to seven houses in a row. They are in Parangiawatta. Oh, we can't stay in flats, no. The length is 525. They're supposed to be dividing this half to the top, half to the bottom. Then it's two hundred something for the top and two hundred

something for the bottom. What's the point of housing like that? They're giving for free, that's true. But they're useless for us. The Red Cross is giving good houses. Even if we go to those houses, we have to come back here.

P. Dayawathi Silva

Even though we stay here during the day, we go to our cousin's place for the night. She lives close by. This house is also completely damaged. The doors and windows are cracked. The walls are the same. Everything that could happen did happen to us. Not even the smallest thing was left behind. Now, of course, it's very difficult to get up. Even if we got housing in Parangiwatta, that was just another difficulty for us. It's just another thing to get us in trouble. This is a thing that's being done to get rid of their responsibilities. Because they're apparently making flats about seven connected to each other. The two floors are for two families. So there'll be fighting about everything. We are losing all our independence because of this. We don't know what kind of people we'll fall next to. Also, we'll be unable to leave a girl child in house by herself even in an emergency. We feel that we'll fall into a great difficulty.

Here we have even a coconut branch or a coconut husk fallen here or there. When we go there, we don't have anything. To say it short, we won't even have a yard. So how can we stay like that as if we've been put in cages? I, of course, don't like to go there. But because we're scared to stay here, we're going to have to go. Whatever said and done, I can't even start talking about what this Tsunami has done to us.

We're Buddhist. Most of the people in this area are Christian. This Tsunami did one good thing. It brought together Christians and Buddhists. When the Christian father took the service on January 1st apparently he told everyone to go and worship the priest at the temple and come first. At the same time when the houses are distributed, the priest is sent for and the keys are distributed through him. Now the Christians are thinking a lot about how well the priest treated everyone at the time of the Tsunami. When the father is opening the houses, he always specially thanks the priest. This is a big thing.

Kalamulla Tsunami Update March 13, 2006

In Kalamulla, where Sarvodaya completed twenty-two houses, there are only a few more individuals left without homes. The priest of the church has also made arrangements to build houses behind the Catholic church for about fifteen people from the villages of Kalamulla and Katukurunda who are staying in temporary shelters. When these houses were distributed, some of the folk from Katukurunda had rejected them saying they could not live as neighbors with people from Kalamulla because they believe they're cruel. Hence, the

priest has made arrangements to give these houses too, to people from Kalamulla. There are about eighty houses on this property and each of them has been built on ten perches of land. When this housing scheme is entered from the direction of Kalamulla, there is a sign saying that the place consists of Bungary (?) Tsunami houses while the sign at the entrance from the direction of Athagama says that this is an American Tsunami housing scheme. Mrs. Wimala Perera, an inhabitant of the village, stated that the priest built these houses with foreign funding. Mrs. Perera resides very close to the housing scheme.

"It's been only two or three days since these people came to stay in these houses," she said. "Since the day they came, they play cassettes very loudly. There was a party even yesterday. We can't sleep at night because there is so much noise. I guess they can't let go of their old habits. But we have a child who is to sit for the exam. He can't study. How can one concentrate and study when there is this much noise? We're scared about what'll happen in the future."

One of the individuals who had come to reside in these houses from Katukurunda has started a small store. She is W.D. Patima Indrani. She stays in the house with her married daughter and one-year-old grandchild. "We lived in Katukurunda near the Sebastian church at not even a distance of two meters from the sea," she said. "We came here after we stayed temporarily in the Depot land after the Tsunami. They gave houses after choosing the poorest five families staying in the Depot land. However, we don't have ownership of these houses. Until two years pass, the priest can do whatever he wants. Also, except for what has been constructed in this house, we can't make any additions with even wood boards. We can't make a small shack in the yard to put this store or make a kitchen. That's why we put the store inside the house itself. Now we don't have anyone from whom we can even ask for an axe to split firewood. Even a small bundle of firewood costs five rupees. In this house, all we can do is cook and eat food. Until five years pass, they won't even hand it completely to us."

Trilicia Nimali is a recipient of one of the Sarvodaya houses. Violently ill, she spends her time in a sick bed. Her story was a complete contrast to the previous one. "All this time I was in the Colombo hospital," she said. "One of my kidneys has gone bad. My whole body is swollen. They're still doing tests, but I couldn't get the most necessary ones done. For more than two months, I've been unable to do the necessary tests to get the correct treatment. The whole time I was in the hospital I remembered home. This house was built for us by Sarvodaya. Those days we stayed here in a shelter we put up with plastic sheeting, metal sheets, and cardboard. Ms. Soma from Sarvodaya saw how the child was eating sitting on the sand and was very saddened by it."

"For me this is like a palace," she continued. "What I'm sad about is that I can't keep the house beautifully. We fell a lot because of this illness. Even

though I said my thanks when the houses were given, I feel it was not enough. I could not mention everyone's names. So I thought that I should get together with everyone in the twenty-two houses, bring all the Sarvodaya officials here, and thank them properly. I was unable to do this too. This is a great burden for me." She started to cry. "I thank all the officials, especially Mr. Upali, Mr. Somasiri, and Mr. Premachandra for doing so much for our village. Not just because Sarvodaya gave me a house. When I fell ill, Mr. Premachandra came to see me and gave me funding to cover some of the treatment costs. I can't understand how I can pay back these officials."

"I could not go for the meetings of the SSS. They're done well. They're doing a nutrition program too. I will never forget the help Sarvodaya has given me," she said as she lay in her sick bed.

We also heard that a group that had come to the Roman Catholic school in the village had computerized a record of who had received the Rs.5,000 compensation.

N.B.

If there is anyone who can extend some kind of financial or other support to the chairman of the Kalamulla SSS, Ms. Trilicia Nimali De Silva, who is suffering from an extreme form of kidney disease, we request that you step up as soon as possible to save her life.

Thalpitiya Tsunami Update March 10, 2006

There are signs that the housing problem in the Wadduwa Thalpitiya village, which was destroyed by the Tsunami, is gradually getting solved. We learned that some of the folk from this village are having houses constructed for them in a place called Weragama. One of the beneficiaries of these houses, W.D. Premawathi, had these ideas:

"We're getting houses permanently from Weragama. However we can't tell when we'll be given them. It is very far from here to there. We have to go by bus to the area they call the Weragama Housing Scheme. There is only one bus on that road, that also only at some times. Weragama is on a side road off the Galle Road. So we have to go by three-wheeler. Even for the bus, a lot of money goes. We do fishing work. There they are building houses on ten perches for each. That's good for us. I'm thinking of doing a self-employment activity when I go there. It'll be too much trouble to come here for the fishing work. When the houses are complete, buses will be put, stores will come up, and the area will develop. They're apparently building houses for 130 over there. Now in our village there are no more than seven who don't have houses. I, of course, say that getting houses in Weragama is a good thing."

Mrs. Sujatha Perera runs a small teashop in this village. She says that since the Tsunami a lot of societies have formed in the village and that the majority of these are women's societies. She states that very recently another new society was formed. "After the Tsunami, our village has two or three women's societies," she said. "The new society is called "Netmin." We have to save Rs.10 each. Now almost unknowingly I've already saved about Rs.90. This society came to the village across the Grama Sewaka sir. They have made plans to do a beach conservation program in the future. They said that they'd purchase about 300 mangrove plants like wetakeyya, gansuriya, and kottamba and give them to us. Then they're going to introduce a self-employment training program in the village. They said that they're going to give training in areas like mat-weaving and seashells without limiting participation by age. Even though they collect seashells in this area, now there is no one to sell them to. Also the current situation shows that mat-weaving is dying out. This society is working to give a prominent place to activities like that. This society is going to make a building for the bank in the near future too. A lot of people from north and south Thalpitiya have joined this society."

"However many societies there are, I don't think any of them are as strong as Sarvodaya," Mrs. Perera continued. "Sarvodaya is an international organization. It's very strong, no. It is through the Tsunami that even we learned of Sarvodaya. It was they who even made houses for the village. I don't think any other organization is as strong. So however many societies are formed, it won't erode the people's belief in Sarvodaya. They work with everything to do in the village."

The information we received from Somawathi Dharmasena, Karunawathi Perera, and Jayanthi Perera showed that the drug problem is still rife in the village while the villagers had also not found a solution to their water problem.

Before the Tsunami every person did some kind of job. However when things were handed out free of charge after the Tsunami, people adapted too easily to this new lifestyle. Even when a society gives out loans, the recipients castigate them by saying that they're loaning out money that was given as Tsunami aid. They do not understand anything correctly. Sarvodaya has sent five O/L students and two teachers to Kalutara for training. These statements were made by Mrs. Sujatha Perera.

She further went onto say that currently a group of about thirty foreigners are at the Sarvodaya Kalutara District Center and that after February 15th they would be dispersed to various villages. She said that at a Sarvodaya Shramadana Society meeting, it had been stated that these days the group is participating in a workshop in Galle and that eventually some of them would come to Thalpitiya to stay in a few selected homes in the village and participate in a volunteer program with the Thalpitiya temple and Sarvodaya.

She said that this group consists of American university students and that they have come here for a program in their final year of study. She said that a similar group had come and stayed at the Thalpitiya school before and that one of the gentlemen in the group had taught English to the students.

Mixed Bag of Fortune: Wadduwa and Thalpitiya ***March 9, 2006***

This article was written based on interviews conducted in the villages of Thalpitiya and Wadduwa in Kalutara district. A number of families in these villages are having houses built for them in an area called Weragama, located some distance from the sea. There are about 130 houses coming up at this location.

The eventual Thalpitiya beneficiaries are looking forward to the day they will receive them, but they have worries too. They wonder when they will finally get the houses and are also concerned about the situation that will arise once they do. This is mostly due to the distance of the new housing from where they reside now. Those engaged in fishing work will have to travel a long distance to do their old work. One of the beneficiaries, W.D. Premawathi, plans to stop fishing work and start some sort of self-employment activity.

It is difficult for them to travel to the new place right now because there is only a single bus, which goes in that direction, and even this costs more money than they can afford. Since the housing scheme is placed on a side road off Galle Road they also have to get down from the bus and walk a great distance.

However the recipients are hopeful about their situation. "When the houses are complete, buses will be put, stores will come up, and the area will develop," says Premawathi. She is also happy that each house is placed on ten perches of land. She says that the housing problem in the village is gradually being solved and that there are now no more than about seven families who still need houses in Thalpitiya.

The housing dilemma in the village might gradually be lifting, but the hamlet now faces new troubles. Some of the villagers say that there is a large drug problem in the area and that they also find it difficult to find water for their daily needs. They also note how the Tsunami has had a negative impact on the attitude of people. "Before the Tsunami every person did some kind of job," says Sujatha Perera, who runs a small teashop in the village. "However when things were handed out free of charge after the Tsunami, people adapted too easily to this new lifestyle. Even when a society gives out loans, the recipients castigate them by saying they're loaning out money that was given as Tsunami aid. They do not understand anything correctly."

Some families from Wadduwa too, are receiving housing in Weragama. But they face the same worry as those from Thalpititiya: the distance from their current place of residence to the new housing. H. Nanny Cooray says that the new housing is not ready because they do not have electricity and water yet, but these are expected to be completed in the next two months. "We'll have to go to Weragama," she says. "But even then, we're going to have to come back here. We raise pigs and chicken. We make jardi. So we have to come back here to do the fishing work. Otherwise, what are we to stay home and do? If we don't earn something to buy that day's food, how are we to live?"

However, she says that they also live in a lot of fear that another Tsunami will come and this will be one benefit of going to live far away.

She has other worries on her mind. Even though she is getting a house, her daughter still does not have a place to stay. She is also finding it difficult to pay back loans that she took to develop her business before the Tsunami. Due the tidal wave, they were given a relief period in which to pay it back, but that period is now over and they have to pay back the full amount. "We're in a situation where we can't lift our heads," she says.

There are others in Wadduwa who still haven't received housing. K. Janaki says that the grama sewaka had promised that everyone would be given housing, but they have still not received any. Larny Padmakanthi, who lives within the 100 meter zone and whose house received semi-damages, complains that no step has been taken yet about the people who reside there. "We don't have a place to live," she says. "There is no end of illness and sadness. Now I've got sick of it. Wherever we get, I will go now."

Mallika claims that she has filled a countless number of applications to receive any kind of relief, but has got nothing. She says that they are now living like animals without proper food or shelter. Meanwhile fifty-two-year-old Pushpawathi Dias is trying to rebuild her life by running a small store. She also says that she has not received enough relief. "Everyday they come and write things down and go," she says. "We also say things with the hope that some time we might receive some sort of relief. We took a loan and started this store on a small scale. What else to do?"

Seventeen-year-old Dilini Randika's problems are far graver. Having lost her mother at a young age, she lost her father too, in the Tsunami. Now she and her younger brother live with an aunt and neither of them no longer go to school. All they have received is Rs.15,000 as compensation for their father. Now her brother goes to pull in the fishing nets from the sea.

Mallika says that there has been a lot cheating in the distribution of aid to the affected. She goes on to say that she has received no help from non-governmental organizations or from the government. "At election time, they

make a lot of promises to us," she says. "But after that they forget us. We don't even have a place to go. The only place we have left to go is the cemetery."

New Houses Bring Mixed Reactions ***March 8, 2006***

More than a year has lapsed since the most devastating experience in Sri Lankan history. Dozens of governmental, non-governmental, and private organizations have spent the past fourteen months engaged in projects to rebuild the lives of those who survived the giant waves, but lost their loved ones, homes, or livelihoods to the catastrophe. While these programs have been initiated and run with excellent intentions, there have been many allegations leveled at them. Foremost among these has been that most of them have ignored the suggestions, ideas, and wishes of the affected community. Individuals have expressed that organizations have often come into their villages and distributed items or set up programs according to their own beliefs rather than by making a needs-assessment among the affected people.

In Kalamulla, Sarvodaya has completed twenty-two houses while the Catholic priest has utilized foreign aid to build houses behind the church for about fifteen families. These houses were distributed among people staying in temporary shelters in both Kalamulla and Katukurunda. The houses are situated on a property that has about eighty houses, each of them standing on ten perches of land. The beneficiaries moved into their new homes recently, but this change has not been beneficial to everyone.

Mrs. Wimala Perera resides very close to the new housing scheme. She says that her new neighbors are too noisy and that this is great disturbance to everyone in the area. "It's been only two or three days since these people came to stay in these houses," she says. "Since the day they came, they play cassettes very loudly. There was a party even yesterday. We can't sleep at night because there is so much noise. I guess they can't let go of their old habits. But we have a child who is to sit for the exam. He can't study. How can one concentrate and study when there is this much noise? We're scared about what'll happen in the future."

Some of the beneficiaries do not seem to be happy with their situation either. W.D. Patima Indrani lived a few meters from the sea near the Sebastian church in Katukurunda before the Tsunami. She, her daughter, and one-year-old grandchild stayed in a temporary shelter before they came to their new home. She complains that even though they've been allowed to stay in the houses, they have not been given complete ownership of them. She also says that they can't make any additions to their new homes. She earns her daily living now by running a small store within her home. She wanted to build a small shack in the

yard to house the store, but was not allowed to do so. So she runs the store from inside her home. She also feels that her move from her old village to Kalamulla has left her family alone. "Now we don't have anyone from whom we can even ask for an axe to split firewood," she says.

Trilicia Nimali is a recipient of one of the Sarvodaya houses and her attitude towards the gift she has received is far different. After the Tsunami, she stayed in a shelter her family put up with plastic sheeting, metal sheets, and cardboard, but was fortunate to receive a new house. "For me this is like a palace," she says. "What I'm sad about is that I can't keep the house beautifully." She says this because she has been afflicted with a kidney disease. She spent most of the time during which her family was constructing the house ill in hospital and is bed-ridden even now.

She is the chairman of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Society in the village and worked tirelessly for the organization before she fell ill. When she was first struck with the illness, officials from the Kalutara center of the organization helped her financially. However, as the costs of treatment have stretched out, her family has found it difficult to cover them. Trilicia has been unable to get the necessary tests done for the past two months because she could not find the money. Due to this, the treatment necessary for her illness is eluding her.

However, this is not her biggest worry. "We fell a lot because of this illness," she says. "Even though I said my thanks when the houses were given, I feel it was not enough. I could not mention everyone's names. So I thought that I should get together with everyone in the twenty-two houses, bring all the Sarvodaya officials here, and thank them properly. I was unable to do this too. This is a great burden for me." She starts to cry.

"I thank all the officials," she continues. "Especially Mr. Upali, Mr. Somasiri, and Mr. Premachandra for doing so much for our village. Not just because Sarvodaya gave me a house. When I fell ill, Mr. Premachandra came to see me and gave me funding to cover some of the treatment costs. I can't understand how I can pay back these officials."

She goes onto talk about the relief work that is being done in the village. Even though she can no longer take direct part in it, she listens to others' stories about it and rejoices by herself from her sick bed.

In Athagama a lot of people are having houses built for them by World Vision in an area called Parangiwatta. They complain that the houses are being built all together with five to seven in a single row. The top floor of each house will be assigned to one family while the bottom floor will be given to another. "What's the point of housing like that?" says K. Charlotte Silva. "They're giving for free, that's true. But they're useless for us."

She says that if they go there, they will still have to return to where they are now to do the fishing work. This is just another worry for them.

P. Dayawathi Silva claims the same. Her house was completely damaged and not a single possession of hers was left behind. They stay there during the day and go to a cousin's place to spend the night. "It's just another thing to get us in trouble," she says about the housing they will receive in Parangiwatta. "This is a thing that's being done to get rid of their responsibilities. Because they're apparently making flats about seven connected to each other. The two floors are for two families. So there'll be fighting about everything. We're losing all our independence because of this. We don't know what kind of people we'll fall next to. Also, we'll be unable to leave a girl child in house by herself even in an emergency. We feel that we'll fall into a great difficulty."

She says that they'll not even have a yard to call their own in the new housing scheme and questions how they can live like they've been put in cages. However, at the same time they're scared to stay where they are now and so they will go whenever the houses are ready. "I can't even start talking about what this Tsunami has done to us," she says.

Dayawathi does feel that the Tsunami brought one benefit. "This Tsunami did one good thing," she says. "It brought together Christians and Buddhists. This is a big thing." She says that the Christians haven't forgotten how the priest at the temple took care of everyone at the time of the tidal wave and that each time the Christian priest conducts an opening ceremony of a new housing scheme he thanks the Buddhist priest. Dayawathi claims that this has been the only good thing that has happened to the village since the Tsunami.

Payagala Tsunami Update March 6, 2006

Mrs. GM Daisy Fernando - Payagala North (Naiwatta)

A year has passed after the Tsunami came. With the help of the Father rather than the government houses were built first of all for those outside the 100 meters. With the help of NGOs, organizations like Sethsara, Red Cross, Joyce Bank, and Sarvodaya built and gave permanent houses. Brothers from the Sewa Lanka organization gave temporary shelters for about six months. Those people too, got permanent homes after six months. The government gave Rs. 5,000, dry goods worth Rs. 200 etc. People have got up again through self-employment activities. Bit by bit, we have returned to some sort of level now. We have come somewhat to the previous level. The government gave 2.5 lakhs for the second time too. We are fisher folk. Now we do the old work in the same way. It was because of the welfare centers that it was difficult for the government to help us. But now everything is good.

Chamitha Dodangoda

Through the coordination of Mr. Sumith Rupasinghe of the OWOP organization a Japanese lady named Mrs. Nojasa (a preschool principal) built a preschool on a land of mine and opened it on January 16th. The Sarvodaya president took part in that ceremony. I had a preschool in my house in Naiwatta. I run another school privately in Angangoda too. This Sarvodaya preschool is in the Nagoda Pitagoneliya area. Because of this now I act as the head of three preschools. Six teachers work under me, two in each school. I, who was greatly affected by the Tsunami, have come to this level through a lot of hard work.

The Red Cross has also done a large service for Payagala. They have built about forty houses for those whose houses were completely destroyed. Father Cartas is coordinating the building of homes for those who suffered part-damages. Seth Sarana, Hela Urumaya have made 100 houses for the village. Indravansha Thera from the Sapugoda Viharaya is helping to solve these problems. Things are much better than they used to be. World Vision is also doing a great job.

PD Shriyani

A sister from Kurunegala bought lands for about sixteen people from the Ullorawatta near the water tank. The Red Cross and a bank built houses and gave on that land. The Franciscan from the orphanage gave 3.75 lakhs. They got the house made. Even though they've been given light and water too, they're not going to these houses. They still stay next to the railroad. They stay here during the day and go to the houses in the night. They're also supposed to be taking the things they get and putting it in the houses. They're staying here to get more things. While they have houses there, there are rumors that they're building more houses here in the 100 meters too. They're very cunning people. However much they take, it's not enough for them. They live through complete dishonesty. No one is honest. There are even some who have given the house that was given to the head of the household to the children and now say that they have received nothing. It's a disgustingly unfair world.

Ranjani

A madam named Marianne from Rajagiriya gave both lands and houses to seven people from Sagara Avenue. Through the father, those houses have been completed very well with sinks and tiles and even pantry cupboards. At the time of the Tsunami, that madam has come to see those at Kalvariya, that is how those seven have got the houses. The priest has also given houses to five people who stayed at Mallegoda Temple to the end saying they have nowhere to go.

Thalpitiya and Wadduwa Tsunami Update December 15, 2006

Bodhi Drudaramaya

Sunethra Gunathilaka

(Between the railroad and the sea quite close to the water)

At this month's meeting, the Sarvodaya organization said that they would give loans of Rs. 5,000 for self-employment activities. Twenty people were chosen for this. Not for groups. Loans are given individually. That system is good. Taking loans as a group brings problems. I will take a loan the next time. Even now I'm doing a self-employment. I bring saris from Colombo and sell them to the foreigners who come to the Bluewater Hotel. I tear each sari into three pieces and sew the separate pieces so that they can be worn as cloths.

In this area, in addition to the work in the sea, coconut-plucking, sale of flower pots, small shops, etc. are done. We do everything with the constant fear that the Tsunami will come. Our things, clothes are still stocked together. There is no way to keep a house beautifully, neatly. I can't think when we will be freed from these problems.

Some people got the Rs. 5,000 the government is giving even for the second time. However, we did not get it. The ralahamy in this area gave each house two saris, five toffee packets, and five noodles packets. The ralahamy on the other side is said to have distributed tinned food. This time they said they're giving us rice. However, this hasn't happened yet. The cooperative does not distribute goods with any order. We got forty-five kilos of flour. Others were told that the flour is finished and given a sack of rice. Both groups should have just been given rice and flour equally. How are we to bring forty-five kilos of flour and eat it? Also, we have heard that recently, the sacks of rice the cooperative had brought had become moldy and they got rid of it. This is real wastage, no.

K.A. Nandani - 32 years

(Near the railroad between 150-160 meters)

It was after the Tsunami that the Sarvodaya organization was started here. I am in the organization right from the beginning. Our village was received part-damages. All the walls in the house are cracked. The roof-tiles, windows, and toilets are damaged. From the aid we got, we fixed these. I did a small grocery store. Even all the goods in the store went.

I do the store again. I do it after taking a loan of Rs. 50,000 from the People's Bank. My husband does woodwork. He fixes old furniture.

We did not get anything from Sarvodaya. They came, looked, took photos, and left. That's all. I go to the meeting every day. They said they would give a loan of Rs. 5,000. That can bring two sacks of rice. For that also there's fighting. So we're waiting to take it in the second round. People who bought goods before the Tsunami had been in debts of Rs. 1,000, Rs. 2,000, Rs. 3,000 to the store. Even though we ask hem, they are not paying this back. Now I do the store with all of that loss.

H.W. Rosaline

My daughter is the Sarvodaya treasurer. We helped Sarvodaya a lot. After the Tsunami, young people came and stayed in various places to spray the wells. When they said that they could not make porridge in the dhamma school, I took on the responsibility. Each day, I scraped about ten to fifteen coconuts, cleaned about fifteen bunches of *mukunuwenna* leaves, and made this porridge and gave. The young people brought the ingredients to me. Lunch too, was cooked by me. We helped Sarvodaya that much. I told my husband to get a sewing-machine for my elder daughter. She is not even married yet. My younger daughter, Gayani, she is the treasurer of the organization. She stays in the same house as us. She's the one who looks after us too. We can't be a burden to others forever, no. We should also have a way to live. Even when foreigners come, they give only to some. We live in a corner, no. So we can't even be seen. Even now, tinned foods have been given in that Wadduwa area. Today, we have not got even that. Tinned foods have been given in Moratuwa too. These things are given in such an astounding manner. There is a place called World Vision at that junction. They've given many things, even bicycles and gas stoves. I went to Gangaramaya in Hunupitiya and talked about this too. They said they would come, but thus far, they haven't.

Gayani Kumari (Treasurer)

I stay in my parents' house. We have bought a piece of land near the Galle Road and are building a house now. We are building this using the Rs. 100,000 the government gave. The things that were lost though are still like that. Our financial position is also just the same. Recently they said they're give self-employment loans to ten people. I am also planning on starting to make flower-pots again. Sarvodaya chose three government employees to whom they gave packages of goods. World Vision is giving sewing machines.

Since three American gentlemen were to come here to stay, three houses including the chairman's had been chosen for them to stay in. They have said that if the house is complete with only a lack of toilets, they will make them with bathrooms. We learned this only later. They looked at my house, said that

a bathroom is missing, and chose a different house. That person is not even a Sarvodaya person. Because they're taking the house, they made her a member.

W.H. Sujatha - 27 years

(Between the Galle Road and the railroad near the rail tracks. About 225 meters from the sea.)

Now the water problem in this area was solved. The road problem still has to be solved. When taken in general, the people in front of this road have no water. There are people who received government aid and there are those who did not. Sarvodaya asked for a list about toilets (those that were damaged, the houses that did not have any.) This was not solved yet either. Among the basic problems is water as well as toilets. Most toilets in this area, due to the Tsunami have got filled with water and are overflowing. This is the problem that really needs to be solved. The people who stayed in this area went to eight temporary houses in Modarawila. However, they come here in the morning and shower and wash their clothes and go to Modarawila only in the afternoon. They say that it is very difficult to stay there. The water and sanitation problem is very severe there. To use the toilet, one has to wake up at least at five in the morning and stay in the line.

People who stayed in places like Korawella, Egoda Uyana, and Panadura Bunt also stay in Modarawila now. Apparently they have used the areas near their shelters as toilets and made them very dirty. The people who lived here might have stayed in small homes, but they were not used to living like shanty-dwellers. They were people who lived well. Now it has become a mud hole there. These are people who lived very peacefully with us in the village. They say that they are not used to this kind of living. There are even people who use drugs. They are scared to leave their girl children by themselves. They are living a very hard life now. Additionally, people who go to sea have to come here. They have to bring their children and come. So when they come in the morning, they go back only in the night.

I have that problem about houses for the five people who are coming from America too. They asked me since the bathrooms in our house are good, whether we can make some rooms and give. I said I would complete that work by January. However, since they need to complete it by November and take photos and send, they have chosen another house. The house of someone who is on the executive committee. They are now making the house for him. I asked why they did not choose our house when we even said we would make it and give. Then they said that this area is not safe and the environment is polluted.

Common ideas

We all have a very big problem in common. There is a drug business in this area now. It is done out in the open itself. However, people are silent. It is the people who come forward who will have to go from police station to police station. There is no difference between night and day, outsiders are constantly coming here to buy drugs. They are helped by the police and politically. We live in great fear. Also, a brothel is run in the same house. Along with this business, they are doing a lot of burglary in this area too.

We have brothers, children. We need to keep them safe. We need to solve this problem and stop it from destroying our village. Only a common organization can solve this problem. We are ready to come forward to do anything to stop this. It is small girls of about twenty who have come. This is very dangerous. Please help us quickly in solving this problem.

Kuuda Payagala Tsunami Update December 12, 2005

Included is a series of testimonials from workers and inhabitants of tsunami affected areas in Kalutara. Some notable concerns include the preponderance of photo-ops and lack of actual support, uneven distribution of aid, fear of future tsunamis and the desire to restart livelihoods, now a year after the tsunami. All six stories are compelling accounts from people directly affected by the tsunami.

Champa Dodameegoda (Preschool Head / Treasurer of Sarvodaya)

We made observations to choose recipients of houses. In the last few days we drew up a list of mothers to whom we will give training in baking cakes and puddings and sewing clothes. About fifteen names were put forward. Someone who has a diploma in this area came forward to lead this workshop. We also obtained details to provide solar panels as a pilot project. We got about seventeen names for this too. We called a meeting of the people for whom we're definitely making houses. On November 10th, we put the foundations for five houses. We promised the laborers that we would pay them after we got the vouchers. They are thanking us with great happiness. We have got about five lakhs each for 130 houses. Since they heard about it, more people are coming. However, we have made definite only thirty-six houses.

Ms. Pradeepa from the UNICEF organization came to meet us towards organizing a family health nurses council. They said that Rs. 10,000 had been annually allocated towards children's programs and they needed to plan councils of small children, youth, and mothers who were caught to the Tsunami. They asked me get the help of eight A level students and two government primary school teachers and head this children's program.

One of my former students in the preschool, Sumedha Krishan Pincho, is now a Year 8 student at Prince of Wales College in Moratuwa. He participated in a speech contest titled "How We Children Faced the War" and obtained first place. Children from twelve districts including war torn areas like Batticaloa and Trincomalee took part in this competition. The "Iama pravardana" (??) unit of Sarvodaya in Moratuwa organized this competition. This child received his award at the BMICH. He also got the opportunity to go to Sweden.

W.D.S.J. Kithudasa

(Janatha Avenue, Payaagala North, Payaagala, about 120-125 meters from the sea

Our house got part-damages. We completely removed the walls, put roof tiles and windows and are making it now. We have got only the Rs. 100,000 from the government. We got even that after putting up a big fight. Even though we have got nothing in this area, they have given really well on the Galle Road. They distribute in various ways. The sea is only about 120 to 125 meters from here. It is about 400 to 450 meters to the road. It is people who have not even seen the sea who got the distributed goods. Here is the water level. Water came past the level of the roof, about seven feet high. We have no other land or houses so we will have to stay right here. On the twelfth, three gentlemen from the army came and showed us how to act thoughtfully if another Tsunami came. They said that they would look after us. I work in the Railway Department in Moratuwa. They said I am a government employee and did not give me the Rs. 5,000. We did not get any relief from the Railway Department either. They did not pay us for the days we stayed home either. We fixed that also after writing petitions. They say that they will give everything. However, the government is like that. Lecturers from Pafrel, World View, Human Rights, and Colombo Campus came and held discussions for about five hours. They recorded it and went. Now it's been about four months. There were a few results from it. One month we got rice rations. That was cut earlier from everyone. At first we got one for four months. Then they gave it for ten weeks.

Sarvodaya was started at our house. The preschool was also here and the preschool head stayed here until the Tsunami. However, we did not get anything. One year before the Tsunami, we built and gave a separate building for the preschool. Sarvodaya has even given to houses that did not receive huge damage. When we go to say things about this, we just bring problems to ourselves. At the beginning we too, got tents and the goods that were distributed earlier (Salmon tins.) That was all we got even from Sarvodaya. There are all sorts of people, no. It's better to just stay aside. Our children made the second lane of the Janatha Avenue crossroads by *shramadana*. Everyone in our family left Sarvodaya. The young people who came for the *shramadana* from Sarvodaya organizations in areas like Panadura, Aluthgama,

and Wadduwa stayed in our home. We worked that much for Sarvodaya. Now of course, we have left and keep to ourselves.

In this area, about 1,200 houses were completely damaged. The church has bought a piece of land and is building two-story homes in it. A lot of people have got houses. About ten to fifteen people from this area have been given houses. Another Tsunami is supposed to come. When they said that it would come on March 28th, no one stayed in this area. We went far from the Galle Road and stayed in various places. A few of us men got together and kept watch over these houses. If we lose even the meager amount of things we have, who are we to tell? Now of course, we live in great fear.

S.P. Manju Prasanna

(Kuda Payaagala, Payaagala, about 125 meters from the sea)

(A differently-able youth who uses a wheelchair. Age 24.)

In 1996, when I was an O Level student, I fell from about 25 feet while helping put up a pandol in my school and broke a bone in my spine. Now my legs are paralyzed. This stopped my education. They have done everything that they can to fix my injury as much as possible. They have said that it can't be fixed any further. When I was doing exercises to fix my legs at the Maahata Rehabilitation Center, I got the wheelchair. Our father is not there. It is our elder brother who bears all the expenses. Our house was partly damaged. We are now fixing the house with the Rs. 100,000 the government gave.

At the time of the Tsunami, I was not at home. My grandmother and brother were not there either. So we were safe. He is attached to the Susumina Peshange organization in Ragama. This is a motor machine company. A gentleman bought me ten perches from Waskaduwa. It would be a great help if I could get some assistance to build a house. Each year since 1999, I have taken part in a wheelchair marathon. I can also throw the javelin about 100 to 200 meters far and complete a twenty-one mile marathon. In 2000, I took part in a marathon to choose people to go to races in Korea and Japan and even got chosen to the final team of five. However, because I could not afford the tickets, I lost that chance.

After the Tsunami, I joined Sarvodaya. However, we did not get even a tent cloth. We did not even have a mat to sleep on. A foreigner gentleman gave us two food packets. That's all. Some people display me, show my disabled status, and do things for their own benefit. Various organizations come and take photos and go. For this I have received nothing except for a biscuit or a soft drink. I asked for a three-wheeler that I could drive easily. However, I'm not getting one. It is difficult for me to do a job with outsiders. We do not have appropriate living conditions, especially regarding toilets. What we really need

is a way to earn. Even if there wasn't the Tsunami, miss can see that people need to help me.

Ayesha Ranasinghe (Anton Nihal Ranasinghe)

(Their home is situated about 250 meters from the sea.)

Our house was not completely destroyed. The things were washed away. My husband works abroad. Not even a spoon or a cup was left. We got the Rs. 100,000 given by the government. We got two handouts of Rs. 5,000. We even got the last stamp book last week. Neither the churches nor Sarvodaya nor the Red Cross gave anything. Since my husband is abroad, everyone says that we have enough. So we did not go to those lines to fight for things either. Water came up to about six or seven feet in our house. We did not get anything even from Sethsarana. They did not come to inquire from us. We did not go to ask for anything from them either. With god's help, I somehow get something. I don't want to fight and take anything. There were good things in the kitchen of our house. All of that was stolen because we stayed somewhere else for a number of months. Nevertheless, I must restart my life somewhere. However, what was lost at the beginning cannot be made up.

Mercy Matilda

(North Payaagala, Payaagala, about 125 meters from the sea)

I am forty-two years old. I have four children. My eldest son is a salesman at the Arpico in Kalutara. Earlier we lived in a place across the rail tracks. Our father earlier worked for Mr. Sunil Thanapath. That gentleman lives in that big house over there in front of our house. After our house was destroyed, he gave us this land. Sewa Lanka gave me cement and wood boards to make a temporary house. Everything in this house is things that we got after the Tsunami. The table, chairs, and cupboard are from the church and the bed, small table, small cupboard, and two chairs are from Sewa Lanka. These two chairs also broke. The fan, radio, pillows, sheets, mosquito nets, torches, and clocks were also given by Sewa Lanka. I joined Sarvodaya about two weeks ago so I received a tent cloth, mat, and solar panel from them.

My husband has always gone fishing by using other people's boats. We get only a quarter of the catch. On some days, we do not earn even Rs. 200. Some days he comes empty-handed. When there is fish, there is a lot of fish. When there isn't, there is nothing. There are times when we go for even two weeks without anything. What we do is find some kind of small earnings and eat. There are never any savings. Earlier I made *kola kanda* porridge. I raised animals. Now I can't do any of that. There is too little light. I don't have the kitchen utensils either. When there is solar energy, these come on. Some times there is no light at all. Without light, nothing can be done.

What we need now is a house. Arpico Finance is making houses. They are making only eighteen right now. Our number is 34. They are building two-story houses on four perches and giving the stories to two different families. There is no garden. There is no place to throw any garbage. There is no room to throw away some water. Then there will only be fighting. We of course, do not like to live like that. If we get something somewhere else before we get this that will be good.

P.B. Shriyani

(Fabian Avenue, Kuda Payaagala, Payaagala)

I am now forty-three years old. We lived near the railroad too. Very near the ocean. Our house was completely destroyed. With the help of Sewa Lanka, I made this house temporarily. My husband does fishing. Our boats were destroyed. Now it is difficult to do that work. We got an engine. However, we sold that to buy a piece of land.

I dried fish for a living. About ten or twelve people worked under me. We had dry fish worth about ten lakhs. In the Tsunami, the tanks were all destroyed. I must start again somehow. A group came from the (?) ministry and said they would help us make dry fish if we give them our technology. We do not like this. We are not at all prepared to give our technology for someone else to earn

***Kalutara Report in Sinhala
See Annex 1***

MATARA DISTRICT

Fishing Villages In Gandhara Tsunami Update December 20, 2005

Fishing was the main livelihood of most of the residents of this village. With the Tsunami disaster, they lost all avenues of engaging in their trade, as their own boats were destroyed, they have been compelled to travel to Tangalle, Mirissa, Kudawella and even to Trincomalee which is about 250km. Away in search of employment they say that they are highly worried about the safety and security of their families when they are far away from home because only woman and children are at home. Due to fluctuation in the price fish, their economic strength has also become weak.

Our survey revealed that there are some people in the village who had been physically handicapped by the Tsunami. Among them is one individual who has

lost the mobility of his right hand when something hard dashed on him while he was being carried away by the current. Another one suffers from weakness in hearing. The treatment so far given is of no avail.

Some people of the area have engaged in other self-employment pursuits such as processing of salted-fish and dry-fish and producing of coir strings. They say that their equipment were damaged or destroyed by the Tsunami disrupting their occupations.

There is only a limited number of educated people in this village since it is mainly a fishing village. Public servants are very rare. There are strife's and fistcuffs are said to be very frequent in this area. Some of them are ephemeral while others last long.

There are 5-6 members in each family and the majority are children.

They have re-built their houses in close proximity to the 100m limit. Some of the residents are willing to leave the village if they are provided with houses elsewhere. Some do not prefer to go away. A permanent housing project is in the progress at Kanattwatte, Wedigodawatte, Narangahawatte and Gedarawatte.

People of the area state that these houses are about 500 square feet in extent and each consists of two beds rooms, a sitting room, a kitchen and a toilet. In the end, a villager said, "we will not reproach the sea. We cannot find fault with the sea. Seas will help us by itself someday".

Thalalle south village

Most of the residents of this village, in which there are unsolved problems yet, are fisherman; there are a few public servants also in this village. Though nearly one year has lapsed since the occurrence of the Tsunami, people are yet suffering. Devastation of the fishing boats and nets, houses and the loss of self-employment opportunities are the critical problems of this village. This village is situated at about 8km away from Matara Town.

It is said that the people of this area to proceed to Mirissa, Tangalle, Beruwala and Trincomalee for fishing. Therefore, they complain that the women and children of their families are denied of their protection and care their economic situation is also less stable at present due to decreasing prices of fish. A woman who lost her two children in the Tsunami tragedy is suffering from Hallucination. It is also reported that a large number of people were injured on the day of the Tsunami attack. They urge for setting up of some system to warn the villagers in advance of impending disasters so as to avoid causing pandemonium by mischievous false alarms.

Some people have been engaged in self-employments such as producing of coir-strings, lace knitting and processing dry fish before the Tsunami came. They were compelled to stop their jobs as they lost all their equipment on the day of the tragedy. But during the period when they suspended their self-employment work, other parties have encroached their avenues marketing

However, they have resumed their vocations.

People of this village too have built their houses within 100meters. Limit some of them are willing to move away beyond the 100 meters. Limit if they are provided with houses. But there are others who are not willing. A housing scheme intended for these people are under way. Houses are being constructed at Kanattewatta, Wedigodawatte, Narangaha Watte and Gedarawatte.

Finally a villager remarked, "we did not think even.....dream that the sea would treat us like this".

Weligama mahaveediya village

With the dawn of an election period, this village has become a hot bed. In an atmosphere of unsolved problems, it is no wonder that people are inclined to lean on the politician for support to get redress.

They have given numerous promises if they fail to honour the pledges. The position of the people would be worse.

Mediation of the government and other parties

By Government:

The allowance of Rs. 5000/- given earlier has now been confined to a few families.

Issues of ration cards also have been limited.

A section of the people of this village still live in the welfare camps. A relief scheme is in the operation but only a limited few reap its benefits.

Services being rendered by Sarvodaya

Sarvodaya is presently implementing a large number of various programs including a lavatory construction project, self-employment projects and distribution of seedlings.

In addition several non-government organizations have agreed to construct houses. Their crucial problem is the scarcity of land.

Problems faced by the villagers

1. Difficulty in raising funds to resume their pre-Tsunami occupations
2. Lack of support to establish self-employment projects.

It is no wonder that politicians are making innumerable promises as they have done at other places.

Solutions and suggestions

When I held discussions with the villagers, I felt that the same question is being asked again and again. Nothing has been done though nearly one year has passed. It is good if they are able to resume their earlier vocations.

I have given my proposals to you. But no responsible authority has cared to look into their problems.

Polhena village

This is a beautiful village situated within the city limit ofIt's pretty beach and extensive coral reef have attracted many local and foreign tourists. The coastal area was badly damaged by the Tsunami. But today it has regained its luster and appears as if nothing happened.

1. Mediation by the government and other parties

By the government

The government has already paid the grant of Rs 500/- and ration cards. Issues of ration cards seem to have been limited by now.

Sarvodaya and other parties

The villagers say that Sarvodaya has done much for their welfare. A fewmany programmes being implemented by them are "we take" replanting project, construction of lavatories, assistance for self employment.

Other non-government organizations have also provided extensive relief assistance work on the conservation of the coastline and construction of houses are still in progress.

Problems faced by them

The residents of this village are also afflicted with complex problems similar to those by the residents of other affected areas. The key problem is the lack of opportunities to engage with their usual occupations and employment.

Their future will depend on how these problems are solved

Their suggestions for solving their problems

It is hardly necessary to forward fresh proposal when the proposals made by them earlier have not received attention. Their primary request is for the assistance to re-engage in their previous occupations, which were disrupted by the Tsunami.

It would be a great help if somebody could help them in this matter.

Madiha west

Though one year has passed since the Tsunami tragedy, this village is in the same condition in which it was immediately after the calamity. In the heat of the election, politicians have come to the village and have made various promises. Higher officials who have never turned an eye for these people for nearly one year have visited the village probably in the view of the election.

The Rs.5000/- grant paid by the government has been limited to a minimum. Issue of ration cards has also been discontinued. In addition to this the government have intervened to construct a few houses and have given a grant of Rs. 100,000/- in respect of each partially damaged house.

Sarvodaya is implementing a large number of projects even at present. It has provided assistance to construct lavatories, and self-employment projects.

Residents say that many other non-government organizations have provided house and household equipment.

Problems faced by the villagers

1. Inability to resume their earlier vocations
2. Unemployment
3. Lack of funds to re-establish their earlier trades.

Solutions suggested by the villagers

1. Assistance to re-engage in their previous vocations disrupted by the Tsunami
2. Assistance to start self-employment projects

In conclusion, I wish to state that their effort to restore their lives to normal is praise worthy.

Matara Villages Tsunami Update November 21, 2005

Thalalla village

This is another service activated by Sarvodaya to rebuild the lives of people who were affected by the Tsunami.

Thalalla belongs to the Gandhara Police division and the Devinuwara Provincial Secretariat Division in the Matara district. This village is situated about eight kilometers from the Matara town and two of its four gramaseva divisions were affected by the Tsunami.

Problems Faced by the Villagers of Thalalla

- Loss of their fishing industry
- Loss of their dwellings
- Lack of fishing equipment

The main problem is that the fishing community does not have the equipment that is necessary for them to continue with this livelihood. They say that the reason for this is that the boats and equipment that they owned were lost in the Tsunami. Another problem they face is that they still do not have houses. Some groups from the village still reside in the welfare centers that have been set up in the Devinuwara Provincial Secretariat Division, the Thalalla Village Hospital Center, the Devinuwara Kande Godella Center, and the Devinuwara Village Hospital Center. The inhabitants of this village have still not received permanent housing. They said that even though various people promised to aid them, they have so far received nothing.

Solutions Proposed by the Villagers

- Supply them with boats or fishing equipment
- Build permanent homes

The villagers said that if they are given these facilities, they can get back on their feet. They hoped that everyone who has thus far helped them would receive every blessing and said that blessings were all they could give to anyone who helped them in the future too. They further said that the Rs. 5,000, which the government was supposed to grant, was received by these villagers only three times.

“We’re fisher folk. Those days we were able to do anything. But now when we need something, we have to wait for someone else to help us.”

This was a view expressed at the end of the discussion by one of the villagers.

Gandhara village

This village belongs to the Landhara Police division and the Devinuwara Provincial Secretariat Division in the Matara district. It is situated about seven kilometers from the Matara town and all of the gramaseva divisions in it were affected by the Tsunami. Most of the people in this village are fisher folk. The worst-affected by the Tsunami were those who were involved with the fishing industry and those in this village were also among them.

Problems Faced by the Villagers

- Loss of their fishing jobs
- Destruction of their homes
- Poor health facilities
- Lack of money to buy the necessary fishing equipment
- Not receiving fishing equipment from any institute or group

The main problem is that these villagers are unemployed. They say that because of this they have many financial difficulties. They also say that no one has come forward to help them repair their damaged boats. The villagers who lost their homes have still not been given any permanent housing. Some of the affected people stay in temporary dwellings at the welfare centers that have been set up in the Devinuwara Provincial Secretariat Division, the Thalalla Village Hospital Center, the Devinuwara Kande Godella Center, and the Devinuwara Village Hospital Center. However, those who still do not have permanent housing face many difficulties. Many people have also faced hardship because sanitary facilities were destroyed. Young womenfolk face the most difficulty due to this.

Solutions Proposed by the Villagers

- Give them a loan to repair their damaged fishing equipment or provide them with new equipment
- Give them permanent housing
- Build permanent sanitary facilities

Temporary Solutions Received

The villagers thank the government and the general populace for supplying food in the days immediately following the Tsunami. They also thank the various organizations that helped them. They express their gratitude to the

government for providing them with temporary dwellings, but also say that some unnecessary activities have taken place. They blame this on the fact that the Gramasevaka officer has placed an emphasis on helping people who are close to him. The villagers say that the Provincial Secretary is also dishonest. However, they have thus far received the government Rs. 5,000 three times.

Future Hopes

“We don’t need any aid. Now at least give us a loan at an easy interest rate. We shall show the ocean that beat us down how we can get up by raising an income from that ocean itself. Now we want only that.”

Weligama village

This village is in the Weligama Provincial Secretariat Division in Matara district. It is situated fifteen kilometers from the Matara town in the direction of Galle. Since the majority of the residents in this village are fisher folk, they were very badly affected by the Tsunami.

Problems Faced by the Villagers

- Loss of their fishing industry
- Loss of their homes
- Lack of money to buy new fishing equipment

The main problem among these is the lack of employment. Due to this, the villagers are in dire financial circumstances. The people of this area now reside in welfare centers that have been set up in hospitals and temples.

Solutions Proposed by the Villagers

- Provide them with the fishing equipment that they lost
- Help them repair damaged equipment
- Supply them with permanent sanitary facilities
- Build permanent housing

The Aid that the Villagers have Thus Far Received

After the Tsunami, the government has provided temporary housing. They have also given food supplies. In addition to the government, Sarvodaya has greatly helped this village.

Future Hopes

“If you are going to help us now, give us a loan at a concessionary rate. We would like to once again live without being a burden to anyone.”

Polhena Village

This village is in the Matara Provincial Secretariat Division in Matara district. It is situated about four kilometers from the Matara town and most of its villagers found their livelihood from the ocean.

Problems Faced by the Villagers

- Loss of their fishing livelihood
- Loss of their homes
- Lack of funds to buy the necessary fishing equipment
- Lack of equipment to carry on with the self-employment activities that they engaged in before the Tsunami

The main problem faced by these villagers is unemployment. Since this area is very beautiful, there was a good tourism industry, but the Tsunami took away all of this and even the villagers' dwelling places.

Solutions Proposed by the Villagers

- Supply them with the fishing equipment that was destroyed by the Tsunami
- Provide them with permanent housing
- Give them health facilities

Services Rendered by the Government, Sarvodaya, and Other Organizations

The government has built temporary housing in this area. They also provide food supplies.

A number of non-governmental organizations are active in this village. They are doing a lot of valuable work including the building of houses.

The villagers say that Sarvodaya has done a lot of work for the village. It has started a sanitary facilities scheme in the area.

Future Hopes

"Sir, now we don't need any aid. We are people who lived without being a burden to anyone. What we need now is some fishing equipment or a loan. Then we will get back on our feet by our own efforts."

Madihe West Village

This village is situated about five kilometers from the Matara town towards Galle. It is situated on the provincial border in the town limits of Matara.

Problems Faced by the Villagers

- Lack of equipment to carry on with their fishing industry
- Loss of their dwelling places
- Living in fear that another Tsunami will come

The most prolific industry in this area was the catching of ornamental fish. They can no longer carry on with this because of the Tsunami. Also, these villagers, who had made the ocean their life, lost everything they owned. Right now, temporary houses have been built in this area and there is a permanent housing scheme has been proposed.

Solutions Proposed by the Villagers

- Provide them with fishing equipment
- Supply them with permanent housing
- Aid them to start self-employment activities

The villagers said that if they are given this help, they can rise again to the state that they were in before.

Services Rendered by the Government, Sarvodaya, and Other Organizations

The government has started building houses that are placed away from the 100 meter zone. It is good to see that a number of non-governmental organizations have placed their focus on this village. Sarvodaya has started building sanitary facilities in this area. In addition to this, the villagers say that a number of other organizations have helped these villagers.

Future Hopes

“We all lived because of this ocean. But it came and hurt us. However, we will rise again from this ocean itself. Now we don’t have anything. If we get your help, we will once again be able to live like before.”

Matara Meeting
August 5, 2005

Planning of a Programme for 2004 December 26th Tsunami survivors of Sarvodaya villages in Matara District to identify problems and with their participation to seek solutions.

While the workshop had the expected attendance, the participants were separated in to 5 groups and their problems were discussed resulting in the following suggestions.

Problems

- Construction of houses for residents within 100 meter limit.
- Economic revival for Tsunami survivors.
- Relieve mental Pressure
- Lack of proper management methodology to distribute the aid received to the deserving.
- Construction of houses; lack of land.
- Loss of equipment used for livelihood.
- Education problems of Child tsunami survivors.
- Solutions to health problems.
- Problems of Children who have lost their parents.

Suggested Solutions

- Prepare a " Safety Project" for persons wishing to live within the 100 meters limit(Build houses on concrete columns)
- Provide equipment and relief for the self - employed who lost their livelihood.
- Introduce alternate income avenues.
- Programmes through youth groups and Children's groups.
- School programmes to stabilize the frame of mind of the Children.
- Provide psychiatric counselling.
- Establish good report with all aid agencies.
- Government to intercede and obtain land for residents within the 100 meter limit. NGO's to build houses
- A relief loan scheme to grant loans. Assist in obtaining fishing gear etc. To tsunami survivors and help them to obtain market links.
- Ensure help from all villagers.
- Organize competitions ,games, picnics, prize giving and the like to make children happy to take away sorrow from their minds
- Mobilize Health clinics repair wells and toilets coast conservation work ensure co-operation of all the villages to avoid disaster.
- Keep them with relatives and assist them through a systematic aid scheme.

Matara Sinhala Report
December 12, 2005
See Annex 1

HAMBANTOTA DISTRICT

Post-Tsunami Village Re-awakening
June 26, 2005

Under the re-awakening programme Sarvodaya conducted two successful workshops in Tsunami affected districts in Kalutara and Hambantota in order to build confidence among the communities as well as identifying their burning problems raising their voices. This is the summary report of a one-day workshop which was held in order to identify problems of the community.

Date

05.04 2005 Kalutara 08.04.2005 Hambantota

Participation

At Kalutara: Representatives of rural societies, Sarvodaya District office staff, Mr. D.A. Perera, Mr. Subasena De Silva, Mr. K. L. Gunawardana At Hambantota: Representatives of rural societies, Sarvodaya District office staff, Mr. D. A. Perera, Mr. Subasena De Silva, Mr. K. L. Gunawardana

Many Sarvodaya Service Villages were damaged following the tsunami tidal wave of 26-12-2004. There was immense destruction of human life and properties. Those who faced this tragedy have lost their houses and livelihood and are severely shocked; many have lost tranquility of mind.

Although various relief services have been provided for these people, there was little if any activity taking place to identify the critical issues from the community's perspective, or any direct communication to hear their grievances.

Therefore, this workshop was carried out to identify the people's problems and requirements, and find solutions together. Such a workshop strengthens people's ties to the organization, and provides mental and emotional support to the people, encouraging them to rebuild and restart their lives. The objectives are to:

- Identify issues of affected communities
- Strengthen Shramadana societies and related organizations in affected villages
- Plan activities in accordance with their requirements through community participation
- Guid and assist them to solve their burning problems
- Encourage and support them to emerge from their confused mental state and help them participate in development activities effectively

This workshop was implemented through group discussions according to a full participation strategy

Major Issues Raised in Discussions

Kalutara	Hambantota
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fear of living. 2. Homelessness and inclusion of existing houses within 100 meters. 3. Unemployment. 4. Insufficient of community health facilities. 5. Health Problems of the people who especially live in tents. 6. Interruption of child mental situation and problems concerning personality. 7. Lack of facilities for child education. 8. Unsatisfactory implementation of relief services which do not always go to the needy individuals. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Problems of sustaining children's education. 2. Problems of loss of jobs - self employment like masonry, fishing and carpentry etc. 3. Loss of houses within 100 meters and beyond following tsunami and lack of suitable land to construct houses. 4. Issues of mental stress and mental pressure. 5. Insufficient supply of drinking water and problems of sanitation. 6. Difficulty of paying credit obtained for private businesses. 7. Problems of life security. 8. Problems of sustaining education and ensure the security of children who lost their parents

Proposed Remedies

Kalutara	Hambantota
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate people on common disasters. • Conducting children programmes as 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install danger warning systems in religious / common places for life security.

<p>excursions to get them out of their troubled mental situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of basic facilities including: uniforms / books / shoes for school and pre-school children. • Conducting Health Programs for all age levels. • Provision of necessary assistance and implementing nutrition programmes for children. • A suitable counseling series for small children, youth groups, pregnant mothers and elders. • Identifying individuals who possess more lands inside the country and educate them on the situation, to encourage them to assist homeless people by allowing their land to be purchased in association with state to build houses. • Keep awakened two individuals every night in tsunami-affected areas. • Provision of one defense soldier from government. • Controlling unnecessary rumors by issuing official news only • Provision of financial assistance, and distributing materials for destructed businesses according to the nature of the business. • Introduce them suitable market. • Conducting shore-conservation programmes. • Educate people on tsunami. • Conduct relevant activities through pre- schools that develops the child's mind. • Provision of financial aid to those who have lands off - shore towards constructions of houses. • Provision of money to the people who want to purchase lands as their wish. • Providing specially latrines and drinking water for places where temporary tents are installed. • Appoint a committee to distribute tsunami aid. • To implement relief services again to those who have not received. • Provision of dwellings in protected areas to enable them to shift from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct children's programs, mental medical clinics and entertainment programs by Sarvodaya or any other institute. • Construction of houses as required with the intervention of government for displaced people who within and beyond the 100 metres limit. • Providing assistance with finance or material to the people whose livelihood had been disturbed to restart their usual occupations; granting credit without interest. • Taking action to overcome the scarcity of teachers by educating them through government in order to promote education of school children. • Provision of one water tank for every five families and supply them with water by bowsers due to contaminated wells problem. • Development of rural schools and making arrangements to admit children to them and facilitate these displaced children, to promote their knowledge of English and Information Technology as well as to receive higher education. • Provide legal protection to children who have lost their parents and grant them opportunities for higher education, counseling, and extending credit for pre - business training. • Provision of educational material and lost notes, commencing pre- schools and implementing nutrition programs. • Establishment of child protection places and place them in village level, arrange opportunities to bring up those children in associating with their own relatives if possible. • Persuading the government requesting houses by collectively organized people who have lost their houses. • Provision of trained teachers preparing a certain strategy for children of affected families to enable them the participate in free extra classes. • Provision of a free travel document to the school children. (season ticket) • Developing of library facilities. • Train people on preventive measures to ensure their security in the event of such disasters.
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<p>insecure places.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep people informed on disaster management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation of shore areas by cultivating them. • Construction of houses to resist towards natural disaster like earth quakes. • Upliftment of mental conditions through lectures and conferences. • Building houses for fishermen in secure places closer to the sea. • Settling people in constructed flats in accordance with timely requirements.
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A decision was made by all representatives of societies that participants will return to their villages and make villagers aware of the issues discussed, and prepare plans and programs relevant to their villages in order to solve problems within the village itself.

AMPARA DISTRICT

Post-Tsunami Situation in Periyaneelawana January 12, 2006

P.Thilagaray - Sarvodaya, Kalmunai.

Periyaneelowanai village is situated in Kalmunai Sarvodaya District. The Gramasevaka division here are 1, 1A, 2, and 1B. I give here the details of Periyaneelowanai -02 Gramasevaka division.

I interviewed 10 peoples including Gramasevaka.

Now the people are settled down beyond 300m, after the past tsunami on 26th December 2004. There are 423 muslim families and 286 Tamil families under the Grama Sevaka Mr. S. Kandasamy/ He stated thurthar that the land is selected to build permanent houses for all tamil families who are affected by Tsunami. This land is situated close to sea. The people did not like the government houses because those houses will be flats.

Sarvodaya is providing wells, toilets, pre-schools, roads. Shramadana works, sawing training, equipment for self employment and relief goods in this area. The organization called "Samaritan Press" provided temporary huts and boats to fishermen.

The 'C.S.A. Organization' built 250 permanent houses in this area. Relief items are given by ICRC, World Vision, and an organization called "Survivors Undilium".

The people of this area received Rs.5,000/- for four times as government assistance. 'American Mission' build 10 permanent houses in this area.

"forut" is collecting details to build 31 permanent houses for fishermen. The organization called "Ahead" is collecting details from villages to build 150 houses. "Hindu Society" is collecting details from people to build 10 houses.

There is hope in the heart of Tsunami affected people.....

There are so many needs to the tsunami affected people. The whole world is paying attention on this issue. This people need powerful mind to build up there life. They need strong mind. Now they are under shock. Slow process should take place to remove their shock and confusion.

When I talked to them they opened their hearts.

Although they lost everything they have hope. They showed various feelings. When we met them counseling in welfare camps.

A mother from the Vadamarachchi east Mannar welfare camp stated as follows.

"Today only I hear the laughing sound" Parents also playing with their children. They ask when we will come back and they came forward to tell their stories.

A father said " what can we do by being like this?" If I get any assistance I shall go to sea. Even 9 years old children are afraid to go to

TRINCOMALEE DISTRICT

Tsunami Affected Talk About Their Grievances January 12, 2006

One year has lapsed since the most devastating experience in Sri Lanka has ever occurred. These are some of the hands- on experiences that Sarvodaya has encountered in visits to the Eastern and Northern Provinces

However, it is in the Eastern Province and especially in the Trincomalee District that a majority of the experiences of the people who faced the devastation spoke out.

The cornerstone of the issues at hand is the lack of self employment opportunities, the delay on the part of the Government to provide fishing equipment, the stopping of the food stamps and the lack of bicycles for school children who have to trek vast distances to get to school.

The same problems were manifest in the Northern District as well. These were some of the observations, which were made in the transit camps there as well. They also are disappointed in the fact that they did not get funding for their lost fishing equipment.

Kinniya, Trincomalee: S. Shafique, who is a fisherman by vocation and who is the head of a six- member household says that his family is housed at a school camp. Hot on the heels of the tsunami, his latest catastrophe is the floods and his house is under two feet of water.

To add to the woes, the mosquito menace is also perennial. He believes that the bicycles would also be of immense assistance for his children as a mode of transport as they have to walk 800 metres to school. One of the major drawbacks of the area is the lack of fishing equipment which would be a tremendous boon for him and his colleagues to pursue their vocation of choice. Granted that the Government has provided him some subsistence with Rs. 2000 and Rs. 5000 and it is his earnest wish that the Government attend to this dire need.

The lack of transport and housing have been seen as the drawbacks which have been spelt out by Siththi Fareed (43) who is also a mother of five and fisherman Abdul Latiff (60) who lives 50 metres from the sea and whose house has been totally damaged. His family has also been registered for food stamps and milk powder and they have not got any of them. Business has also been dull in the entire district with little or no fishing.

Some of the other problems prevalent in the area is the provision of the food stamps which have been stopped.

Kuchchiveli: Kopalapuram village: The issues are the same at this venue as well but the highlight is that SEEDS had provided the inmates with some seed capital and some of the residents who have been affected by the tsunami have found themselves modes of employment which also includes making and selling string hoppers. An Italian NGO named GVC is building some low cost housing in the area. Another case in point is that the Government has not provided them with permanent housing and provided them with agricultural tools and equipment.

Kalmunai: It is the Kangani village and the Grama Sevaka Division of Karaitivu. Simon Yogarani, a wife and mother of two sons shares her tragic

experiences. Her husband is a coolie and it is from her meager earnings that the foursome, eke out an existence. The tsunami has destroyed all but she is eternally thankful to God, whom she says, has saved their lives. She is also appreciative of the Sinhala community who have been absolutely cooperative in their hour of need, who provided them with the shelter and food until they were ready to return to their villages. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and a former Member of Parliament has provided them with the kitchen utensils and temporary huts.

Some of the issues at hand have been the lack of employment and housing and also children who have problems in pursuing education and also some mode of transport and they believe that the best is the bicycle.

A family man Seenithamby Senapathi, a father of three daughters and a son is grateful to the many organisations, which have come to their rescue and it is he who said that the mode of transport was the bicycle.

The Northern Province also has had its share of problems as well. Some of the most urgent problems, which are seen prevalent are the lack of opportunities for self employment for war affected women and widows.

Some of the background problems in the Jaffna District are the lack of communication and the non-availability of the officers who could lead with the problems. Some of the perennial problems seen is the lack of funds for building despite the availability of their own land.

This has been evident in the case of Puvaneenthivaram Ravimani, a mother of six children who believes that the people who are inmates are good to conduct revision classes for their off springs but the immediate need is furniture.

Gopalapuram Village Tsunami Update September 2, 2005

Division - Kuchchaveli

There are 2028 families living in this village. 185 boys are under 18 years old, 232 males are between 19-60 years old. There are 18 males over 61 years. 339 females are living here among the total family. There are 176 girls under 18 years of age. 11 persons are disabled due to Tsunami. Nutrition level of the children are very low. Here children can enjoy their hobbies in the Welfare Centres. Some organizations helped for this purposes health facilities are very less in this village. (Such as drinking water, mosquito nets, latrines etc.) The village environment is not clean. Some times contagious disease may spread due to flies. The villagers said that the government officials such DS, Grama sevaka, Health Officer, Samurdhi Development Officer and Police Officers serve

very well in their villages. This people temporarily reside in schools and relations houses. The people who left the refugee camps. Now settle down in the temporary houses which were build by NGOs. But they face difficulties due to lack of facilities. Some families involve in Agriculture and Fishing. But self employment facilities are very less. They said the government relief comes in time and the food items are good. Weekly ration is enough. They said some of them did not get the Rs. 5,000/- payment. Grama sevaka and other Officers do their service honestly. Some other organizations too helped them. As this organizations work with Divisional Secretary. They have close relationship in relief activities and they give preference to self employment.

This people are not satisfied with the present life when they compared to the re Tsunami life style. We could observe this when we discussed with them. They need awareness programme. NGOs other government organizations and some general public involve in relief activities. They like peace at the moment. Security Forces too help them. Schools are not damaged here children go to school with the available facilities there are parents who lost their children. Women who lost their husbands, and some people who lost their brothers and sisters due to Tsunami in this village. Some originations do psychic counseling.

Verugal Village Tsunami Update September 2, 2005

Division - Echchalampattai

There are 284 families in this village. 281 women and 423 men live here. 416 children are under 18 years old. This children are affected by Tsunami and mentally depressed. They are all refugees. Although the children lost their books and clothes. They go to school with their limited belongings. Some organizations fulfilled their needs. They do not have proper nutrition and hobby. So they suffer a lot. The people of this village face severe problems due to lack of medical facilities. Some women of this are lost their children and husbands and grieve. There are no basic facilities to women. Pregnant mothers request mosquito nets. They need assistance to do their self employment. Only a few people have toilet facilities. The drinking water of this area is not clean. So there is a possibility of spreading disease. They requested to solve this problems. Also the people informed that the Divisional Co-ordinator serves them as much as possible, even without going to his home with regards of relief. They could not receive Rs. 375/- in time. So it is very difficult carry on their day to day life. They said that money should be given in time.

They received Rs. 5,000/- for three months and now it is not in practice. But Rs. 15,000/- paid for each deceased person. Many people of this village is in schools and on threes. So some organizations came forward and built

temporary shelters till they build permanent houses. These temporary shelters are built 100 Mt. from the sea. And the basic health facilities are available. Their main occupations is fisheries, But they do not have fisheries equipment such as boats, nets, fishing hooks etc. The most important thing is they do not have money to carry out their occupation. All the roads are damaged. Therefore it is very difficult to do the transportation on this roads. Nobody take this in to notice. Government did not take any action to repair this damaged schools. Some organizations made some temporary huts where these students study. Land should be prepared. Resettlement should be done, constitution of permanent houses should be started. Job opportunity should be made. If we can fulfill this needs, we can save the Tsunami affected people. This is their suggestions.

Malinthurai Villa Tsunami Update September 2, 2005

There are 120 families in this village. 230 men and 190 women are among the total 420 members. 310 children are under 18 years old. The people who take care of them pay more attention on them. But there are problems regarding nutrition women are suffering as their needs are not met. Drinking water is not clean after Tsunami. Though the children have educational equipment, they cannot go to school as the schools are far from their village. Health awareness programmes and medical services are taking place. No action has been taken regarding the housing of displaced peoples. Fishing is their main occupation. But they could not do it as the not availability of fishing equipment. The villagers suggest that the fishing equipment should be given and the resettlement should take place with equal facilities reconstruction of schools and hospital should be started immediately. Loan facilities should be given and the nutrition level of the children should be developed. These are the suggestions of the villagers. Relief goods are distributed here. But is is not in regular basis. The people of this area informed us that expired goods too distributed to them.

Generally malnutrition can be seen in this village. Lactating mothers need nutritious food. General public of this area suggested that they are satisfied with the works from D S to Police Officers. In people need national identity cards. It is mentioned that fundamental rights of women such as freedom of thought is violated. Some other organizations are working in this village. Some of the affected people live in their relations' houses. They do not have any facilities. Relief items are given to the people who are in the camps. Outsiders are neglected. Here the people get Rs. 375/- each per week. They say this amount is not enough and they receive Rs. 2,500/- as allowance. Rs. 5,000/- allowance has given only for two months. It is stopped now. They suffer a lot . Rs. 15,000/- payment was given to all who died in this disaster.

So these villagers receive some aids and some are not.

Trincomalee Report in Sinhala
Please see Annex 1