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Marit Haug and Chamindra Weerackody

The Tsunami Aid Delivery System and Humanitarian Principles

A view from five districts in Sri Lanka

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Abstract: This report analyses the delivery of tsunami aid in Sri Lanka through international non-governmental organizations and the interface between the international aid delivery system and Sri Lankan governance institutions, civil society organizations and communities. Collaboration between international aid agencies and Sri Lankan civil society organizations worked out relatively well. Most agencies were also aware of the need to involve communities. Yet, few had found ways of effectively ensuring community participation. Local governance institutions were initially very active in the recovery effort, but later on their role was largely reduced to facilitating the work of aid agencies.

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Preface

On the 26th of December 2004 the impact of the tsunami in Sri Lanka killed an estimated 35,000 people, 95,000 homes were destroyed, and the livelihoods of 150,000 families were affected. This report analyses the delivery of tsunami aid in Sri Lanka through international non-governmental organizations and the interface between the international aid delivery system and Sri Lankan governance institutions, civil society organizations and communities. Through an analysis of the views and actions of key stakeholders in five tsunami affected districts of Sri Lanka, the study has sought to account for why the fulfilment of humanitarian principles still represent a challenge to aid agencies. The study is unique in that it followed the rebuilding process in five districts for over a year and a half, collecting data from a number of different stakeholders through different data collection tools – hence putting together a comprehensive picture of the rebuilding efforts from the perspective of the affected districts.

NIBR would like to thank the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for providing us with the generous funding that allowed us to undertake this study. Ingrid Ofstad at the Norwegian Embassy in Colombo supported the idea of a study from the very beginning and later Erik Frimannslund Brede offered support and inspiration. Thank you also to all the team members from the tsunami affected district of Sri Lanka, all of whom contributed invaluable insights from their home districts. Throughout the research process the findings were discussed with government officials, civil society representatives, community members and international aid agencies in the five study districts. Their different perspectives, but also their common interests and visions in rebuilding the districts, inspired the research team to seek a deeper understanding of the complexities of the rebuilding process.

Oslo, December 2007

Arne Tesli
Research Director

Table of Contents

Tables

Figures[i1]

Figure 2.1 Relative importance of aid providers as perceived by affected communities 57
Figure 3.1 Affected people's preferences for different forms of livelihood interventions..... 77
Figure 6.1 Stakeholder views of each other 119

Abbreviations

NDTF:	National Development Trust Fund
CEA:	Central Environmental Authority CBO: Community Based Organization
CNO:	The Centre for National Operations
GTZ:	German Technical Cooperation Agency HH: Household
JVP:	Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna
NGO:	Non-governmental organization
INGO:	International non-governmental organization
LTTE:	The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
OCHA:	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RADA:	Reconstruction and Development Agency
TAP:	Transitional Accommodation Project
THRU:	Tsunami Housing Reconstruction Unit
SLFP:	Sri Lanka Freedom Party
STF:	Special Task Force
TAFREN:	Rask Force for Rebuilding the Nation
TEC:	Tsunami Evaluation Coalition
UNP:	United National Party


Tsunami affected communities in 5 districts selected for the study
N
W
E
S
Valvettithurai
JAFFNA
KILINOCHCHI
MULLAITIVU
MANNAR
VAVUNIYA
ANURADHAPURA
TRINCOMALEE
PUTTALAM
POLONNARUWA
BATTICALOA
KURUNEGALA
MATALE
Kirankulam
Sainthamaruthu 2
KANDY
AMPARA
GAMPAHA
KEGALLE
BADULLA
COLOMBO
NUWARA ELIYA
MONARAGALA
RATNAPURA
KALUTARA
HAMBANTOTA
GALLE
MATARA
Koggala
Kudawella West
40 0 40 80 Kilometers

Summary

Marit Haug
The tsunami aid delivery system and humanitarian principles
A view from five districts in Sri Lanka
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This report presents the findings from a study on how the international aid agencies and Sri Lankan organizations and governance institutions worked together in the rebuilding process after the tsunami in Sri Lanka. Did aid organizations live up to humanitarian principles that state that international aid organizations should support and facilitate initiatives and activities in the affected country, rather than drive the rebuilding efforts in a top-down manner? A considerable body of knowledge exists about how this interface should be managed, but practice lags behind theories and principles in this area (ALNAP 2004).

The principal purpose of the study was to report back to the Norwegian funding agency and to the stakeholders during the rebuilding process and this was done in the form of reports and presentations at seminars in the districts and in Colombo. This report summarizes the reports that were compiled and describes the challenges, issues and dilemmas confronting the stakeholders in the first two years of the rebuilding process.

The aid delivery system was examined from a district perspective, rather than a national perspective. This vantage point was chosen on the assumption that a lot of the operational work involved in the rebuilding process would take place at the district level. In each selected district the study focused on the interface between international non-governmental organizations and three sets of

organizations and institutions: sub-national governance institutions[1], Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations and communities and households.

- *Sub-national governance institutions.* Donor agencies had emphasized that reconstruction efforts should be based on the principle of subsidiarity and consequently each reconstruction activity should be designed and implemented at the lowest competent tier of government[2]. Despite strong mobilization by sub-national governance institutions in the aftermath of the tsunami, very few extra resources were allocated to them for tsunami work and their role was principally to facilitate the work of aid agencies. In this context, how did international aid agencies work with sub-national governance institutions in relation to coordination, planning, decision-making and implementation of programmes?
- *Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations.* According to humanitarian principles, international organizations should build on the capacities of local organizations. Yet they have been criticized for undermining local organizations by imposing their own time frames, conceptual frameworks and aid packages.[3] Whereas international aid agencies funded and gave technical support to many Sri Lankan organisations, relations between them were at times tense. How did the two parties perceive each other, and how did they work together?
- *Communities and households.* International humanitarian agencies should support the efforts of communities and households, involve them in aid management and be accountable to them. Non-governmental organizations are considered to be well placed to work closely with communities and households and to adapt support to needs and vulnerabilities. At the same time relief situations are characterized by pressure to deliver quickly and to spend money fast. How did aid international aid organizations resolve this dilemma?

[1] Governance institutions encompass the government administration and elected political bodies.
[2] The World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the Japan bank for International Cooperation (2005): Sri Lanka 2005 Post Tsunami Needs Assessment. Preliminary damage and needs assessment. Undated.
[3]For an early and classic critique of humanitarian aid see Harrell-Bond, B. (1986): Imposing aid: emergency assistance to refugees, Oxford University Press, Oxford

Based on the framework above, four categories of stakeholders in the reconstruction process were identified:

- communities and households
- sub-national governance institutions (the public administration and politicians)
- Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations
- international humanitarian aid agencies

The study followed the rebuilding process over a period of one and a half years, from July 2005 to December 2006 and this time frame allowed for data collection from each stakeholder group two or three times.

Five districts were selected on the basis of a combination of affectedness and geographical spread: Batticaloa and Ampara in the east, Hambantota and Galle in the south and Jaffna in the north. [4] While the tsunami had a devastating impact on all these districts, in the north and the east the tsunami came on top of the destruction caused by two decades of the armed conflict that had come to a halt with the Cease Fire Agreement signed in February 2002. Galle and Hambantota are predominantly Sinhalese. Jaffna and Batticaloa are predominantly Tamil, whereas the coastline of Ampara is inhabited by Muslims and Tamils.

The study findings are based on:

- in-depth interviews with over 200 politicians and public officials (July 2005, March-June 2006 and November 2006).
- a survey of 85 Sri Lankan aid organizations (July 2005).
- interviews[5] with more than 100 of the largest Sri Lankan and international non-governmental organizations (December 2005 – March 2006, December 2006).
- a household survey of the affected population in six districts[6] (July 2005).

[4] Kalutara in the western province was dropped after the first phase of the study because few aid agencies worked in the district. As the conflict escalated, the research team was not able to complete data collection in Jaffna.

[5] The ten most important agencies in each district (budgets and impact) were selected based on the survey results and also on consultations with the coordinating bodies in each district

[6] The first phase covered six districts.

- five community studies where participatory methods, in-depth interviews, mapping and a households survey were used for information collection (March 2005-October 2006). One community from each district was selected. The household survey included four communities because the community in Jaffna could not be reached for security reasons at the time of the survey (July 2006). A community in this context refers to a settlement of around 250-300 households, coinciding with the lowest administrative unit under the Grama Niladhari, the local administrative officer. In the cases of Ampara and Jaffna the selected villages are part of small towns. The survey covered 840 respondents.

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs funded the study that was carried out by the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research with researchers from four regional universities in Sri Lanka – the University of Colombo, the University of Ruhuna, South Eastern University, the University of Jaffna – and consultants.[7]

What did aid agencies deliver?

When the tsunami struck on 26 December 2004, it directly affected a narrow coastal strip of Sri Lanka with the most severe damage being inflicted on the heavily populated semi-urban east coast. The impact of the tsunami killed an estimated 35,000 people, 95,000 houses were partially or fully damaged, and the livelihoods of 150,000[8] families were affected. Public infrastructure, including roads, hospitals and schools, was damaged. Yet the impact of the tsunami was localized in that it did not have any considerable impact on the economic performance of the Sri Lankan economy. The tsunami was first and foremost a human tragedy.

With the massive amount of relief aid being delivered immediately, the emergency needs for food, medicines and shelter were met quickly and rehabilitation assumed priority. After the relief phase – during which the affected people were housed in public buildings or with friends and family – attention shifted to shelter. According to figures from the Task Force for Rebuilding the Nation (TAFREN), more than

[7] NIBR is responsible for the contents of the report. The views expressed in the report do not necessarily correspond with those of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[8] The Ministry of Finance and Planning and the Reconstruction and Development Agency (2006): Post-Tsunami Recovery and Reconstruction. December 2006.

50,000 temporary shelters were built within six months, exceeding the government's stipulated requirement for transitional shelter (Shelliah 2005). Despite the excess of temporary shelters, almost 3,000 families remained in camps whereas the remaining families lived with their extended families, friends or in their damaged houses. The majority of the affected people were fishermen and people employed in fisheries-related sectors. The fisheries sector received the bulk of the immediate aid, and by the end of 2005 government statistics indicated an oversupply of boats.

The tsunami response was unique because of the abundance of funding committed by private and public donors. According to the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) total funding was over US$ 7,100 for every affected person.[9] The tsunami precipitated a massive mobilization of Sri Lankan and international actors. Individuals, priests, non-governmental organizations, the military, local government officials (Grama Niladharis, Divisional Secretaries and District Secretaries), politicians (Provincial Council Members, Pradeshiya Sabha Members and Members of Parliament), tourists and international agencies contributed in a unique collective effort. During the first two weeks after the tsunami, people in the immediate environment were the most important aid providers. The affected population reported that they had received aid from relatives (45%), neighbours (37%), the temple (32%), the church (15%), individual philanthropists (15%) and the mosque (8%). [10]

Affected households received aid in cash and kind also from foreign philanthropists, largely from tourists (Galle) and from philanthropists from the Middle East (Ampara). Remittances from abroad were important in the communities in Ampara and Jaffna. Affected households in Ampara had received aid from relatives and family members who worked in the Middle East, while those affected in Jaffna had received assistance from relatives based in Europe. The support reflected the extensive degree of social and economic linkages between communities in Sri Lanka and countries in many regions of the world.

The massive national relief effort crossed ethnic and religious boundaries. Tamil and Muslim households in Batticaloa and Ampara on the east coast reported having received aid from Sinhalese in Kandy, Kurunegala, Kegalle and Colombo, and Buddhist temples

[9] Tsunami Evaluation Coalition: Synthesis report: Executive Summary. July 2006.
[10] Data from the household survey in July 2005.

provided aid to affected Muslims and Tamils in the conflict-affected district of Ampara. This concern and mobilization contrasts starkly with the politicized nature of earlier relief efforts to help the war-affected population since the start of the civil war in 1983.

Fifteen to forty national and international organizations and institutions had provided assistance in each of the five local communities included in this study. [11] Civil society – including religious institutions, national and local non-governmental organizations, government agencies, companies, the military and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), political parties and international organizations – delivered aid. Almost half of the actors who provided aid were professional aid agencies. Six to eighteen Sri Lankan and international aid organizations had assisted in the communities. However, support from each aid organization seems to have been narrow in scope and coverage, resulting in inequitable distribution of aid. For instance, despite the high number of aid interventions in each community, households report that they had received support on average three to four times.

Who delivered aid?

The government's strength was its outreach. The coverage of the donor-funded cash payments of Rs. 5,000 that were distributed to all affected households three to four times was high. Housing grants distributed through the government also scored well on coverage. The government assisted with practical problems such as the replacement of documentation that had been lost in the tsunami while facilitating access to aid delivered by aid agencies, for instance permanent housing. Perhaps due to its outreach, the government comes across as the most important aid provider in the July 2005 survey, whereas the in-depth community studies give less credit to the government and more credit to non-governmental organizations. The affected population was ambivalent about the role of the government since some public officials were unresponsive to complaints from the public and others were corrupt.[12] The survey results from July 2006 demonstrate that the government had retained its position as the major aid provider in the two war-affected communities in east (above 50% of aid delivery cases[13]) while voluntary organizations dominated aid

[11] From December 26 2004 to October 2005.
[12] Data collected through participatory methods in five communities (October-November 2005).
[13] The percentages are based on the number of 'cases' of aid received by each household. Each household reported what kind of aid they had received in response to one of the survey questions (July 2005). The answer is a rough

delivery in the two communities in the south (above 60% of aid delivery cases).

Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations were quick to respond and had reached almost half of the affected population four weeks after the tsunami. They continued to deliver aid consistently, and their role was particularly important in the south where they were the most important aid provider measured by the number of aid interventions received by households[14]. The affected population appreciated their way of working closely and consistently with communities but criticized corrupt practices and partiality in some cases.

Compared to the coverage obtained by Sri Lankan aid agencies, the outreach of *the international aid agencies* was slightly lower. Four out of ten respondents reported that they had received aid from international aid agencies by the fourth week after the tsunami, but six months after the tsunami the outreach of the international aid agencies was significantly lower than that of Sri Lankan aid agencies. The survey results one year later (July 2006) confirm this picture, with the exception of the most severely affected Ampara district where international organizations had provided aid in 26% of the cases. Not surprisingly, the impact of the work of the international agencies was particularly strong in locations where international agencies had focused their attention and had delivered aid through a multi-sector approach rather than through focusing on one sector. It is also important to note, however, that many international organizations funded Sri Lankan aid agencies.

Due to the abundance of funding and to equity considerations many aid organizations began to include new target groups such as poor and war-affected households that had not been affected by the tsunami. Some agencies said that as many as 30% of their beneficiaries were poor people who had not been affected by the tsunami. A significant number of the aid agencies planned to continue with development interventions in the tsunami-affected districts after completion of their tsunami-related activities. These interventions included long-term projects, for example income generation, capacity development and development of public infrastructure.

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measure of aid provision that does not take into account the value of the aid received. This measurement is more useful for comparison between households and districts than for assessing exactly how much aid households received.

[14] They had delivered aid in 33% and 44% of the cases in the two communities in Galle and Hambantota. In Batticaloa they had only delivered aid in 11% of cases and in Ampara in 19% of cases.

The role of international agencies

The Sri Lankan government welcomed international aid agencies and they were invited to play a major role in reconstruction. The Centre for National Operations (CNO) that was replaced later by the Task Force for Rebuilding the Nation (TAFREN) and eventually by the Reconstruction and Development Agency (RADA) was set up to *facilitate* the work of international aid agencies, to set standards and to monitor progress. International aid agencies signed MoUs with RADA, for example for house construction or for the delivery of boats. Later the authority to sign MoUs was transferred to the District Secretaries[15] at the sub-national level. The affected districts through the District Secretary subsequently reported to RADA.

Hundreds of international aid agencies contributed huge amounts of funds, both directly to households and communities and through Sri Lankan organizations and the government. They provided transport facilities and logistic support to move large amounts of aid within a short period of time. Some had well designed intervention methodologies in their field of expertise – for example some had expertise in the construction of temporary shelter, but many lacked experience in construction of permanent houses. Livelihood projects were often implemented through Sri Lankan organizations.

The principles for humanitarian aid delivery set the following standards for aid delivered by international aid agencies:[16]

- Affected people have a right to receive aid, and humanitarian organizations have a right to offer aid based on *needs and vulnerability*.
- Aid agencies should respect culture and custom and should build on the capacities of local communities, organizations and government structures.
- Beneficiaries should be involved in the management of aid.
- Aid organizations should be accountable for financial performance and effectiveness to the population whom they seek to assist.

[15] The District Secretary is often referred to as the Government Agent (GA) and is the administrative head of the district administration.
[16] Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief (1994). See also the Sphere project at www.sphereproject.org. The list is not exhaustive.

Moreover, the voluntary sector is believed to have certain strengths with respect to how aid is delivered to affected households and communities. Usually the 'value added' of voluntary agencies is assumed to be:

- closeness to communities
- ability to reach marginalized and vulnerable households
- capacity to forge partnerships with voluntary agencies in the recipient country

Was aid based on needs and vulnerabilities?

The presence of numerous aid agencies caused competition for projects and beneficiaries. Moreover, aid agencies faced difficulties matching allocation of resources and services with household needs and vulnerabilities. Aid was not effectively targeted, much of the aid was of low quality, and aid was provided in a standardized manner. A number of reasons beyond the control of aid agencies combined with weaknesses in aid agency methodologies caused inequity.

Targeting affected households was a complex process in which all the stakeholders – including the affected population, community organizations, Sri Lankan and international aid organizations, the government and politicians – pursued their own interests. Ineffective targeting resulted in gaps, overlaps, inequity in aid delivery and reduced impact. Inaccurate beneficiary lists, ineffective community organizations, political interference and weak coordination and information management made targeting difficult.

Problems with beneficiary[17] lists and beneficiary selection
The selection of beneficiaries has been the most contentious issue in the process of allocating aid to households. Aid was delivered on a 'first come first served' basis in the relief phase – 'to those who stretched out their hands and cried'. There was a rush to deliver, and beneficiary lists were not available or ignored. Later on lists of beneficiaries were compiled by the Divisional Secretariats[18] but the process of compiling beneficiary lists was highly contested and politicized. Public officials tended to put the blame on manipulation

[17] There is an ongoing debate on the most appropriate term for referring to the affected population. The term beneficiary is used here because it was widely use by the aid agencies. A rights-based approach would refer to them as 'right holders'.
[18] The Divisional Secretariat is the administrative unit one level below the district administration.

by beneficiaries, beneficiaries blamed public officials for accepting bribes and bending to pressure from politicians, and politicians referred to demands from their constituencies.

To overcome the problem of inaccurate beneficiary lists most aid agencies consulted community representatives and local officials to gather first-hand information about their losses and needs. They subsequently cross checked the information with the lists compiled by the Divisional Secretariats. This process of checking information was time-consuming, particularly early on before agencies acquired knowledge about the communities. The time and effort spent by aid agencies suggest that many of them did not have adequate methodologies, tools or the necessary knowledge of the communities to collect information effectively and to target and tailor aid according to needs and vulnerabilities.

Inequitable distribution by community-based organizations
Inadequate monitoring of aid allowed malpractices and corruption to flourish and undermined accountability to local communities. Communities accused community-based organizations of partiality and of favouring friends and relatives of board members. Whereas community organizations distributed less valuable items equally between members, they often allocated valuable goods such as boats, fishing nets and bicycles to committee members and their informal networks. Others were left out, at least initially. These concerns suggest that community organizations were not inclusive or representative of the diverse needs and interests of the communities. At the same time aid agencies tended to base their work on the assumption that they *are* inclusive and representative. When asked why they continued to deliver through community organizations despite the problems Sri Lankan organizations argued that there were no alternatives to using them as a channel.

Politicization of aid: from unity to political patronage
Politicians from all parties agreed that immediate relief was provided in a non-politicized manner and that there was collaboration across party political lines and across ethnic divides. As time passed and the initial sense of unity evaporated, political patronage re-emerged in aid distribution as politicians diverted resources to supporters, for instance by including them on beneficiary lists. Politicians became fiercely competitive for control over aid resources distributed through the government machinery. Politicians admit to the politicization of aid, but blame it on political pressure from their constituents.

What is commonly referred to as 'political interference' reappeared as aid distribution became politicized. In Galle, for example, the three largest political parties – the opposition United National Party (UNP), the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) (the party of the President at the time of the tsunami and the largest government coalition partner) and the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) – blame each other for having brought party politics into the delivery of aid. Political interference led to a waste of time and resources as well as to delays in project implementation as initiatives were changed or blocked to suit party political interests. For example, in cases where the Provincial Council was under the control of the government and the Municipal Council was under UNP control, the opposition UNP members say the government prevented them from implementing rebuilding projects. In UNP-run municipalities, supporters of opposition parties were allegedly discriminated against in aid allocation.

Coordination: too little too late

Coordination took place through formal *district coordination meetings*, both multi-sector and sector-specific. The multi-sector district meetings were chaired by the District Secretary or the Additional District Secretary. [19] Weekly meetings were held at the beginning, but as time passed and needs changed meetings became less frequent. After some time, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) started to provide technical support for the District Secretary through the convening and follow-up of meetings. Many of the public officials who were interviewed praised the role of the District Coordination Committees convened by the District Secretary[20]. The committees were a useful arena for bringing together public officials and aid agency representatives for discussions of common issues. However, these committees did not have any decision-making powers and functioned as meeting places for information sharing and networking.

Especially early on in the process the *Divisional Secretaries* were the main contact points between the agencies and the government. Aid organizations liaised with the Divisional Secretaries for needs assessments and for selecting locations. Later on agencies relied on the Divisional Secretaries for beneficiary lists. Divisional Secretaries also introduced agencies to relevant public officials and provided information pertaining to government regulations and requirements as

[19] The District Secretary is also often referred to as the Government Agent, GA, and is the administrative head of the district administration.

[20] The District Secretary is accountable to the government in Colombo and is the administrative officer in charge of the district administration.

well as facilitating the approval of plans, authorisation and permits. Having a good working relationship with the Divisional Secretaries became a matter of priority for many agencies, and many supported the Divisional Secretaries informally – for example by providing much-needed office equipment. In addition to the district level coordination meetings, divisional level meetings took place. Divisional level meetings were mostly multi-sectoral, but for a huge and complex task such as temporary house construction in Ampara district sector meetings were held at the divisional level.

A *lead agency model* was developed at the district and divisional levels to facilitate coordination. The lead agency provided technical support for coordination meetings, and meetings were often chaired by the lead agency. At the district level lead agencies were in charge of sectors, and most lead agencies were international. At the divisional level the lead agency usually had multi-sector responsibilities. The lead agency model combined the resources of the Sri Lankan government administration such as intimate knowledge of communities and strong informal networks with the modern technology of the humanitarian organizations such as the use of email to call meetings and distribute minutes.

Measured by gaps and overlaps, it is evident that coordination had been a problem in all districts. Poor participation in coordination meetings, lack of aid agency and government experience, the dominance of English as the language of coordination, and differences in culture and approaches to coordination have made coordination a frustrating exercise. Despite a fairly comprehensive institutional structure agency views on coordination were mixed. Chaos reigned in the initial relief phase and the imperative was to deliver as much relief as possible - as quickly as possible. Some agencies argued that better coordination in the relief phase was unrealistic and that coordination was reasonably good in the rehabilitation phase. Others argued that coordination was weak during the crucial early months and that poor coordination persisted, particularly in the livelihood sector. However, coordination improved when the number of active agencies was reduced, when informal coordination became commonplace, when tools and practices were tested and when humanitarian agencies and the government gained experience.

Information management
The lack of household level data on losses, needs and allocation of aid was a barrier to aid effectiveness throughout the rebuilding process. Information management is a complex area that requires the inputs of professionals with a combination of information management skills,

computer skills, and knowledge of the aid delivery system. Aid agencies and the government initiated several projects to overcome the lack of information, but requirements for accurate information, the sustainability of information collection efforts, and adaptation to the needs of different users were never fully satisfied. Initiatives have often not fulfilled the expectations and requirements of aid workers in the field, and the lack of accurate information became a stumbling block to speed, fairness and equity in aid distribution and to community consultation.

Many aid agencies failed to collaborate with the village level administrative officer, the 'Grama Niladari', who could have helped in identifying beneficiaries and in coordinating at the village level. From the very beginning the Grama Niladhari had been active in information collection at the village level, but they became marginalized and did not receive any additional resources or training. The role of the Grama Niladhari became restricted to serving as an information provider for the Divisional Secretariats.

Aid standardization

Initially aid agencies delivered aid in standard packages, without considering specific household needs. The affected population was concerned that dry rations were provided in fixed quantities, with for example large quantities of flour being distributed to households that preferred rice. Also livelihood support was at the outset based on standard interventions rather than on support adapted to household needs. Push cycles, fish boxes, weighing scales for fish traders, toolkits for masons and carpenters, sewing machines, seeds and animals, utensils (paddy boiling pots, food preparation machines etc.) and flour grinding machines/blenders were often provided without regard for the household's pre-tsunami occupations and their opportunities for making use of the support. The same households had in many instances received the same standard intervention several times. Sometimes households would ask for the standard items although they did not need them, i.e. sewing machines, because this is what they expected the agency to provide. Credit facilities often did not address issues such as loss of collateral and inability to pay high interest rates. As a result many small businesses and home-based economic activities had not been restarted. However, as the rebuilding process shifted to rehabilitation and development, several non-governmental organizations began to diversify their livelihood interventions in response to differences in household needs and specific household vulnerabilities.

Standardization turned out to be a problem in the shelter and housing sector as well. Temporary houses were standardized and not for example adapted to the need to accommodate extended families. With respect to permanent houses many said they wanted to make adjustments to make them more culturally and practically suitable to the needs of individual families. In particular many of the resettlement schemes were based on standard designs, yet important requirements could have been met if small adjustments had been allowed for. For instance, some wanted flat concrete roofs that would allow for a new floor later on rather than sloped roofing that would make building another floor more complicated and costly.

Quality of aid

Communities complained about the quality of aid, and the problem persisted throughout the rebuilding process. In the relief phase many households found that the flour included with the dry rations was of sub-standard quality. Boats had been distributed without nets and engines, or without the appropriate nets. In other cases their sea worthiness was poor. Toolkits for masons and carpenters were often of low quality or the sets were incomplete. Even though many temporary houses were of excellent quality, poor quality was a concern in some areas. Due to poor quality and severe delays in the start-up of the construction of permanent houses in several districts, many temporary houses needed upgrading. Some aid agencies concede that they were not aware of internationally-accepted standards (such as the Sphere standards) and that their priority was to build as many temporary shelters as possible as quickly as possible. They also blamed delays in the provision of government guidelines. Guidelines were not made public until the construction of temporary houses was well under way in all districts and completed in some.

Poor quality was caused by a number of factors such as i) the imperative to deliver quickly to meet urgent needs and to spend a large amount of funds within a short period of time, ii) lack of knowledge about international quality standards combined with delays in standard setting by the government, iii) contractors who were corrupt and who did not deliver according to the specified requirements, and iv) lack of involvement by the future users of the aid – for example boat owners or house owners. Some agencies had paid special attention to quality and had for example spent well above the average budget on temporary housing, producing temporary houses supplied with water, sanitation facilities and electricity.

Participation by affected communities

Practically all aid agencies strongly believed that participation was desired. According to the guidelines for humanitarian organizations, the rationale for participation is to ensure that aid is based on needs in order to avoid dependencies and to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster. Immediately after the tsunami, participation was defined primarily as *information sharing* and *information collection*. Firstly, aid organizations began to provide information about events and programmes through the display of posters and handouts as well as at public meetings. Secondly, most agencies collected information from communities in the form of surveys or more ad hoc cross-checking of beneficiary lists. Perhaps due to the ad hoc nature of many of these efforts, complaints persisted. Often the affected population had not been adequately informed about the distribution of relief items, and as a result many were not aware of the time and venue of aid distribution. Delays in the delivery of inputs to restart livelihoods or in the progress of housing projects were not conveyed to communities in an adequate and systematic manner. Many organizations did not adopt transparent and objective criteria for the selection of beneficiaries. Whereas most agencies agree that consultation was superficial in the relief phase, almost all the agencies reported that they consulted extensively with the communities after the first frenzied phase. Consultations included formal participatory assessments, repeated visits by agency staff for discussions with formal or informal community representatives, and discussions with the local government officials.

Beneficiary participation in *project implementation* was common. However, participation tended to be limited to contributions in the form of labour, for example clearing of building sites for house construction. A number of agencies involved the affected population in the choice of house designs as well. Agencies believed that active participation by beneficiaries would reduce dependencies as households were mobilized to actively contribute to recovery efforts. Other aid agencies referred to efficiency arguments and believed the active involvement of affected households would keep costs down. Yet others believed that participation would ensure that aid was matched with needs, for example in cases where households were presented with a choice of house designs for their new house. Moreover, aid agencies encouraged participation to ensure transparency and accountability to the affected communities.

Participation in project implementation ensures the involvement of the affected population in the aid delivery process but does not include them in decision-making on allocation of resources and services. The

involvement of the affected population in decision-making was minimal. For example, should aid be delivered in the form of cash or kind? Did people prefer to stay in their pre-tsunami homes or to be resettled? How much support did they really need to rebuild small businesses? Moreover, there were no effective sub-national political bodies that could function as arenas for discussing broader issues and for setting priorities for the tsunami rebuilding process in the districts. However, it should be noted that as the rebuilding process got under way a number of initiatives were taken by donors to strengthen the capacity of the Municipal Councils to deliver services.

Sri Lankan stakeholders, particularly politicians, expressed concerns over the aid agencies' weak *accountability* to affected communities. Aid agencies attempted to address this concern through mechanisms such as the publication of beneficiary lists, sharing information with the Divisional Secretaries, and closer consultation on resource allocations with communities, but the problem persisted. On their part, the affected population often complained to public officials, and a large number of appeals were made to the local level government institutions – in particular to the Divisional Secretariats. Communities also demanded accountability by raising concerns directly with community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations and international aid agencies. For example when community based organizations were found guilty of corrupt practices, villagers confronted them directly in some cases, whereas in other cases they were too scared to do so.

Accountability was weak for a number of reasons:

- The tsunami relief and rehabilitation operation was driven by the need to deliver goods and services as quickly as possible. Other concerns, such as establishing mechanisms for accountability and transparency were secondary.
- The affected communities were not organised but people rather competed with each other to access as much aid as possible. Much of the aid was delivered directly to beneficiaries or through community organizations that generally had weak capacity, and functioned primarily as instruments for receiving aid. They had neither an interest in, nor the capacity to make demands on aid agencies.
- Sub-national political bodies did not function as effective arenas for planning and decision-making concerning the tsunami rebuilding process. Traditionally the local level political bodies in Sri Lanka have a limited role and few resources. After a few

weeks the role of local level politicians became reduced to bringing the grievances of the affected people to the attention of the government and aid agencies. These interventions were often construed as political interference by aid agencies and government officials.

- The coordinating bodies set up by the aid agencies and the government functioned as information sharing bodies and not decision-making bodies.

Support to sub-national governance institutions

Sri Lanka is endowed with an institutional structure that reaches out to each village. The government administrative service covers the country comprehensively; similarly voluntary organizations exist in every village. Although government institutions and civil society organizations in the north eastern part of the country were used to humanitarian crisis after two decades of war, the south had little experience in disaster management. Almost all the Sri Lankan officials and aid workers recollect how they worked day and night for the first three months after the tsunami, mobilizing extra resources and putting aside all other non-essential work. According to the international principles for aid delivery, the challenge for the international aid agencies was how to support those efforts already under way.

Donors started a number of programmes to address the lack of resources that hampered the effectiveness of government institutions at the sub-national level. As a result of these programmes government institutions had been provided with transport facilities, office equipment and technical staff for instance through the CADREP programme[21], and government officials in the south said the available resources were sufficient (early 2006), whereas in particular the shortage of technical officers continued to be a concern in the east.

Apart from the involvement of the District Secretaries and the Divisional Secretaries in conducting coordinating meetings, significant involvement of other public officials in the recovery process was restricted. Key public officials such as the director of housing, the director of planning, the Samurdhi[22] officers, and the social services were often not adequately briefed on the tsunami rebuilding issues. Whereas effective coordination between aid

[21] The CADREP (Capacity Development for Recovery Programme) programme that was implemented by UNDP contributed to this outcome.
[22] Samurdhi is a social security programme

organizations and sub-national government institutions was the objective of the relief and rehabilitation phase, the development phase required multi-stakeholder planning through a process that needed to go beyond information sharing and consultation. The production of the Integrated Livelihood Development Plans was an attempt to improve planning through a process that involved important stakeholders in the livelihood sector.[23] Yet some aid agencies worried that the limited involvement of governance institutions in planning and decision-making processes in the districts is likely to reduce the long-term benefits of the tsunami aid since government institutions have not been prepared to take over public facilities (for example health and water sanitation sectors), staff does not have the technical capacity, and budgets are not in place to pay for running costs.

Support to Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations

According to the survey of Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations, four of five had worked with their 'tsunami communities' before the tsunami. The strength of the Sri Lankan organizations has been their capacity to work closely with communities and to mobilize community-based networks for volunteering, and many also raised funds in Sri Lanka that enabled them to remain active throughout the tsunami rebuilding process. The affected population valued aid agencies who had set up offices in close proximity to their villages and who had employed staff from their own communities. These two factors facilitated access to aid agencies. Although the involvement of Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations in the capital-intensive housing sector was limited, they made a significant contribution to the construction of temporary shelters. A majority of them had also been involved in the livelihood sector, often in partnerships or with funding from international aid agencies.

After the initial rush had subsided, many partnerships were formed between Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations and international aid agencies. After six months, approximately 50% of the international aid agencies reported having a local partner. As many as 75% of Sri Lankan organizations had more than one donor of which 32% received funding only, while 41% said they had established broader collaboration in the form of partnerships (July 2005). The majority of the Sri Lankan organizations had contracts of more than two years with their donor or partner.

[23] Different institutions produced the plans in close collaboration with ILO and RADA.

Sri Lankan organizations assessed their partnership with international donors positively. Donors were helpful to them in numerous ways and provided infrastructure facilities and training for capacity building as well as information and advice. International aid agencies equipped Sri Lankan counterparts with novel techniques and tools for better institutional and financial management. The capacity-building programmes consisted of training in management, accounting and reporting, but some agencies also provided training on substantive issues such as child rights, conflict sensitivity, marketing, mobilization of aid recipients, savings and credit management, leadership skills etc. Some organizations said they wanted more training on methodologies introduced by international partners.

Despite the positive assessments by Sri Lankan organizations little informal interaction took place between international agencies and local organizations because of language and cultural barriers. The lack of informal coordination between international and Sri Lankan organizations, increasingly common among international aid agencies, constricted the international aid agencies' knowledge of the local organizational landscape. Different working methods (for example a confrontational style versus a non-confrontational style, preference for informal versus formal interaction), languages, and conceptual frameworks created problems in mutual understanding. Because international donor agencies controlled funding, cultural differences were exacerbated by power relations. As a result, donor agencies dominated the aid discourse. Nevertheless Sri Lankan organizations received a boost, and most of those that received funding were strengthened rather than undermined by international actors.

With the phasing out of their international partners Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations face the challenge of how to sustain their programmes. In order to address this challenge many have started or expanded savings and credit programmes based on revolving funds. However, these new initiatives have clashed with international aid agency programmes that disbursed grants and credit without a savings component, and Sri Lankan organizations blame international agencies for undermining their programmes. Others have set up cooperatives that bring together occupational groups, while some have approached the private sector and have been able to raise funds from companies.

Support to community based organizations

After the initial rush, many aid agencies began to shift from a household-based to a more institutionalized approach whereby

livelihood support was provided through community-based organizations. Membership in community organizations increased aid satisfaction, although to a limited degree. Community organizations were useful as:

- forums for consultation
- instruments for resource mobilization
- conduits for grant and loan programmes
- managers of community projects
- control and monitoring agents

While a minority of aid organizations opted to work with existing community-based organizations in the villages combined with investing in furthering their capacities, the majority of the aid agencies had decided to form their own community organizations, causing such organizations to mushroom in the tsunami-affected areas. The affected population worried that this phenomenon would undermine the existing organizations that had been functioning well in their villages for a number of years. Micro-credit organizations were particularly vulnerable to competition from community organizations that provided grants.

Sri Lankan organizations criticized donor agencies for acting with rush and urgency, for imposing unrealistic targets and timeframes, and for not investing sufficiently in capacity-building programmes. They argued that effective partnerships with community-based organizations required long-term investments, but that donors were often not prepared to commit funding for the long term. Funding agencies expected community-based organizations to apply objective criteria to beneficiary selection, to engage in the systematic planning and management of aid, and to adopt participatory and transparent methods of monitoring. However, despite the relatively long history of community-based organizations in Sri Lanka, spanning more than three decades, and their capacity to mobilize the affected population in a voluntary manner, their capacity to work as formal organizations with well-defined intervention methodologies, formal procedures for electing leaders, systematic accounting and regular meetings is often very low. Moreover, small organizations, often deeply embedded in local communities, had experienced that language barriers and lack of organizational capacity prevented them from approaching international donors.

Impact of aid: lessons learned

In many ways the reconstruction process in the south was a success. Much of the house construction was completed early and a lot of support was provided in the livelihood sector. In the east and the north rebuilding was disrupted by increasing tensions and conflict. Nevertheless one and a half years after the tsunami a majority of the households observed that their lives were characterized by feelings of hopelessness, uncertainty, unhappiness, discomfort, fear and anxiety. Very few households in the four communities said that their lives had returned to normal. The prevalence of these feelings and perceptions across different economic strata, indicate that aid had not been effective in addressing the well-being of the affected people. Yet it is interesting to note that the community that reported the highest levels of well-being had also achieved the fastest rate of completion of the construction of permanent houses.

One and a half years after the tsunami household incomes were lower than before the tsunami (July 2006). A total of 60% of households reported a reduction in monthly income, and the majority of the respondents felt their socio-economic status had fallen. Households had fewer income sources than before, there had been a shift towards casual labour, and many households had not been able to resume their previous income-generating activities. However, the reconstruction also offered opportunities for employment. These factors indicate that many remained vulnerable one and a half years after the tsunami – despite good overall recovery.[24]

There were no significant differences in satisfaction levels between different income groups, between the sexes, or between the young and old. However, households without male adults of working age (female-headed households) were less satisfied, but the difference was small. These findings suggest that aid agencies had been relatively successful in targeting female-headed households. Individuals with academic degrees were least satisfied. One possible explanation is that this group had better access to information about the large amounts of funding available and had higher expectations of benefits. Households with unemployed members were more satisfied than others. Perhaps those who owned few assets before the tsunami and who managed to get access to valuable resources, for example a new house were better off after the tsunami than before.

[24] Good progress in income recovery was also noted in the ILO surveys, see for example: ILO (2005): Third Needs Assessment Survey for Income Recovery (NASIR 3). A survey sponsored by the ILO. October 2005.

Early on communities complained that aid distribution was unfair, in particular for more valuable items such as boats, bicycles, sewing machines and permanent houses[25]. Residents believed that aid delivery was systematically biased against households that did not have the capacity to negotiate access to aid with aid agencies. The community perception was that the genuinely affected households and the real victims had not received their fair share. Households that were poor before the tsunami and households that suffered after-effects from the tsunami, either physically or emotionally, lost out in the aid allocation process. For example, families who had been affected by loss of family members were often not able to attend when aid was distributed or to take the time to meet with agencies, whereas extended families were in a position to use multiple strategies for accessing aid. These perceptions are supported by the survey data. Households with disabled members had been less successful than others in recovering pre-tsunami income levels and small families (one to three members) were less satisfied with aid than larger families. Inequity in distribution created tension and conflict in communities as families fought over access to aid, although these tensions were reduced over time. Later on aid agencies began to target the poorest more systematically and data from July 2006 show small differences between income groups in terms of the support that households had received.

Lessons from house construction: cash transfers and the 'buffer zone[26]*'*

The single most important factor that explains aid satisfaction is residential circumstances. Households that had built a new house on the plot of land where their old house had been before the tsunami, reported the highest level of aid satisfaction (80%). Most of these households had rebuilt their own houses with donor funding channelled through the government. Households that had been resettled in new houses reported much lower levels of aid satisfaction (46%). This finding reaffirms the high human costs involved in resettlement. Only between 30% and 40% of households that lived in camps, in temporary shelters, with friends and relatives, and in renovated houses reported that they were satisfied.

[25] Data from October 2005.

[26] The 'buffer zone' was the term used for the policy that restricted people from moving back to areas close to the sea. The width of the zone varied from 100 meters in the south to 200 meters in the east.

There were three models for house construction:

- *Owner driven model:* The affected household was provided with cash grants in instalments (Rs. 250,000 to rebuild a fully damaged house and Rs. 100,000 to rebuild a partially damaged house). Donor funding for this programme was channelled through the government. This was the most widely used model, and this type of funding was made available for households that wanted to rebuild their houses in the pre-tsunami location.
- *Donor-driven model*[27]*:* Aid agencies and other charitable organizations built houses for the affected population. Generally contractors were employed for construction, and the beneficiaries had a choice of three to four house designs. Sometimes beneficiaries also provided some input in the form of labour.
- *Community-based model:* In this model, design, finances and house construction were handled by community organizations. This model was rarely used in Sri Lanka, but when used it enabled aid agencies to build low-cost houses.

Two years on there had been a shift from the donor-driven to the owner driven approach and from the use of contractors to payments of funds for construction directly to owners. The community-based approach had also gained popularity. Other agencies had begun to select contractors with a proven track record or smaller and cheaper contractors. In part the shift was due to a realization of weaknesses inherent in the use of contractors:

- the low quality of work often delivered by contractors
- corruption
- the high costs involved in using contractors
- limited possibilities for adapting houses built by contractors to the present and future needs of the families
- the management of the relationship to contractors was perceived by aid agencies as difficult and time-consuming
- the use of contractors reduces participation by the affected households
- the legal aspects of the work was time-consuming

[27] This model was also referred to as the relocation model.

Data on aid satisfaction show that beneficiaries were more satisfied with cash grants than with a house donated by aid agencies.[28] In part the difference in aid satisfaction between those who received cash grants and those who received new houses from aid agencies is due to dissatisfaction over resettlement. Cash-grant households rebuilt their houses on their pre-tsunami land, whereas the households that received a new house in many cases had to move to resettlement schemes. The success of the cash-based approach depended on timely and effective monitoring and on availability of funds to build a complete house. However, due to the disruption of house construction resulting from the war, it has not been possible to fully assess the merit of the cash-based versus the contractor-based approach.

One and a half years after the tsunami, 66% of households whose houses had been completely destroyed had received new houses or cash grants for reconstruction.[29] Many of the remaining households had been promised new houses but had not received them yet while 28% of households that were not entitled to this support had received support.[30] These findings suggest that the targeting of affected households had been a problem.

The introduction of the *100-200 meter zone* slowed reconstruction efforts in numerous ways. The introduction of the zone initially meant that over 50,000 families were compelled to shift from their original locations to new land[31]. The construction of new houses on new land was a complex technical, bureaucratic and social process. Lack of suitable land for resettlement, problems in identifying beneficiaries, and changes in government policies were common problems that caused delays.

The 'buffer zone' population's situation was further aggravated when they moved to new houses outside the zone. Disruption of social networks, negative impacts on livelihoods, and delays in the provision of community and public infrastructure were common problems in the resettlement schemes. Moreover arrangements had not been made for the transfer of ownership of the land. Consequently the value of those new houses as collateral for loans was much less than the corresponding value of their former houses located within the 'buffer zone',

[28] The data is from the two communities in the south where both types of housing aid had been received.
[29] Figures from the four communities.
[30] The households had *not* been deliberately included on the grounds that they were poor.
[31] Following the reduction of the zone, the authorities revised the figure to 36,000.

except for households that had lived in temporary shelters and on encroached land. Restrictions also applied to the sale of the houses. The 'buffer zone' population showed their frustration through low levels of aid satisfaction.

Lessons from the livelihood sector: targeting and tailoring[32]
Effective targeting of the households turned out to be difficult because aid agencies did not have access to reliable household data on losses, needs, and delivery of aid. Furthermore, effective livelihood interventions were hard to design because support had to be tailored to needs and vulnerabilities at the household level, often with community organizations as the mediator between aid agencies and households. Poor targeting of aid was recognized early on as a major weakness in the delivery of aid in the livelihood sector, and problems were initially documented in the fisheries sector. Despite acknowledgement of the problem, poor targeting has persisted. In July 2006 34% of households reported that their economic activities had been affected, but only 41% of those economically affected households had received livelihood assistance in the form of cash or kind. A total of 45% of households that had *not* been economically affected had received this form of support. This means that coverage was almost the same among affected and non-affected households. One explanation for the mismatch could be that housing damage had been used as criteria for livelihood support rather than the impact of the tsunami on livelihoods.

Community-based organizations were an important tool for aid delivery in the livelihood sector. One out of two were members of community-based organizations, with more members among the relatively better-to-do. A troubling finding is that almost two-thirds of the population who classified themselves as 'very poor' were not members of community organizations. Survey findings show that households that received livelihood assistance had higher pre-tsunami incomes than those who did not receive aid, with the exception of households in one of the communities.[33] On average members of community-based organizations earned more than non-members before as well as after the tsunami. Because the poorest and most

[32] For a more detailed discussion on livelihood recovery see: Haug, M. and C. Weerackody (2006): Delivery of tsunami aid for livelihood development at the community level, in Paul Steele ed.: *Livelihoods in post-tsunami Sri Lanka: building back better?* Institute for Policy Studies Working Paper Series No 10, Colombo

[33] The mean income of those that received livelihood assistance in Batticaloa was lower than those that did not receive assistance (survey July 2006)

vulnerable tend to be mobile, scattered and unorganized, aid agencies need to invest time, effort and resources to reach them.

Support provided by non-governmental organizations tended to be in the range of Rs. 10,000 to 40,000. For businessmen who had been running medium-sized businesses, the amounts they were offered were not sufficient for them to restart their livelihoods. Moreover, aid agencies did not adequately address household level barriers to the resumption of activities. The physical injuries or psychological problems many suffered from after the tsunami continued to hinder a number of families from engaging in their previous economic activities.

Extensive local displacement also impacted negatively on local economies. Displacement was exacerbated by the government's policy of resettlement that was given tacit approval by aid agencies through their construction of resettlement villages. The policy of resettling the affected population from the coast to 'tsunami villages' affected livelihoods in a number of ways: many found it more difficult to find work and to travel to work, whereas others lost their markets and pre-tsunami economic links were disrupted.

The use of cash versus kind

Most of the cash grants for *house construction* or renovation of an old house had been spent on the agreed purpose. Practically all families in the east reported that they had used the assistance for either renovating or rebuilding their houses. In the south a considerable number of households had spent the money on other purposes, mainly because households had received more support in the south – often from both the government and aid organizations. Some had even received a new house in addition to cash support. The owner driven housing programme has been called a success with the main problem being that Rs. 250,000 was not enough for the construction and the original funding scheme had to be supplemented by other sources.[34]

Cash grants were the most highly valued form of *livelihood* support in three of the four communities. [35] Of the respondents, 40% had spent the livelihood cash grant on economic activities while 26% had spent the grants on other purposes – for instance to obtain medical treatment

[34] The Ministry of Finance and Planning and the Reconstruction and Development Agency (2006): Post-Tsunami Recovery and Reconstruction. December 2006.

[35] The community in Jaffna could not be reached at the time and hence the survey included two communities in the east and two in the south.

and to settle past debts[36]. Whereas 58% of the households in the high income group (above Rs. 10,000 per month) had spent cash grants on economic activities, only 32% in the lowest income group (less than Rs. 5,000 per month) had spent cash grants on generating income. This finding suggests that cash grants are only spent on economic activities after more immediate needs have been met.

Tsunami aid, ethnicity and war

In a way the story of the tsunami recovery is two stories. One is the story of the south, and the other is the story of the north and the east. Six months after the tsunami aid satisfaction varied considerably across districts. The highest level of satisfaction was reported from the Tamil community in Jaffna (80% were satisfied) and the lowest from Ampara (18%). The opinion of those in Batticaloa in the east was equally divided. With the escalation of the conflict in the north and the east this picture changed[37]. In July 2006 aid satisfaction was low in the village in Ampara (32%), albeit an improvement compared to the earlier. Aid satisfaction in the village in Batticaloa was reduced to 10% due to the impact of the war on the progress in the housing sector. The survey results showed that in the two villages in the south the majority was satisfied with the aid they had received.

Many Tamil and Muslim politicians accused the government of being partial in the distribution of resources, favouring its own Sinhalese constituency in the south of the country at the expense of Tamils and Muslims in the most heavily affected east of the country. These perceptions indicate that the government failed to ensure an inclusive rebuilding process, effectively reinforcing ethnic divisions.

Do the differences in aid satisfaction reflect inequity in aid distribution across districts and communities? All ethnic groups received roughly the same amount of support during the first six months. During this period households report a surprisingly consistent pattern of interventions across ethnic and religious groups. However, with the start of house construction, differences in aid satisfaction grew between beneficiaries of housing cash grants in the east and in the south. Over 60% of the recipients of housing cash grants in the south reported that they were satisfied with aid, in Batticaloa 25% were satisfied and in Ampara 37% (July 2006). The differences in aid

[36] The rest had either spent the cash for both purposes or they had not spent the cash yet.

[37] The data sets are not directly comparable because the first survey was based on a representative sample from the districts whereas the second survey covered all affected households in four villages.

satisfaction between recipients of cash grants for house construction reflected the slow progress of completion of houses in the east compared to the south.[38] Another factor was that cash grants from aid agencies and charitable organizations were more common in the two communities in the south than in the east.

Several factors may explain the difference in aid satisfaction between the south and the east. The war turned the situation around for Tamils in Batticaloa – from optimism to despair. In Ampara a combination of topographic, geographical, political, administrative, and institutional factors explain why rebuilding has been slow. All these factors reinforced each other to produce a crisis in the reconstruction process in Ampara, manifest in the low level of aid satisfaction and in a feeling of neglect and discrimination expressed by politicians and civil society leaders. The institutional structure for aid delivery also differed. Sri Lankan organizations delivered most of the aid in the south whereas the government delivered most of the aid in the east. Membership in community organizations was much higher in the south (90% in Hambantota and 79% in Galle) than in the east (31% in Batticaloa and 28% in Ampara), a reflection of differences in the prevalence of community-based institutions. Civil society organizations in the east had been weakened due to the war, and aid delivery to communities was subsequently made more difficult.

Recommendations

The recommendations below are concerned with how aid agencies can strengthen their efforts to support households, organizations and governance institutions after disasters and how donors can facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations.

Realistic timeframes
Realistic timeframes should be established at the outset of operations to enable agencies to adopt appropriate methodologies that allow them to operate according to the principles for the delivery of humanitarian aid. Time frames should be assessed in each case, for example on the basis of the type of intervention that is needed (life-saving versus reconstruction) and the relevant category of emergency (conflict versus natural disaster, recurring natural disasters versus one-off disasters).

[38] Acccording to government figures the completion rates for owner driven houses were: Galle (69%), Hambantota (79%), Ampara (17%) and Batticaloa (28%). Progress in the donor driven scheme was also slower in the east.

Aid agency methodologies
Aid effectiveness and positive impact depend on *how* aid is delivered. Agency applications and programmes should be assessed not only by objectives and outputs, but also by the agency's approach, methodologies and tools. Effective methodologies and tools for targeting, consultation, participation, quality control, transparency, accountability, and monitoring are crucial for successful aid delivery.

Explore the use of cash
Aid agencies should further explore models for the use of cash. Cash support transfers control from aid agencies to the affected population and empowers them to become their own aid managers. Households are often better positioned than aid agencies to make informed spending decisions and to ensure that goods and services meet quality standards. Vulnerable groups may need extra support in addition to cash.

Monitoring
Aid agencies should improve the monitoring of humanitarian aid to minimize corruption, to improve targeting, to ensure quality and to increase the usefulness of aid. Monitoring should be integrated with organizational learning systems. National governments should also monitor aid agencies to ensure that aid agencies meet performance criteria and that aid agencies are accountable and transparent.

Geographical focus
In order to improve their knowledge of communities, organizations and institutions aid agencies should prioritize quality relations with a small number of households or communities over superficial relationships with a large number of households or communities. Knowledge is required to implement the humanitarian principles. As an additional benefit a more selective approach would ease coordination problems.

Coordination and information management
Effective coordination depends on access to timely, accurate and relevant information. The interface between coordination and information needs further study. Donors, governments and international aid agencies should allocate resources for the development of tools and human resources in this area. Models for collaboration between government and aid agencies should be developed based on best-practice cases.

Joint planning and decision-making with sub-national governance institutions
International agencies should work closely with sub-national

governance institutions in order to reduce gaps and duplication, to improve planning, and to help build local competence to sustain interventions in the long term and to ensure that preventive capacities are built as an integrated part of the rebuilding efforts. Flexible funds to meet resource requirements at the sub-national governance level should be made available by donors. Planning and decision-making is not a simple exercise but it is an extremely complex process. This report has tried to highlight these complexities by describing the diversity of actors, their different perceptions, processes that affect decision-making and resource allocation, and effects of aid on different actors etc. These complexities need to be reviewed, mapped out and incorporated into planning and decision-making processes.

Collaboration between international, national and local aid organizations

Effective collaboration between international aid agencies, national and local organizations should build on an explicit recognition of the strengths and weaknesses of the each organization. Coordination frameworks should be structured to ensure an equal playing field, for example by allowing for the use of local languages. The prevention of new disasters and the sustainability of interventions depend on the creation of effective links to existing local economic and political processes.

Sammendrag

Marit Haug
Tsunami bistand og humanitære prinsipper.
En studie av gjenoppbyggingen i fem distrikter på Sri Lanka.
NIBR-rapport: 2007:5

Denne rapporten tar for seg hvordan de internasjonale hjelpeorganisasjonene som strømmet til Sri Lanka etter tsunamien 26. desember 2004 arbeidet i forhold til retningslinjene for humanitært arbeid. Levde organisasjonene opp til sine egne prinsipper om å støtte Sri Lankas egne institusjoner og organisasjoner, og ikke minst støttet organisasjonene opp om befolkningens egen innsats for gjenoppbygging?

Studien besvarer disse spørsmålene gjennom en analyse av gjenoppbyggingsprosessen i fem av de hardest rammede distriktene i Sri Lanka: Jaffna, Batticaloa, Ampara, Hambantota og Galle. Gjennom en periode på nærmere 20 måneder ble data samlet inn fra sentrale aktører i gjenoppbyggingsprosessen: lokale myndigheter og politikere, sivilsamfunnsorganisasjoner, lokalsamfunn, hushold, og internasjonale hjelpeorganisasjoner.

Nærmest umiddelbart etter tsunamien gikk flere tunge givere sammen om å tilpasse prinsippene for humanitær bistand til situasjonen på Sri Lanka og med et stort antall sivilsamfunnsorganisasjoner, en høyt utdannet befolkning, samt et statsapparat som hadde forgreininger helt ned på landsbynivå, så lå forholdene til rette for bruk av lokale krefter. Samtidig utgjorde tsunami responsen en unik situasjon fordi det aldri tidligere var samlet inn så mye penger per rammet person til en humanitær katastrofe; med 7000 dollar per person hadde hjelpeorganisasjonene muligheten til å bidra med mye mer enn normalt – slik at for eksempel nye hus kom til å utgjøre en stor andel av gjenoppbyggingsinnsatsen. Til tross for de store budsjettene og den omfattende gjenoppbyggingsoppgaven så ble mye av pengene bevilget eller gitt under forutsetning av at de skulle brukes raskt; innen ett til to år. Presset i forhold til å bruke penger fort, noe som ble et slags

suksesskriterium, førte til mangel på planlegging, mangel på lokal involvering og slurvete arbeid. På denne bakgrunn trekker studien følgende hovedkonklusjoner:

- Nødhjelpsfasen var vellykket og umiddelbare behov ble i hovedsak dekket som et resultat av massiv innsats fra lankeserne selv med støtte fra internasjonale hjelpeorganisasjoner fra over 20 land. Hver av de fem landsbyene vi undersøkte hadde fått hjelp fra mellom 6 og 10 hjelpeorganisasjoner. Imidlertid ga mange av organisasjonene bare litt støtte eller støtte til noen få slik at hjelpen ble ulikt fordelt innen landsbyer. Til å begynne med skapte dette spenning og konflikt i flere av landsbyene.
- De viktigste utfordringene under gjenoppbyggingen var knyttet til følgende forhold:
    - Unøyaktige lister utarbeidet av myndighetene over hvem som skulle motta hjelp – dette problemet ble aldri løst og skyldtes en blanding av bruk av bestikkelser for å komme på listene og politisk press på dem som utstedet listene.
    - Landsbyorganisasjoner som favoriserte noen av de rammede framfor andre; slike organisasjoner var ofte ikke representative for alle i lokalsamfunnet.
    - Utilstrekkelig koordinering av bistanden gjorde at noen fikk hjelp flere ganger, mens andre fikk veldig lite i forhold til det de hadde mistet. Likevel fungerte koordineringen i perioder bra i noen av distriktene gjennom et nært samarbeid mellom lokale myndigheter og internasjonale hjelpeorganisasjoner som bidro med teknisk bistand til koordineringsarbeidet.
    - Innføringen av en utvidet 'strandsone' førte i første omgang førte til at 30,000 mennesker måtte flytte på seg. Denne flytteprosessen medførte store administrative, praktiske og menneskelige kostnader som i betydelig grad kompliserte og forsinket gjenoppbyggingsprosessen.
    - I tillegg til ulik fordeling var dårlig kvalitet på det som ble levert i mange tilfeller et problem. For eksempel når det gjaldt husbygging så skyldtes dette ofte slurv fra entreprenørens side. Etter hvert satset flere organisasjoner på en modell der folk selv fikk penger til å gjenreise sine egne hus.

Til sammen bidro disse faktorene til at hjelpen ikke i tilstrekkelig grad var basert på behov og sårbarhet hos mottakerne.

Selv om lokale myndigheter var sterkt engasjert i gjenoppryddings og gjenoppbyggingsarbeidet rett etter tsunamien ble de etter hvert tilsidesatt og arbeidet i stor grad drevet av hjelpeorganisasjonene. Et norsk støttet initiativ via UNDP som tilførte lokale myndigheter mer ressurser slik at de kunne spille en mer aktiv rolle ble oppfattet som svært verdifullt.

Lokale organisasjoner var imidlertid i sterk grad involvert i gjenopp-byggingen med mye støtte fra utenlandske partnerorganisasjoner. Fire av fem av disse organisasjonene hadde arbeidet i de tsunami rammede områdene tidligere og de hadde derfor god kjennskap til lokalsam-funnene. Seks måneder etter tsunamien hadde 50% av de utenlandske organisasjonene begynt å samarbeide med lankesiske organisasjoner.

Flere organisasjoner bidro med kontantbeløp til gjenoppbyggingen av boliger. I de landsbyene der hus ble ferdigstilt før denne studien var ferdig var denne metoden vellykket og tillot folk å bygge slik de selv ville, og pengene ble i all hovedsak brukt som forutsatt. Også når det gjaldt støtte til inntektsbringende arbeid så mottakerne på direkte pengestøtte som den mest effektive og fleksible hjelpen, i forhold til for eksempel støtte i form av nytt utstyr som ofte var av dårlig kvalitet.

Å treffe riktig var den store utfordringen i forhold til støtte til dem som mistet levebrødet sitt. Det var svært arbeidskrevende for organisasjonene å identifisere dem som faktisk var rammet, og dertil var det en utfordring å gi riktig form for støtte. De fattigste fikk ofte minst blant annet fordi de ikke var organisert, og et generelt problem var at den støtten som ble gitt var for liten til at mottakerne faktisk kunne begynne på nytt igjen.

Selv om tsunamien førte til samarbeid på tvers av partigrenser og etniske grupper tok det ikke lang tid før tradisjonelle motsetninger og konkurranse om ressursene tok over. Mens gjenoppbyggingen sør i landet på mange måter var vellykket, førte nye kamphandlinger i nord og øst til at gjenoppbyggingen i mange områder stoppet opp. Data fra tidlig i gjenoppbyggingsperioden viser at det ikke var signifikante forskjeller i støtten som ble gitt til ulike etniske grupper, men etter hvert om forholdene ble mer usikre i nord og øst, så økte disse forskjellene, samtidig som tamilske og muslimske politikere var sterkt kritiske til det de oppfattet som myndighetenes favorisering av områdene i sør. Tsunamien førte derfor ikke til felles innsats for gjenoppbygging på tvers av krigens motsetninger slik mange hadde håpet på.

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1 Humanitarian aid delivery: views from five districts

This report presents the findings from a study on the tsunami rebuilding process in Sri Lanka. We were interested in how the interface between international aid agencies and Sri Lankan organizations and governance institutions functioned. A considerable body of knowledge exists about how this interface should be managed, but practice lags behind theories and principles in this area (ALNAP 2004).

1.1 Principles for humanitarian aid delivery

As the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Organizations in Disaster Relief (1994) plainly states: 'The immediacy of disaster relief can often lead organizations unwittingly to put pressure on themselves, pressure which leads to short sighted and inappropriate work.' To improve their own performance, international organizations have over the last decade attempted to regulate relief interventions through guidelines and codes of conduct for actions in emergencies. The principles embedded in these guidelines emphasize meeting needs, ensuring the participation and agreement of the affected population and supporting the capacities of local communities, organizations and government institutions.

The principles for delivery of humanitarian aid set out in the Code of Conduct emphasize the right to receive aid and the right to offer aid based on needs. Aid agencies should respect culture and custom and build on the capacities of local communities, organizations and government structures. Beneficiaries should be involved in the management of relief aid. Relief aid should reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster and seek to avoid long term dependency on relief

aid. Agencies should be accountable for financial performance and effectiveness to donors and to the people whom they seek to assist.

The Sphere project[39] sets out minimum standards for humanitarian action combined with more specific proposals for how aid organizations should implement the standards. The affected people should actively participate in the assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the assistance programme. Humanitarian interventions should be based on an initial assessment and on the identification of protection and assistance needs. Humanitarian assistance should be targeted, provided equitably and impartially, based on vulnerability and on the needs of individuals or groups affected by disaster, and agreed among the affected population.

In contrast to the inter-governmental agencies, the non-governmental sector is believed to have certain strengths with respect to how aid should be delivered to affected people and communities. Usually, the 'value added' of the non-governmental delivery channel is considered to be:

- closeness to communities
- ability to reach marginalized and vulnerable groups
- capacity to forge partnerships with local/national organizations and thereby strengthen local structures and institutions for aid delivery, mobilization and advocacy

Did the non-governmental channel live up to these strengths in the delivery of tsunami aid?

1.2 The impact of the tsunami and the funding response

When the tsunami struck on 26 December 2004, it directly affected a narrow coastal strip of Sri Lanka with the most severe damage being inflicted on the heavily populated semi-urban east coast. The impact of the tsunami killed an estimated 35,000 people, 95,000 houses were partially or fully damaged, and the livelihoods of 150,000[40] families were affected. Public infrastructure, including roads, hospitals and

[39] www.sphereproject.org
[40] The Ministry of Finance and Planning and the Reconstruction and Development Agency (2006): Post-Tsunami Recovery and Reconstruction. December 2006.

schools, was damaged. Yet the impact of the tsunami was localized in that it did not have any considerable impact on the economic performance of the Sri Lankan economy. The tsunami was first and foremost a human tragedy.

The tsunami response was unique because of the abundance of funding committed by private and public donors. According to the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) total funding was over US$ 7,100 for every affected person.[41] The availability of ready funding and the high media profile that accompanied the response meant that a host of international aid agencies arrived almost immediately and began to supplement the rescue operation that had been started immediately in Sri Lanka. The unique funding response and mobilization led to an unprecedented push to deliver aid quickly and created dynamics that apply to a lesser extent in disasters that do not receive the same attention. However, most of the challenges and constraints identified in the report are likely to apply to other disasters as well.

With the massive amount of relief aid being delivered immediately, the emergency needs for food, medicines and shelter were met quickly and rehabilitation assumed priority. After the relief phase – during which the affected people were housed in public buildings or with friends and family – attention shifted to shelter. According to TAFREN figures, more than 50,000 temporary shelters were built within six months, exceeding the government's stipulated requirement for transitional shelter (Shelliah 2005). However, almost 3,000 families remained in camps whereas the remaining families lived with their extended families, friends or in their damaged houses. The majority of the affected people were fishermen and people employed in fisheries-related sectors. The fisheries sector received the bulk of the immediate aid, and by the end of 2005 government statistics indicated an oversupply of boats.

1.3 Design and methodology

The international aid delivery system constituted the focus of the study and more specifically the international non-governmental aid agencies. The aid delivery system was approached from a district perspective, rather than a national perspective. This vantage point was chosen on the assumption that a lot of the operational work involved

[41] Tsunami Evaluation Coalition: Synthesis report: Executive Summary. July 2006.

in the rebuilding process would take place at the district level. In each of the selected district the study focused on the interface between international non-governmental organizations and three sets of organizations and institutions: sub-national governance institutions, Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations and communities and households.

- *Sub-national governance institutions.* Donor agencies had emphasized that reconstruction efforts should be based on the principle of subsidiarity and consequently each reconstruction activity should be designed and implemented at the lowest competent tier of government[42]. Despite strong mobilization by sub-national governance institutions in the aftermath of the tsunami, very few extra resources were allocated to them for tsunami work and their role was principally to facilitate the work of aid agencies. In this context, how did international aid agencies work with sub-national governance institutions in relation to coordination, planning, decision-making and implementation of programmes?
- *Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations.* According to humanitarian principles international organizations should build on the capacities of local organizations. Yet they have been criticized for undermining local organizations by imposing their own time frames, conceptual frameworks and aid packages.[43] Whereas international aid agencies funded and gave technical support to many Sri Lankan organisations, relations between them were at times tense. How did the two parties perceive each other, and how did they work together?
- *Communities and households.* International humanitarian agencies should support the efforts of communities and households, involve them in aid management and be accountable to them. Non-governmental organizations are considered to be well placed to work closely with communities and households and to adapt support to needs and vulnerabilities. At the same time relief situations are characterized by pressure to deliver quickly and to spend money fast. How did aid international aid organizations resolve this dilemma?

[42] The World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the Japan bank for International Cooperation (2005): Sri Lanka 2005 Post Tsunami Needs Assessment. Preliminary damage and needs assessment. Undated.
[43]For an early and classic critique of humanitarian aid see Harrell-Bond, B. (1986): Imposing aid: emergency assistance to refugees, Oxford University Press, Oxford

Based on the framework above, four categories of stakeholders in the reconstruction process were identified:

- communities and households
- sub-national governance institutions (public administration and political bodies)
- Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations
- international humanitarian aid agencies

Data was gathered from all these categories of stakeholders and findings were reported back in the form of reports and presentations at seminars in the districts. The study followed the rebuilding process over a period of one and a half years, from July 2005 to December 2006 and this time frame allowed for data collection from each stakeholder group two or three times. The findings from the study also reflect the changes that took place over this period.

Five districts were selected on the basis of a combination of affectedness and geographical spread: Batticaloa and Ampara in the east, Hambantota and Galle in the south and Jaffna in the north. [44] While the tsunami had a devastating impact on all these districts, in the north and the east the tsunami came on top of the destruction caused by two decades of the armed conflict that had come to a halt with the Cease Fire Agreement signed in February 2002.

[44] Kalutara in the western province was dropped after the first phase of the study because few aid agencies worked in the district. As the conflict escalated, the research team was not able to complete data collection in Jaffna.

Table 1.1 *Overview of the impact of the tsunami in the five districts*

	Ampara	Batticaloa	Galle	Hambantota	Jaffna
Deaths	10,000	3,000	4,200	3,100	2,600
Damaged houses[45]	24,438	17,948	12,781	4,084	5,109
Percentage of national financing needs[46]	16%	13%	16%	5%	7%

Galle and Hambantota are predominantly Sinhalese. Jaffna and Batticaloa are predominantly Tamil, whereas the coastline of Ampara is inhabited by Muslims and Tamils.

The study findings are based on:

- in-depth interviews with over 200 politicians and public officials (July 2005, March-June 2006 and November 2006).
- a survey of 85 Sri Lankan aid organizations (July 2005).
- interviews[47] with more than 100 of the largest Sri Lankan and international non-governmental organizations (December 2005 – March 2006, December 2006).
- a household survey of the affected population in six districts[48] (July 2005).
- five community studies where participatory methods, in-depth interviews, mapping and a households survey were used for information collection (March 2005-October 2006). One community from each district was selected. The household survey included four communities because the community in Jaffna could not be reached for security reasons at the time of the survey (July 2006). The survey covered 840 respondents.

[45] Post Tsunami Recovery and Reconstruction. Joint Report of the Government of Sri Lanka and Development Partners. December 2005.
[46] Sri Lanka 2005. Post-Tsunami Needs Assessment. Preliminary Damage and Needs Assessment.
[47] The ten most important agencies in each district (budgets and impact) were selected based on the survey results and also on consultations with the coordinating bodies in each district
[48] The first phase covered six districts.

The findings from the first survey in five districts can be generalized to those five districts, whereas the survey results from the five communities are valid for those communities and cannot be generalized to districts, ethnic groups etc. It is important to bear this in mind when the findings from the surveys are presented. Finally the research team presented the findings at seminars in the districts attended by representatives from all stakeholder groups. The seminars allowed for dissemination to stakeholders in those districts and also validation of findings.

The weaknesses and strengths of the international tsunami response are likely to apply to other humanitarian contexts since they resulted from the way in which the 'international aid delivery' system operated and cannot be explained by the Sri Lankan context alone. It is important to note, however, that the study findings do not necessarily apply to individual organizations.

2 The post-tsunami aid delivery system: who received what, and how?

The extraordinary mobilization of donor funding, which included private contributions from a large number of countries throughout Asia, Europe and the United States made the tsunami aid response unique. This broad-based mobilization is reflected in the diversity of aid providers at the district level. As a result practically everybody received relief aid, although some received little. This chapter describes what households and communities received and how the delivery system functioned at the sub-national level.

2.1 What did people receive?

2.1.1 Relief: standardized aid across communities

The relief response was fast and included the delivery of food and non-food relief items, medical services, debris clearance, trauma counselling, etc. The affected communities typically received cooked meals, dry rations, milk powder, mats, mattresses, pillows, plastic buckets, soap, towels, toothbrushes, toothpaste, mosquito nets, clothes, candles, bottled water, medical attention and medicines, and tents. Annex 2 provides an overview of the support provided to one village in Batticaloa.

In the transitional phase, aid agencies and the government delivered temporary shelters (construction started from the second month after the tsunami), toilets for camps and individual shelters, bathing facilities within camps, cleaning of wells and water purification facilities, weekly food stamps worth Rs. 375 pr person, government grants of Rs. 2500 to buy kitchen utensils, Rs. 5000 in government

grants for restoring livelihoods (provided three to four times to each household), household goods, kitchen utensils and kerosene cookers, uniforms, stationary, school bags, toys and food for children, water tanks and water, first aid boxes, cash grants from philanthropists and voluntary organizations (generally between Rs. 5000 and Rs. 10000), cash for work, temporary schools and pre-schools, temporary childcare centres and psycho-social counselling.

Although not all villages received the same aid, the above list is typical. Besides the government cash grant of Rs. 5000 that had been disbursed in all the five villages, residents in four of five villages had also received cash grants from aid agencies, government departments (Fishery Department) or individual philanthropists. Cash grants from individuals were reported from Ampara and Galle and the grants had been provided by Arab philanthropists (Ampara) and tourists (Galle).

Typical rehabilitation assistance took the form of one-day boats, multi-day boats, canoes, fish nets, bicycles and fish boxes, sewing machines, tool kits for masons, carpenters and electricians, cattle, poultry and poultry pens, agricultural implements, cash grants and interest free loans, government housing grants for all the villages and permanent housing under construction in four of the five villages, cash grants from aid agencies for house renovation and for building of new houses, employment for village youth in aid agency programmes, vocational training, construction of houses and schools, construction of tube wells, road construction, construction of community halls and nurseries.

The household and community data (October-November 2005) suggest that there were substantial variations in what households had received. Some households had received up to ten types of support while others had received very little beyond the support provided by the government. Whereas each community reported between 15 and 40 aid interventions[49], households[50] reported on average three to four aid interventions. In the July 2005 household survey, households were interviewed individually and under-reporting may have occurred. Assessments in the community studies were done collectively and under-reporting was made more difficult. Yet, even accounting for under-reporting at the household level, it seems that many interventions have been narrow in scope and coverage, resulting in inequitable distribution of goods.

[49] Community study, October 2005
[50] Household survey July 2005

2.1.2 Temporary shelter: quick progress

Over 50,000 temporary shelters were built in six months, exceeding the government's needs assessment for transitional shelter (Shelliah 2005). Temporary shelters were provided for 50% of the families whose houses had been damaged or destroyed. Almost 3000 families remained in camps whereas the remaining families lived with their extended families, friends or in their damaged houses. Parallel with the construction of temporary houses, the process of building permanent houses was initiated. According to TAFREN some 95,000 houses needed to be fully or partially rebuilt at a cost of USD 400 million (Shelliah 2005).

A majority of the international agencies and large Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations such as Sewa Lanka, Sarvodaya and faith based organizations were involved in the construction of temporary shelters. Some international non-governmental organizations signed up Sri Lankan organizations as sub-contractors to reach their housing targets. For example, Oxfam partnered with Sarvodaya in Batticaloa. The average cost of a temporary shelter was Rs. 65000 (USD 600).[51] Whereas some agencies built only a few shelters, others constructed up to 5000.

During the start-up phase of temporary shelter construction, there were discussions on standardisation of designs and on how the resources committed to temporary shelter construction could be utilized for the construction of permanent houses. Those discussions revealed the need to clarify the relationship between temporary and permanent housing construction, both conceptually and operationally. For example, is it economical to build temporary shelters that can be upgraded to permanent shelters? Whose responsibility should it be to provide electricity, water and sanitation? Should temporary shelters be designed to be easily disassembled to enable people themselves to shift them to new areas if required?

2.2 Who provided aid?

The tsunami affected a narrow strip of the coast around the island, with the exception of parts of the West coast. The affected areas were easily accessible and people from surrounding towns and villages and

[51] This figure is based on the information provided by the agencies interviewed.

from all over Sri Lanka immediately began massive rescue and relief efforts. Individuals, priests, non-governmental organizations, the military, local government officials (Grama Niladharis, Divisional Secretaries and District Secretaries), politicians (Provincial Council Members, Pradeshiya Sabha Members and Members of Parliament), tourists and international agencies contributed in a unique collective effort. The household survey (July 2005) showed that during the first two weeks after the tsunami, people in the immediate environment were the most important aid providers. The affected population reported that they had received aid from relatives (45 %), neighbours (37%), the temple (32%), church (15%), individual philanthropists (15%) and the mosque (8%). This spontaneous support network was replaced in the following weeks by the professional aid agencies and the government.

The massive national relief effort crossed ethnic and religious boundaries. Tamil and Muslim households in Batticaloa and Ampara on the east coast reported having received aid from Sinhalese in Kandy, Kurunegala, Kegalle and Colombo and Buddhist temples provided aid to affected Muslims and Tamils in the conflict affected district of Ampara. This concern and mobilization contrasts starkly with the politicized nature of earlier relief efforts to help the war affected population.

Households received aid in cash and kind also from foreign philanthropists, largely from tourists (Galle) and from philanthropists from the Middle East (Ampara). Remittances from abroad were important in the communities in Ampara and Jaffna. Affected people in Ampara had received aid from relatives and family members who worked in the Middle East, while affected people in Jaffna had received assistance from relatives based in Europe.

The picture that emerged was of a very complex support web involving localized structures and long-distance transfers of funds from relatives and philanthropists abroad. The support reflected the high degree of social and economic linkages between local communities in Sri Lanka and countries in many regions of the world.

2.2.1 The government's role

From the time of the tsunami up to April 2005, government institutions set other work aside to concentrate on tsunami relief and rehabilitation issues. Almost every government employee told stories of how they worked round the clock for weeks despite a number of

them having experienced personal losses. The government undertook the following work during these critical weeks:

- The Divisional Secretariats[52] provided food and water and set up temporary camps, and were also involved in coordination of immediate relief distribution. The Grama Niladharis[53], Samurdhi Development Officers[54] and the Community Development Officers attached to the Divisional Secretariats were mobilized for the initial relief effort. Many of them report having worked day and night.
- Relevant government authorities carried out urgent repair works of electricity supplies, roads, bridges, etc.
- The Divisional Secretariats and the relevant sector ministries conducted damage and needs assessments. Local level officials also provided information directly to international agencies and non-governmental organizations.
- After a few weeks the government started systematic provision of support in cash and kind to individual households through a tsunami ration card system and payments of death compensation. After information had been collected by the village level administrative officers, certification and recommendation of affected beneficiaries who were eligible for cash support from the government rested with the Divisional Secretaries. The Divisional Secretaries head the divisional secretariats.
- The Divisional Secretaries handled appeals from the affected population. The affected population often disagreed with decisions made by the Divisional Secretaries on eligibility and protested by seeking meetings with the Divisional Secretaries.
- The Divisional Secretaries carried out progress monitoring of rebuilding work based on information collected by the Grama Niladharis, technical officers, Samurdhi officers and other officers attached to the Divisional Secretariats.

By the end of four weeks, a majority of the affected population reported that they had received assistance from the government. By August 2005 the government had emerged as the most important

[52] The Divisional Secretariat is the main operational unit of the Government at sub-national level and is the administrative level below the district level.
[53] The Grama Niladharis represent the government at the village level.
[54] The Samurdhi Development Officers are in charge of the Samurdhi programme which is a social welfare programme targeted at the poorest in Sri Lanka.

service provider – according to the perceptions held by the household survey respondents (July 2005). The majority of people had received the weekly tsunami food stamps (Rs. 175), the weekly cash support (Rs. 200) and three or four instalments of the cash support (Rs. 5000) that had been channelled through the government and funded by the World Bank and other donors for the benefit of 220,000 families. Later, housing grants (in total 79,184) were channelled through the government. Perhaps reflecting the government's outreach and its traditional role as welfare provider, the majority of the affected population expected the government to be their most important provider of support in the future.

The government continued to be an important aid provider in the east as opposed to in the south where aid agencies had become the most important aid provider (July 2006). The government had provided the aid in 52% of the cases[55] in Sainthamaruthu (Ampara) and in 85% of the cases in Kirankulam (Batticaloa).[56] Of the 39 households interviewed in Velvettithurai (Jaffna) 26 households had named the government as one of the key aid providers. However, in the south the government provided aid in 30% of the cases in Kudawella (Hambantota) and in 41% of the cases in Koggala (Galle). Although the findings from the communities are not representative of the general situation throughout the east and the south, they indicate a fundamental difference in the mode of aid delivery between the two areas. Whereas a multitude of small international aid agencies and local organisations worked in the south, fewer non-governmental organizations operated in the east.

2.2.2 Political parties

Political party members engaged in distribution of food, drinking water, clothes, medicines, temporary shelter and clearing of debris. These activities were funded by donations from individuals, including party members, private companies and civil society, as well as from party funds. In some cases, politicians funded activities using their

[55] The percentage is calculated based on the total number of cases of aid provided, which is much higher than the number of households. The figures refer to the relative importance of different aid providers. The value of the aid received from each aid provider could not be calculated.

[56] The figures are based on the survey of four communities, two in the east and two in the south. The figures are not representative of the overall situation in the south and east, but they do provide an indication of a fundamental difference between the south and the east in the mode of delivery.

own funds. The ruling parties made use of resources available through the central government, whereas parties in control of local government utilized local government resources. The positive contribution of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) or People's Liberation Front, a nationalist party representing the majority Sinhalese and at the time a partner in the ruling coalition, was noted by other political parties. The JVP set up relief camps, they provided dry rations and medicines, and constructed temporary houses of a high standard.

Members of all political parties agreed that there was cross party mobilization and cooperation after the tsunami, but when politicians reverted back to traditional competitive politics not long after the tsunami, the opportunity for further collaboration was lost. Party members felt that the opportunity to capitalize on the surge of national solidarity was missed by the government and in July 2005 the Supreme Court rejected the proposed joint government-LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) tsunami aid delivery mechanism. The mechanism had been proposed to facilitate collaboration between the government and the LTTE in the rebuilding efforts.

Many Tamil and Muslim politicians accused the government of being partial in the distribution of resources, favouring its own Sinhalese constituency in the south of the country at the expense of Tamils and Muslims in the most heavily affected east of the country. These perceptions indicate that the government failed to ensure an inclusive rebuilding process, effectively reinforcing ethnic divisions.

Politicians and sub-national level political institutions, the Members of Parliament for the local area, representatives of the Urban and Municipal Councils, the Pradeshiya Sabhas (the locally elected councils) and the Provincial Councils played a minor role in the tsunami rebuilding process. Only 3-6% of the survey respondents, depending on district, say political institutions were important. However, individual politicians in many cases helped people in their own electorates.

2.2.3 Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations

Sri Lankan organizations responded quickly. One in four households said they received support from Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations during the first two weeks of the tsunami. Four weeks after the tsunami nearly 50% of households reported that they had received assistance. Aid delivery by Sri Lankan organizations was consistent and in July 2005 over half of the respondents said that they were receiving aid from Sri Lankan organizations. Sri Lankan

organizations were the most important aid providers in four out of five communities[57]. The communities appreciated the quantity and the monetary value of the support, but also that Sri Lankan organizations were easily accessible. People felt emotionally close to them. Communities valued life-saving rescue and relief, temporary housing, permanent houses and boats. The positive impact of the interventions of the Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations was a result of the work of numerous small organizations and large nationwide organizations often backed by international funding.

A year and a half after the tsunami Sri Lankan organizations were the most important aid providers in Kudawella (Hambantota) (44%) and in Koggala (Galle) (33%).[58] They were less important in Sainthamarathu (Ampara) (19%) and in Kirankulam (Batticaloa) (11%) in the east. In Velvettithurai (Jaffna) 30 out of 39 households reported that they had received aid from Sri Lankan organizations. Since the survey was not conducted in Jaffna, conclusions cannot be drawn in this case.

2.2.4 International aid agencies

The international response was comprehensive. By the fourth week, four in ten households reported that they had received aid, up from one in ten in the first two weeks. International aid agencies that already operated in Sri Lanka expanded their operations to include tsunami related work. Within days, professional humanitarian agencies arrived from Asia, Europe and North America. Some of the smaller agencies were set up *ad hoc* in response to the tsunami. Other agencies expanded their social work in their home countries to include tsunami related work.

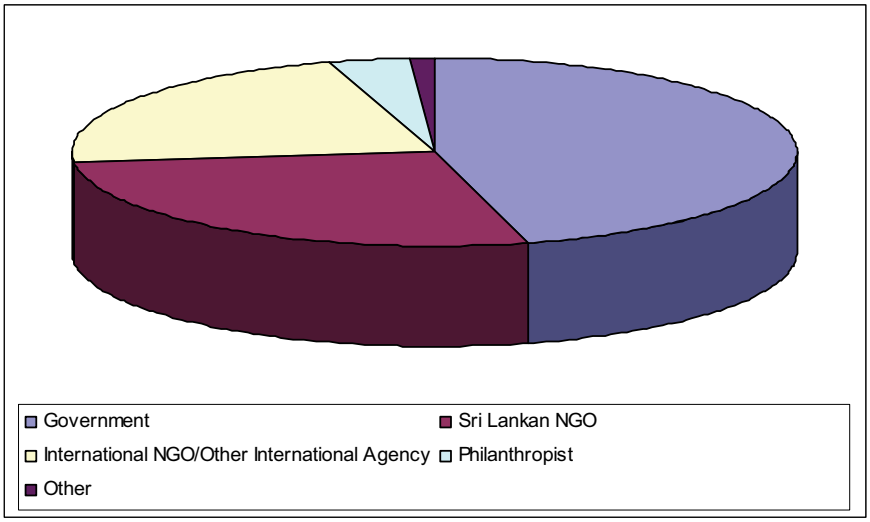
By August 2005 the number of households who received aid from international aid agencies had been reduced. The reduction may have been due to a number of factors. Firstly, many of the relief agencies had left. For example, by mid-August the need for immediate medical attention had been reduced and temporary housing schemes had been almost completed. People were yet to benefit from permanent housing programmes whereas the livelihood sector was dominated by Sri Lankan agencies. Secondly, many international agencies had begun to implement programmes through Sri Lankan organizations.

[57] Based on findings from the five community studies.
[58] Survey of four communities July 2006.

Only 14% of the survey respondents expected international agencies to be important to them in the future. The relatively low trust in the international agencies is perhaps a reflection of the relief mode of the first six months that entailed little systematic and consistent interaction with communities. On the other hand, international aid agencies were important providers of temporary housing.

The role of international agencies continued to be important in the most affected district of Ampara (26%) in the east.[59] Kudawella (Hambantota) reported the second highest number of interventions from international aid agencies (22%) whereas Koggala (Galle) reported fewer cases (17%). International aid agencies had played a minor role in Kirankulam in Batticaloa (4%). None of the households interviewed in Velvettithurai (Jaffna) referred to international aid agencies.

Figure 2.1 *Relative importance of aid providers as perceived by affected communities*[60]



[59] Survey of four communities in July 2006.
[60] The figures are based on cases of aid receipts reported by each household, and not on the value of the aid received.

2.2.5 Community views on aid agencies

Many aid agencies had been active in each of the five communities included in this study. A timeline of aid provision up to October 2005 documented assistance from between 15 and 40 actors, with the community in Hambantota on top with 40 aid providers. The timeline illustrates the breadth of the response from civil society, including religious institutions, national and local non-governmental organizations, government agencies, companies, military groups (the Special Task Force) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), political parties, as well as international agencies, both inter-governmental and non-governmental. The number of Sri Lankan and international non-governmental aid agencies operating in each community varied from six to eighteen. Some communities had more Sri Lankan organizations, others had more international agencies.

Table 2.1 *The most significant aid providers in five communities (October 2005)*

Actors[61]	Ampara	Batticaloa	Galle	Hambantota	Jaffna
Rank 1	2 INGO 1 SLNGO	The temple LTTE 1 SLNGO	1 SLNGO 1 political party 1 INGO Grama Niladhari	1 SLNGO	2 SLNGOs
Rank 2	1 SLNGO 1 INGO	Special Task Force	3 SLNGOs 1 UN agency	1 bilateral agency 1 SLNGO	1 SLNGO
Rank 3	2 SLNGO 3 INGO Ministry of Health	2 INGOs	2 temples 1 SLNGO 1 private company	1 politician 1 Grama Niladhari	Government institutions

All communities ranked non-governmental organizations higher than government agencies. Moreover, Sri Lankan organizations come across as more significant than the international aid agencies. The ranking was based on two criteria: a) the amount of aid provided by aid agencies and b) aid agency closeness, both physical and psychological, to communities.

[61] INGO: international non-governmental organization, SLNGO: Sri Lankan non-governmental organization

2.2.6 The usefulness of the aid provided by the different agencies

The government was the most important aid provider according to the household survey results (July 2005). The reason is perhaps that the government shouldered many responsibilities. Cash support provided by the government was highly valued and the coverage was high. The government assisted with practical problems, such as requirements for replacement of lost documentation. The government also facilitated access to aid delivered by aid agencies.

However, affected households explained that they had an ambivalent relationship to the Grama Niladharis, the Divisional Secretaries and other government officials. The Grama Niladharis were not directly involved in aid delivery, but they were indispensable to obtain approvals for external assistance. At the same time Grama Niladharis took bribes, did not distribute relief goods that they had been entrusted with, and delayed the delivery of services. Grama Niladharis would, for example, delay payment of tsunami benefits, keep goods in their offices without distributing them, and delay distribution of application forms for housing. The affected population blamed them for delays in the delivery process.

Affected people valued the assistance of a diverse mix of agencies, including large Sri Lankan organizations such as Sewa Lanka, Humedica, LEADS, EHED, the Rural Development Foundation and Lions Club, and international aid agencies such as World Vision, the American NGO which has had a long standing presence in Sri Lanka, and GOAL, the Irish humanitarian organization that arrived after the tsunami. The timely and well organized initial assistance of the LTTE and the JVP was highly appreciated, although communities ranked them as number one only after open disagreement.

The common characteristics of the organizations that had been highly rated by the respondents are summarized below:

- They responded to immediate needs, secured the lives of affected persons and provided temporary shelter and other essential needs.
- They had promised permanent houses or were in the process of building permanent houses.
- They had supported restoration of livelihoods and had helped in children's education.
- Geographical closeness was valued. People preferred aid agencies with local offices, either in the village/town or close by the

village/town. Alternatively, frequent visits to the village and follow-up were considered important elements of a good agency approach.

- Agencies that stayed with the population and contributed with a number of interventions were valued.
- The affected population preferred to be assisted by aid workers from the same ethnic background as themselves.
- The employment of people from the local communities was appreciated.

In general the views expressed by the affected people concerning non-governmental organizations were more positive than those expressed in the public discourse in Sri Lanka. The public debate on non-governmental organizations has been heated and non-governmental aid agencies have been severely criticised for not being accountable to Sri Lankan stakeholders and for their high overhead costs.

2.3 From relief to development

Due to the abundance of funding and equity considerations, many aid organizations expanded their interventions after the initial relief phase:

- New groups were included as target groups. In the war-affected districts the focus was broadened to include people who were affected by the war. Most agencies reported that they included poor people although they had not been affected by the tsunami. According to some agencies as many as 30% of their beneficiaries were poor people. Agencies who concentrated their tsunami work in the coastal areas expanded their work to include areas inland. In the south the coastal communities were well-off compared to inland communities, so this shift was also grounded in concerns about the need to target poorer areas.
- A significant number of the aid agencies which had started work after the tsunami planned to continue with development interventions in the tsunami-affected districts for some time. These interventions included long term projects, for example income generation, capacity development and development of public infrastructure.

Many links of solidarity were created between communities in Sri Lanka and agencies abroad, and perhaps some of these links will be

maintained over time for the benefit of the tsunami-affected communities.

As agencies moved from relief to development and took a more long term approach, their intervention methodologies also changed from those characteristic of a relief mode to more development-oriented interventions.

Table 2.2 *Characteristics of interventions in the relief phase as compared to the development phase*

Relief	***Development***
Speed	*Trust*
Random	*Targeted*
Consultation	*Participation*
Coordination	*Planning*
Sub-contracting	*Partners*

- Trust. Whereas the imperative in the relief phase was speedy and quick delivery in response to the immediate needs of people, agencies that planned to stay on emphasized the need to establish trust by working closely with the communities, often through community-based organizations. The imperative to deliver speedily led to problems of quality, standardization of interventions that were not adapted to needs, and inequity in distribution causing reduced aid efficiency and effectiveness.
- Targeting. During the relief phase, affectedness by the tsunami was the only criterion for targeting, and in the tsunami-affected areas aid was often delivered randomly. After the immediate needs were met, aid agencies began to expand their target groups to include poor and war-affected households. At the same time some agencies became more selective in the targeting of tsunami-affected people and they introduced targeting of vulnerable and marginal households. Vulnerable groups need comprehensive and long term support tailored to their needs, for example sustained relief combined with strategies to create income.
- Participation. Whereas the relief phase was dominated by random distribution and limited consultation, most of the aid agencies that continued beyond the relief phase adopted a more bottom-up and participatory approach whereby they worked to strengthen the capacities of local communities and community-based organizations to influence and sustain aid programmes.

- Planning. Coordination between agencies and the government in order to avoid gaps and overlaps was the objective of the relief and rehabilitation phase. However, the development phase required multi-stakeholder planning through a process that went beyond information and consultation. Planning was needed to secure government preparedness to take over public infrastructure, the required technical capacity to run those facilities, and the availability of budgets to pay for running costs.
- Partnerships. In the relief phase a majority of aid agencies implemented their own programmes, using Sri Lankan organizations as sub-contractors, or they implemented construction programmes with contractors. Emergency management was not seen as the forte of Sri Lankan organizations, but a skill which the international agencies had developed through their experiences in other disaster areas. Developing partnerships with Sri Lankan organizations was i) not considered, ii) suitable organizations were not found, iii) the process of partnership development was seen to be time consuming, or iv) working through Sri Lankan partners was seen to slow down the process. This assessment changed as more aid agencies began to work through partners. Even then a number of smaller organizations felt bypassed by international aid agencies due to their lack of knowledge of English.

2.4 Summary

It is argued that relief aid was standardised across communities, with a surprisingly consistent pattern of items delivered in each community. The government had the best outreach, with practically every household reporting they had received the cash support provided through the government. Sri Lankan and international aid agencies initially had more or less the same coverage, with Sri Lankan agencies slightly ahead. However, as many international agencies pulled out after the immediate relief phase and others began to deliver aid through Sri Lankan partners, Sri Lankan organizations, emerged as the most important aid providers at the community level. Communities appreciated aid providers that were consistent and approachable. After a few months, as agencies shifted from the relief mode they began to rely more on trust, systematic targeting, participation by affected communities, planning in collaboration with local authorities, and partnerships with Sri Lankan organizations.

Initially it seemed reasonable to assume that the tsunami aid could have a positive long term impact on the affected districts, given both the broadening of focus and the developmental nature of interventions being planned after the relief phase. However, as aid agencies began to leave the southern districts during the third year after the tsunami, many of them without leaving sustainable projects behind, the hoped for long term development impact of the tsunami aid seemed unlikely. Moreover there were concerns about the availability of government resources to maintain all the new facilities that were planned or were under construction. The resumption of the conflict in the north and east shattered hopes for a developmental impact of the tsunami aid in those areas.

3 Housing construction and livelihood support

Most of the non-governmental aid agencies that were interviewed were involved in the housing construction or livelihood sector. This chapter examines the dilemmas and challenges encountered by the agencies working in these two important sectors. The challenges of targeting and equitable distribution are clearly illustrated.

3.1 Housing construction

According to the first government figures around 95,000 houses were partially or fully damaged. Houses were constructed by households, communities and aid agencies and aid agencies spent up to USD 18,000 on a house[62]. Many of the aid agencies were new to housing construction, but due to a combination of need and the availability of funding, numerous aid agencies and charitable organizations became involved in the sector. RADA signed Memoranda of Understanding with around 250 aid agencies. There were three models for housing construction:

- *Owner driven model:* The affected household was provided with cash grants in instalments (Rs. 250,000 to rebuild a fully damaged house and Rs. 100,000 to rebuild a partially damaged house). Donor funding for this programme was channelled through the government. This was the most widely used model, and this type of funding was made available for households that wanted to rebuild their houses in the pre-tsunami location. Initially more than 50,000 households were included in this scheme (for fully damaged houses), which was later expanded as the 'buffer zone' was reduced. Eventually 79,184 families had accepted grants

[62] Highest reported figure by the aid agencies interviewed. The costs increased over time.

under this programme.[63] In many cases aid agencies topped up government funding when it transpired that costs had escalated and that funding was insufficient.

- *Donor driven model*[64]*:* Aid agencies and other charitable organizations built houses for the affected population. Generally contractors were employed for construction, and the beneficiaries had a choice of three to four designs. Sometimes beneficiaries also provided some input in the form of labour. Eventually around 30,000 houses were to be built on this model.[65]
- *Community based model:* In this model, design, finances and housing construction were handled by community organizations. This model was rarely used in Sri Lanka, but when used it enabled aid agencies to build low-cost houses.

Two years on there had been a shift from the donor driven to the owner driven approach and from the use of contractors to payments of funds for construction directly to owners. The community based approach had also gained popularity. Other agencies had begun to select contractors with a proven track record, or smaller and cheaper contractors. In part the shift was due to a realization of weaknesses inherent in the use of contractors:

- the low quality of work often delivered by contractors
- corruption
- the high costs involved in using contractors
- limited possibilities for adapting houses built by contractors to family needs
- the management of the relationship with contractors was perceived by aid agencies as difficult and time-consuming
- the use of contractors reduced participation by the affected households
- the legal aspects of the work were time-consuming

[63] In all 79,184 were eventually to be constructed under this programme (The Ministry of Finance and Planning and the Reconstruction and Development Agency (2006): Post-Tsunami Recovery and Reconstruction. December 2006.)
[64] This model was also referred to as the relocation model.
[65] The Ministry of Finance and Planning and the Reconstruction and Development Agency (2006): Post-Tsunami Recovery and Reconstruction. December 2006.

3.2 Constraints on implementation of housing projects

The introduction of the 100-200 meter zone was the single most important factor in delaying reconstruction efforts. Most of the other factors listed as constraints could be traced back to the introduction of the 100-200 meter zone. The introduction of the zone initially meant that 50,000 families were compelled to shift from their original locations to new land. With the revision of the buffer zone the figure has been revised downwards to 36,000 by RADA. The construction of new houses on new land is a complex technical, bureaucratic and social process. The problems involved led some agencies to shift resources from resettlement schemes to owner driven schemes.

The following *bureaucratic* constraints were listed by aid agencies:

- ***Land for resettlement.*** Lack of a clear government policy on the exact boundaries of the buffer zone has drastically hampered the work of the agencies. Lack of land was a problem in particular in Ampara, Batticaloa and Galle. Very few houses had been completed in the donor driven schemes in Ampara and Batticaloa by March 2006. Agencies complained that land had not been made available for housing construction to start. Some land had not been formally acquired and the former owners intervened to stop construction. The quality of the selected land was often poor and unsuitable, either because it was steep or subject to recurrent flooding. Consequently a lot of time, effort and resources had to be allocated to the preparation of land for house building. The responsibility for land preparation had not been clarified. Filling up marshy lands also required obtaining an EIA from the Central Environmental Authority (CEA) which was a difficult process for aid agencies. There was no government coordination with the CEA.
- ***Beneficiary lists***. The lack of beneficiary lists slowed progress. One Sri Lankan organization had received more than eight beneficiary lists and each list contained changes in the names of beneficiaries. Non-governmental organizations blamed public officials for acting under pressure from politicians. Officials did not deny this allegation but they blamed aid organizations for not consulting them. Without access to the final beneficiary lists, aid agencies were unable to ensure participation by the intended beneficiaries. Aid agencies claimed that they had every right to know the identity of the beneficiaries. Aid organizations also

complained about inaccuracies in the beneficiary lists. One organization reported that they had to disregard 61 names from a beneficiary list of 176 given by a Divisional Secretary as they were not eligible to receive houses. Aid agencies spent resources on verification but they also faced threats and pressure from the communities when they rejected names that had been approved by public officials and sometimes by the political authority as well. Some agencies had decided not to question the accuracy of the lists because of the high costs involved. Others believed that 98% of the names were accurate. Some organizations felt that the risks involved in checking were too high.

- ***Policy-making.*** Government policies were unclear and contradictory, often causing agencies to adopt a 'wait and see' attitude combined with trying to seek clarifications from local or national authorities. For example, information about the reduction in the width of the buffer zone trickled down after long delays. The change meant that many households shifted from the donor driven programme to the owner driven programme. Co-funding arrangements, where the home-owner driven programme was topped up by donor funding, made the situation very complex. Government representatives had formalized co-financing arrangements in some districts, for instance in Batticaloa. In other districts aid agencies were bewildered and unsure about whether co-funding was allowed.
- ***Decision-making powers at the local level.*** Aid agencies experienced delays in decision-making by local authorities. The decision-making process was politicized and officials were not empowered to make independent decisions. The need to refer decisions to Colombo slowed the process. Furthermore, decisions by the central government were not effectively and formally communicated to the local level, often leaving the local administrators in a state of despair. The large number of government agencies involved in the approval process compounded the problem. Provision by local authorities of adequate drainage, water and sanitation, electricity, access roads, surveys etc. lagged behind the construction process.

Moreover, there were a number of *technical* constraints related to the building process itself.

- Contractors did not deliver on time, and they often delivered poor quality work.

- Shortage of material and poor quality material seemed to pertain mainly to the east where, for example, poor quality of timber and roofing tiles slowed construction
- Procurement of material that was not available locally was time-consuming
- Lack of skilled labour and qualified engineers particularly in the East

3.3 Distribution patterns for housing assistance

A year and a half after the tsunami, 66% of households whose houses had been completely destroyed had received new houses or cash grants for reconstruction.[66] Many of the remaining households had been promised new houses but had not received them yet while 28% of households that were not entitled to this support had received support. These findings suggest that the targeting of affected households had been a problem.

Whereas international organizations, Sri Lankan organizations, small charities and private companies had been very active in housing construction in the south, fewer agencies had engaged in the east. This difference in the use of delivery channels is also reflected in the data from the two communities surveyed. The replacement rate for permanent houses built by donor agencies was 85% in Kudawella and 45% in Koggala. In Koggala the remaining houses were under construction as part of another donor driven scheme (July 2006). None of the households in the two communities in the east had received a new house by a donor agency. The situation was also the same in Velvettithurai (March 2006).

As opposed to the southern communities, the eastern communities had received support through the owner driven housing scheme. However, most of the households had not received all the instalments and their houses had not been completed. Although funding had been allocated, disbursements were dependent on the progress made in the construction process.

[66] Figures from the four communities.

Table 3.1 *Damage and allocation of cash grants and permanent houses*

Community	Comp-letely damaged houses	Partially damaged houses	Cash grants for house repairs	Cash grants for housing construction	Permanent houses provided by aid agencies	Community level coverage for totally damaged houses
Kudawella	87	78	76 (97%)	44 (51%)	74	135%
Koggala	93	64	32 (50%)	47 (51%)	42	96%
Saintha-maruthu	66	264	152 (58%)	113 (171%)	-	171%
Kirankulam	75	89	72 (81%)	71 (95%)	-	95%

The figures suggest that coverage has been very good for the owner driven scheme, with 95% replacement rate in Kirankulam and over 100% in Sainthamaruthu. Coverage is here used in the sense that people had been approved as beneficiaries of the cash grants, and payment of instalments had started, but the success of the programme in terms of completion rates is too early to assess. Similarly in the south, the outcome of the donor driven and the cash grant scheme in combination has been nearly 100% coverage in Koggala and way over 100% in Kudawella. In two of the villages coverage was over 100% which suggest that households had been able to access housing assistance from more than one donor.

From the outset, the government policy for housing support was very simply put to provide ‘a house for a house’, so in principle the entitlement policy was straightforward. However, the way in which the policy was implemented resulted in some households receiving less than they were entitled to and others receiving more. Inaccuracies in screening procedures and in determining the extent of the damage are likely to provide part of the explanation. For example, the distinction between a non-damaged and a partially damaged house was not always easy to draw. Similarly the line between a fully damaged and partially damaged house was often seen to have been arbitrarily set at 40%. People who felt their houses had been unfairly categorized often pursued their case with great determination, sometimes resulting in their cases being reconsidered and reallocations being made by the Divisional Secretaries. There were also plenty of stories told of people who used bribes to access a larger grant than they were entitled to.

3.4 Resettlement schemes

The need for resettlement schemes stemmed from the introduction of the buffer zone, which when introduced in January 2005, established a 100 meter zone in the South and a 200 meter zone in the north and the east, to which affected people were not allowed to return and rebuild their houses. Subsequently aid agencies were asked by the government to build new houses for this group of people on land provided by the government further inland. From the very beginning this policy was resisted by many communities and in April 2006 the buffer zone was reduced, allowing many to move back, but a zone still remained.

Initially many resettlement schemes were built without consulting the affected people, and in a number of cases people refused to move into their new houses because they were cut off from their earlier areas of residence where they had been able to earn a living and to stay close to friends and family. There are also examples from Ampara of people resisting to move to places where they felt insecure due to the conflict. As the aid agencies began to learn these lessons, agencies cancelled the building of a number of such schemes involving forced resettlement.

In cases where people were brought together from different geographical areas, and hence had different professional, occupational and caste backgrounds, problems were often encountered. There are, however, resettlement schemes which seem promising, in particular in cases where the people already know each other, for instance when an entire village moves into the same resettlement scheme. In resettlement schemes where agencies had put in a lot of work in the form of livelihood assistance and had provided support for the creation of new social networks, the results also seem positive.

The provision of public infrastructure for the new settlement schemes remained a gap in many areas due to lack of funding. Nevertheless, some agencies had begun to provide schools, community halls, vocational training units, tanks and medical clinics – after they had completed housing construction. However, water, sanitation, waste management and environmental issues continued to be of concern in all the districts almost two years after the tsunami. In general aid agencies expected the government to provide these facilities.

The government had not provided households in the resettlement schemes with ownership to their new plots of land. Whereas the affected families had been granted the right to use the land and the house, they did not have the right to sell their new houses. Especially

households whose houses had been located on prime land and with full ownership before the tsunami were worse off in the resettlement schemes. The survey data which will be presented later in this report reveals that only 46% of household in resettlement schemes were satisfied with the aid they had received. This finding testifies to the high social and economic costs involved in resettlement. The people who really benefited from resettlement were those who had not previously owned land, such as squatters or second generation families (adult children living with their parents).

3.5 Livelihoods: standard packages

Effective targeting of the households turned out to be difficult because aid agencies did not have access to reliable household data on losses, needs, and delivery of aid. Furthermore, effective livelihood interventions were hard to design because support had to be tailored to needs and vulnerabilities at the household level, often with community organizations as the mediator between aid agencies and households. Poor targeting of aid was recognized early on as a major weakness in the delivery of aid in the livelihood sector, and problems were initially documented in the fisheries sector. Despite acknowledgement of the problem, poor targeting has persisted. In July 2006 34% of households reported that their economic activities had been affected, but only 41% of those economically affected households had received livelihood assistance in the form of cash or kind. A total of 45% of households that had *not* been economically affected had received this form of support. This means that coverage was almost the same among affected and non-affected households. One explanation for the mismatch could be that housing damage had been used as criteria for livelihood support rather than the impact of the tsunami on livelihoods.

The large majority of Sri Lankan and international agencies were involved in the livelihood sector. Income-generating projects were often implemented through sub-contracting or partnership arrangements between international and Sri Lankan aid agencies. Many Sri Lankan organizations had been involved in income-generating projects in the affected communities before the tsunami. Despite the impression that priority had been given to the fisheries sector, many aid agencies had started initiatives to restore and develop non-fishery related activities. Their occupational focus had been on sewing, carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, coir-making and handicrafts, and support had been provided in the form of toolkits and

vocational training programmes for new recruits to these trades. Moreover, farmers had been provided with agricultural implements, hand tractors, credit and training. Vegetable vendors had received support in the form of push cycles, containers, cash grants for buying vegetables, etc. Women had been provided with hand looms, coir machines, grinding machines, paddy-boiling utensils and food processing machines, grocery items for retail shops, home garden inputs and poultry.

Initially the livelihood interventions were standardized and they did not respond to the specific needs of the affected communities. Many aid agencies had delivered packages such as masonry and carpentry tool kits, push cycles and boxes for fish vendors and string-hopper making machines for women. These standard packages were seen equally across the tsunami affected areas both in the north, in the east and in the south with a comparatively high incidence in the east. Some aid agencies had started training for carpenters and masons in the belief that they would be able to exploit the labour market opportunities resulting from the construction boom after the tsunami. Cases of over-supply of these standard packages and adverse implications on labour and consumer markets were reported from all the regions and particularly from Ampara. However, after a few months aid agencies began moving away from these standard packages diversifying their livelihood interventions to respond to the specific needs of the affected communities. In addition to the above mentioned livelihood interventions which were provided in the form of material goods, many aid agencies had also introduced cash grants and loans or a combination of both to support a variety of small enterprises.

The early livelihood interventions focused on ‘replacing lost hardware’. The resourceful households did well with grants, loans or hardware, but others often needed more support. Market outlets, working environments, and the affected population’s frame of mind had changed and small businesses needed support mechanisms to cope up and sustain their activities. In order to respond to diverse needs, some aid agencies had begun to incorporate a number of other support services into livelihood development programmes such as the provision of raw materials and physical space, facilitation of market links, education and counselling services, etc. An illustration of this type of assistance provided by Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations in the district of Galle appears in Annex 3.

Sri Lankan organizations were concerned about the increasing dependency on aid created through free handouts. Sometimes they

blamed the international agencies for providing free assistance. There were instances reported where Sri Lankan organizations had decided to call off their partnerships with international agencies as the two parties could not agree on the terms and conditions of aid. While some international organizations had insisted on free aid, the Sri Lankan organizations had emphasized the importance of giving aid in the form of either full or partial loans. Free aid has weakened the cultures that Sri Lankan aid organizations had gradually evolved with their clientele, in particular in the savings and credit sector. Despite these differences of opinion, many Sri Lankan organizations had successfully negotiated with their counterparts to combine loan and grants.

Most aid packages delivered by Sri Lankan agencies combined grants and loans. The loan component of aid ranged from 25-50%. In some instances the loan component was 100%. The interest charged on the loan varied from 6-14%. The beneficiaries were expected to repay the loan component to the community organization. Repayments were accumulated in revolving funds set up to disburse future loans. However, some organizations complained that 20-30% of their beneficiaries had failed to repay their loans.

Many Sri Lankan organizations had taken steps to reduce aid dependency and to build beneficiary confidence. Measures to reinforce the self-confidence and discipline of beneficiaries, such as compulsory saving schemes, commitments for an initial investment prior to the release of the grant/loan, and participation in capacity-building training programmes were required to access loans. Perhaps particularly vulnerable groups such as widows and disabled persons were unlikely to fulfil all the criteria and would require special grants. The success of this economic model depends on investment in the institutional and financial management capacities of the community organizations that manage the credit programmes.

3.6 Rebuilding small businesses

The resources of the families themselves had been almost as important as governmental and aid agency resources in terms of rebuilding economic centres. Altogether there had been 119 small businesses or economic centres such as retail groceries, tea kiosks, barber saloons, grinding mills, etc. in the five study communities before the tsunami. Of these economic centres, 101 centres (85%) were damaged in the tsunami. In Kirankulam there had been 15 economic centres and all had been destroyed. 24 out of 35 economic centres were destroyed in

Sainthamaruthu. In Velvettithurai 30 economic centres out of 33, most of which were barber saloons, were destroyed. In Koggala, 10 out of 12 economic centres were damaged while 22 out of 24 economic centres in Kudawella were destroyed. Of the 101 damaged centres, 61 centres (60%) had been restored either with assistance from the government, from aid organizations or with the affected people's own resources. Ten economic centres in Sainthamaruthu had been restored but the source of support for restoration is not known. In the remaining four communities, 28 centres had been restored with assistance from the government or from aid organizations, while the balance of 23 had been revived using family resources.

In three of the communities, new economic centres had emerged. They included four in Koggala, 11 in Sainthamaruthu and three in Velvettithurai. These new economic centres were primarily the retail groceries started with cash or material support given by Sri Lankan organizations, other aid agencies and philanthropists. Some families had abandoned their previous economic activities as they could no longer engage in those activities and instead they had started alternative income generating activities such as retail groceries or tea kiosks.

3.7 Livelihood support: too little to meet needs

A large number of income support programmes were initiated. In one of the communities in the south, income support had been delivered through eight different programmes, including financial assistance to restore small businesses and repair damaged vehicles, income generating activities for female headed households, tool kits and equipment for income generating activities, business loans at 6% interest, credit programmes for self-employment, scholarship programmes for students, vocational training in food technology, driving and entrepreneurship development.

Although many were dissatisfied with livelihood support, it is clear that a majority of households were satisfied, with the exception of households in Sainthamaruthu where reconstruction lagged behind other districts and many households lived in camps. However, many respondents were of the view that the level of livelihood assistance was insufficient to restore livelihoods. Households in Sainthamaruthu (73%) were particularly concerned and said that livelihood assistance was not adequate to achieve full recovery. The same view was held by

households in Kudawella (37%), Koggala (37%) and Kirankulam (19%). It is interesting that only one in five people in Kirankulam, a majority of whom had not received any livelihood support, had complaints about the livelihood assistance received. Perhaps households did not have high expectations or they had been able to exploit new economic opportunities after the tsunami and did not rely on assistance. The increase in the number of people engaged in casual labour in Kirankulam suggests that the community did not rely on aid.

3.8 Delivering livelihood assistance through community-based organizations

Community-based organizations were an important tool for aid delivery in the livelihood sector. 50% of survey respondents were members of community-based organizations, with more members among the relatively better-to-do. A troubling finding is that almost two-thirds of the population who classified themselves as 'very poor' were not members of community organizations. Survey findings show that households that received livelihood assistance had higher pre-tsunami incomes than those who did not receive aid, with the exception of households in one of the communities.[67] On average members of community-based organizations earned more than non-members before as well as after the tsunami. Because the poorest and most vulnerable tend to be mobile, scattered and unorganized, aid agencies need to invest time, effort and resources to reach them.

3.9 Cash or kind

Data on aid satisfaction show that beneficiaries were more satisfied with cash grants than with a house donated by aid agencies.[68] In part the difference in aid satisfaction between those who received cash grants and those who received new houses from aid agencies is due to dissatisfaction over resettlement. Cash-grant households rebuilt their houses on their pre-tsunami land, whereas the households that received a new house in many cases had to move to resettlement schemes. The success of the cash-based approach depended on timely

[67] The mean income of those that received livelihood assistance in Batticaloa was lower than those that did not receive assistance (survey July 2006)
[68] The data is from the two communities in the south where both types of housing aid had been received.

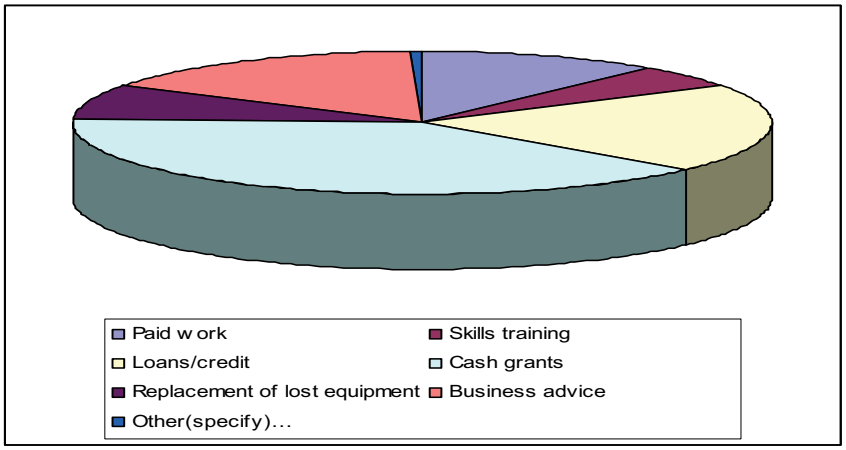
and effective monitoring and on availability of funds to complete house construction. However, due to the disruption of house construction resulting from the war, it has not been possible to fully assess the merit of the cash-based versus the contractor-based approach.

The survey data suggest that most of the cash grants that were received for building a new house or renovating an old house had been spent for the agreed purpose. This finding is interesting in the light of the ongoing debate on cash versus kind as fundamentally different ways of providing support to people's own coping strategies. 99% of the families that received housing assistance in Kirankulam reported that they used the assistance for either renovating or rebuilding their houses. The corresponding figure for Saintahmaruthu was 98%. In the south, 91% of the recipients in Kudawella and 46% in Koggala had used the grant for renovating or rebuilding their houses. In Velvettithurai 82% of the households reported that they used housing assistance for renovations, to add extensions or to build new houses.

However, cash grants had not been used for housing purposes only. The money had also been used for other purposes such as to meet daily living expenses, to obtain medical treatment and to settle past debts. Between 20% and 40% of the families reported having used housing assistance for these other purposes as well. In Koggala many of the families had received a house or had been promised a house from an aid agency before they received the cash payment. Subsequently, 5% of the families in Kudawella had also used the grant money to buy new land. In Koggala 40% of the families had used the cash grants to add extensions to their new houses that had been built by the Lions Club and the individual philanthropists. Households used the cash for other purposes because they had been allocated houses, or had been promised houses, by aid agencies.

The affected people received a number of different forms of *livelihood* support. Cash grants were the most highly valued form of livelihood support in three of the four study communities. Households in Koggala (70%), Sainthamaruthu (64%) and Kudawella (51%) preferred cash grants. People said that cash grants enabled them to decide where they should invest the money and also to secure the quality of goods they purchased.

Figure 3.1 *Affected people's preferences for different forms of livelihood interventions*



Many households in Saintahmaruthu (64%) and Kirankulam (50%) reported that they had used part of the cash grants to meet their living expenses. Fewer households in Koggala (21%) and Kudawella (7%) had used cash grants for other than the intended purpose. Some households, particularly in Koggala (7%), Kudawella (12%) and Saintahmaruthu (4%) had used the money for housing construction or housing renovation. The survey data show that poorer households tended to spend livelihood grants for other purposes while the better-off households were more likely to spend the money as intended. Considering the purposes for which the livelihood grants had been spent – to meet living expenses, for medical expenses and to settle past debts – it is evident that poorer households had been compelled to spend livelihood support on urgent needs.

There were other reasons why people had not used the cash grants exclusively to restore their livelihoods.

- Cash amounts received from aid agencies were hardly sufficient to fully restore their economic activities and households needed to raise more funds for this purpose. In the process people tended to use part of the money for meeting their immediate needs.
- Some households did not want to reveal that they had received support because they wanted to be included in the support programmes of other aid agencies.
- In cases where the livelihood support had not been allocated to households who had lost their livelihoods, those households could not be expected to spend for income generating purposes.

Immediately after the tsunami, the government distributed cash grants of Rs. 5000 a month to each affected family to restore their livelihoods. Households received the grants three to four times. Hardly anybody had used these cash grants for revival of their economic activities. Instead they were largely used for consumption purposes and for meeting immediate needs for food, medicine, etc.

The following table shows how cash grants had been used for livelihood related activities.

Table 3.2 *Use of cash grants for livelihood related activities*

Activity	Koggala	Kudawella	Sainthamaruthu	Kirankulam
1. To buy new equipment/tools	49%	37%	38%	25%
2. To renovate the business premises	12%	29%	1%	25%
3. To buy raw materials	29%	15%	40%	25%
4. Other	10%	19%	11%	25%
Sum	100%	100%	100%	100%

Cash grants had been spent on buying new equipments and tools, the renovation of business premises, and for the purchase of raw materials. In most cases the cash had been spent on new equipments and tools.

3.10 Summary

Aid agencies adopted three distinct approaches to housing construction, with the cash based approach gaining popularity. The large majority of households had spent the cash grants for the intended purposes. Because housing construction based on the cash model had not been completed in the villages in the east at the time of the last survey due to the conflict, it has not been possible to fully compare the effectiveness of the two approaches. Although the data indicate that households were more satisfied with cash, this effect is to a large extent due to the fact that these same households had been allowed to rebuild their houses on the same land as before, and had not had to carry the cost of resettlement. Many families found resettlement

socially and economically costly because of its negative impact on social relations and incomes.

Initially livelihood support consisted mostly of standardised ‘hardware’, but after some months aid became more targeted and tailored to individual needs. The livelihood sector encompassed a vast number of actors adopting different mixes of loans and grants. A number of agencies expressed concerns that new organizations and new forms of support that required less investment by clients in terms of time and money undermined existing credit providing community based organizations. Recipients favoured cash support over other forms of livelihood support.

4 Participation by affected communities

Participation by affected communities is believed to ensure aid effectiveness and sustainability, and to avoid dependence. Relations between aid agencies and communities were shaped not only by agency principles and policies, but also by the government's procedures for selection of beneficiaries. The government's time consuming and politicised procedures for beneficiary selection often undermined a participatory approach because aid agencies often had no choice but to go ahead with housing construction without knowing who their beneficiaries were. This chapter describes the different approaches and procedures that shaped the relationship between aid agencies and beneficiaries, in essence answering the question of how aid was allocated.

4.1 Beneficiary selection: a contentious area

The process of selecting beneficiaries has been contentious. Aid agencies, politicians and officials worried over the lack of reliable information that caused severe problems in targeting and in achieving equitable distribution of aid. The responsibility for beneficiary selection rested with the Divisional Secretaries. Beneficiary selection was based on damage and needs assessments carried out by local government officials. The first phase of the selection process was based on the assessments conducted by the government in the immediate aftermath of the tsunami. The National Housing Development Authority carried out surveys of destroyed and partially damaged houses. The Ministry of Fisheries through its field staff of Fisheries Inspectors conducted a survey of boats, partially damaged / fully damaged boats (one-day / multi-day boats with inboard and outboard engines), traditional fishing craft, fishing nets and fishing gear. Certification of identity and entitlement certificates were

prepared and issued to those who were affected, so that different types of grants, support and temporary housing could be obtained through the Divisional Secretaries. For example in the case of boats, entitlement certificates were issued by officers from the Ministry of Fisheries. Beneficiary lists for distribution of cash allowances, fishing boats and gear, and housing were subsequently prepared by the Divisional Secretaries with input from the relevant government agencies.

The issue of beneficiary selection remained unresolved and contestation intensified when allocation of permanent houses began. In the rehabilitation phase, the beneficiary lists compiled by the Divisional Secretaries were checked against lists compiled by aid agencies. For example, for *housing construction* international agencies selected beneficiaries based on lists from the Divisional Secretaries that were cross-checked with lists prepared by the international agencies. This process was time-consuming and a number of agencies spent months on verification of beneficiary lists. Most aid agencies approached beneficiaries directly and visited communities several times to verify lists by talking to beneficiaries and neighbours. A minority of the international agencies worked with community organizations. Towards the end of this process some agencies presented and verified lists at public meetings. Despite these efforts aid agencies conceded that it had not been possible to ensure that interventions were 100% on target, but that an acceptable error margin would be around 10%.

After the relief phase, Sri Lankan organizations adopted more systematic and participatory approaches to beneficiary selection in the *livelihood* sector. Beneficiary selection was streamlined and careful measures were taken to avoid overlap and abuse. Community organizations or small groups identified and recommended beneficiaries, staff conducted open community meetings, displayed beneficiary lists in public places, worked closely with the Grama Niladharis and the Divisional Secretaries, obtained certifications from the Grama Niladharis and the Divisional Secretaries, and shared beneficiary lists with other aid agencies.

The affected population, aid organizations and government officials suggested several reasons for the inaccuracy of beneficiary lists:

- The police had issued false reports on losses
- Entitlement certificates had been issued to people who were not genuine claimants

- Authorization for payments was given to people who were not entitled to a specific benefit, for example compensation for a fully destroyed house had been authorized to households whose houses had been partially destroyed
- Names of genuine people had been omitted or deleted from beneficiary lists. Households that were not entitled to support had been added to the lists after pressure from politicians.
- People put forward fraudulent claims. This problem was aggravated because identity cards and other documentation had been destroyed in the tsunami
- Aid agency staff gave priority to friends and relatives
- Village officials lacked competence and experience and were sometimes too close to communities to remain objective and to produce accurate lists. Some village officials were under pressure from the political party that provided them with the job. Many of them are said to have included party supporters and relatives on the lists of tsunami-affected while excluding the deserving. Public officials complained about pressure from the people.
- Divisional Secretaries referred to political pressure in allocation of resources, in particular in allocation of houses.

4.2 Targeting: from geographical and administrative to vulnerability

Was targeting based on needs and vulnerabilities? Although targeting is usually thought of as a rational process involving deliberations about where agencies can achieve the intended impact, the tsunami targeting process was initially chaotic as agencies fought to gain dominant geographical positions through 'planting their flags'. Nevertheless targeting was mediated through a number of coordinating mechanisms established at the national, district and divisional level. These mechanisms will be discussed in more detail later in the report.

Once aid organizations had established their geographical target areas, they had to decide on principles for targeting households. In the housing and fisheries sectors, aid agencies based aid distribution on government beneficiary lists. The government system for assembling beneficiary lists was based on *ownership* of houses and boats prior to the tsunami without regard to other household characteristics. The

ownership-based beneficiary lists excluded the poorest from accessing support, both in the provision of housing and boats. For example, the housing policy of 'a house for a house' initially excluded people who did not have titles to their houses, for example encroachers or squatters or those who lived in rented houses. In this manner the emphasis on physical asset replacement was not neutral but effectively favoured the more 'well to do'.

Very few organizations directed their efforts specifically at vulnerable groups during the emergency phase. For organizations that normally base their interventions on supporting the poorest and marginal groups, this focus on asset replacement and ownership was problematic, particularly in the absence of a complementary strategy for ensuring inclusion of poor, marginal and vulnerable groups. This weakness in aid delivery was identified by the communities themselves who argued that the most severely affected households had been left out because they did not have the required resources to approach aid agencies.

One of the constraints faced by agencies in targeting vulnerable groups was the lack of experience in working in the tsunami affected areas. Few agencies had prior knowledge of the socio-economic household profiles. Neither did they initially have trained Sri Lankan staff, partners or community based organizations with the skills that were required to reach vulnerable groups. The Sri Lankan organizations claim to have fared better in that they had targeted 'deserving' households, although they were not necessarily the most vulnerable.

As time passed and agencies began to plan more long term interventions, strategies changed:

- Some continued to work with the groups whom they had supported in the relief phase. For instance aid agencies continued to work with the people whom they had initially supported with tents.
- Interventions became more focused and each agency limited their interventions to a smaller number of geographical locations.
- A number of agencies shifted their focus towards more vulnerable groups: poor, unemployed, disabled/permanently ill, elderly, widows and children.
- Some agencies kept funding available in the event of gaps.

A more narrow geographical focus and plans for long term engagement set the stage for deeper engagement with the affected communities and facilitated targeting of vulnerable groups. Aid agencies adopted methods for more systematic community participation. Some aid organizations trained communities in selection procedures that were subsequently applied by the communities themselves. Others asked village committees to suggest interventions which were subsequently prioritized in a collaborative effort between the community and the partner organization. Sri Lankan organizations in particular began to prioritize the most vulnerable groups such as widows, disabled persons and families living in extreme poverty. Attention was paid to provide support for second generation families who did not have formal ownership to the house in which they lived and the landless.

The lack of targeting did not mean that everyone got their fair share. Influential and powerful people staked their claims and negotiated with the government and the aid agencies and received more than others. As more agencies began to target vulnerable groups, the new approach was resented by some groups in the communities. Unrest was caused by groups who had been able to attract more than their fair share of aid and who protested against the new approach of targeting vulnerable groups.

In parallel with the adoption of a more selective and targeted approach, a number of organizations expanded their target groups to non-tsunami affected people. In the north and east, conflict-affected households were included, and in the south poor households were included. The more inclusive approach was intended to contribute to reducing disparities between the tsunami-affected communities and poor or war-affected communities and to prevent conflicts caused by inequitable aid distribution.

4.3 Widespread consultation

The majority of the households that had received aid from international aid agencies reported that international aid workers had consulted with them. Two out of three recipients said that Sri Lankan organizations had discussed with them. However, findings from the five community studies suggest that consultations were superficial. Affected people complained of random distribution to those who happened to be around when aid agencies turned up, in particular to people living close to the main roads. Often the affected population

had not been adequately informed about distribution of relief items and as a result many were not aware of the time and venue of aid distribution. Some aid agencies distributed relief aid to 'people who could cry and stretch out their hands' and did not adopt transparent and objective criteria for selection of beneficiaries. Delays in the delivery of inputs to restart livelihoods or in the progress of housing projects were not conveyed to communities in an adequate and systematic manner.

Whereas most agencies agree that consultation was limited in the relief phase, almost all the agencies reported that they consulted extensively with the communities after the first frenzied phase. Consultations included formal participatory assessments, repeated visits by agency staff for discussions with community representatives and the local government officials.

In the housing sector many smaller agencies worked very closely with the beneficiaries who designed their own houses and had control of finances and construction. In this model, the aid agency signed a *contract* with the beneficiary who was subsequently paid in instalments as the building work progressed. Monitoring was done by supervisors with a technical background, either from the agency or from the Divisional Secretariat. Agencies that had adopted this approach reported good progress in housing construction.

Comparatively few agencies worked through community organizations in the housing construction field. In cases where this model was applied, funding was controlled by the community organization through a system whereby the release of money depended on progress in the construction work. Sometimes the community organization did not deal only with housing construction but took part in developing integrated plans for the community. However community organizations because of their limited capacities could not keep pace with the 'rush to spend' style imposed by aid agencies nor undertake extensive projects.

Housing construction by contractors with some beneficiary consultation seems to have been the most common model among aid agencies and it dominated in the resettlement schemes. This approach offered less scope for adaptation to individual needs and even though consultation took place, there was often little room for individual adjustments due to the extra financial costs involved.

4.4 Participation: restricted to the project cycle

The three major reasons for participation listed in the guidelines for humanitarian aid are to ensure that aid is based on *needs*, to *avoid dependencies* and to *reduce future vulnerabilities* to disaster. The implications of participation are that aid should be agreed with communities and that beneficiaries should take part in the management of relief aid. Although seemingly straightforward, these objectives have been hard to fulfil.

Immediately after the tsunami, participation was defined primarily as *information sharing* and *information collection*. Firstly, aid agencies provided information about events and programmes through the display of posters, handouts, and at public meetings, at times attended by government officials. Secondly, most agencies collected information from communities in the form of surveys, or more ad hoc cross-checking of beneficiary lists.

There was a strong ideology among aid agencies that participation was desired and after the first phase participatory approaches became more common. For example, one agency that was deeply involved in the provision of temporary housing stated that 'Without participation we could not have been effective and efficient in providing temporary shelters'. The problem was rather to find ways of ensuring that participation took place in a meaningful way.

Participation in the project cycle means participation in the assessment, design, resource mobilization, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phase. Below are some of the forms of participation that were found:

1) Assessment, design and planning

- Development of community action plans/integrated village development plans/livelihoods development plans with the participation of the communities
- Community-based selection of vulnerable groups
- Influence on choice of house design: selection between different ready-made designs (often 3-4 designs)

2) Resource mobilization

- Involvement in clearing and preparing sites for temporary and permanent housing construction
- Involvement as labourers in housing construction (masons and carpenters paid for by the agency), sometimes through cash for work schemes

3) Monitoring

- Community based monitoring of housing construction; monitoring of receipt of materials, and of quality of the work
- Introduction of a card system that recorded the assistance received by beneficiaries from different sources
- Accompanying households and village committee members when purchases were made
- Presentation of the details of price lists, items purchased and payments made at public forums attended by the beneficiary community (social audits)
- Community-based monitoring and evaluation
- Joint reviews with communities

4) Participation throughout the project cycle

- Decisions with respect to all phases of housing construction made by the beneficiary, combined with direct transfers of funds to beneficiaries

Aid agencies had adopted participatory methods for a number of reasons. Participation was based on the notion that it *reduces dependency* as people were mobilized to actively contribute to rebuilding efforts. Participation was also intended to ensure that interventions were *adapted to needs*, for instance in house design. Moreover, some agencies referred to *efficiency* arguments, indicating that houses could be built more cheaply with the active involvement of the beneficiaries, their families and the wider community. The need to ensure *transparency and accountability* was another justification for participation.

Many Sri Lankan organizations claimed that they adopted participatory methods in consultations with communities, when doing assessments and reviews and in formulating community action plans. However, the capacities that existed within most of the Sri Lankan

organizations to adopt and facilitate participatory methods systematically and rigorously remained at a low level: for some it was simply a discussion with the villagers, or a group of villagers who become the entry points for organizations; for others it was applying some tools such as social maps, livelihood charts and Venn diagrams. Many organizations had large collections of documents collected through participatory methods but data generated through those exercises had hardly been used for any practical purpose. The community action plans prepared were closer to 'shopping lists' with a long list of activities, without prioritization of those activities or substantial linkages between objectives and activities. Despite the use of participatory methods, the same bundle of interventions was found in the communities, despite differences in context. This situation suggests that the genuine needs and interests of the affected people had not been addressed through the methodologies used. While acknowledging the initiatives taken by organizations to be more transparent and accountable to the communities they serve, it is important that the issue of building capacities of the organizations in the systematic use of participatory approaches and methods is addressed to improve effectiveness.

4.5 The role of community organizations in ensuring participation and accountability

Community organizations in Sri Lanka have traditionally served as instruments for organizing people for common tasks through 'shramadanas' in the villages. This type of collective action could, for example, be organized for construction of infrastructure. Although community based organizations were usually thought of as independent organizations, some important nationwide community organizations have been part of the government structure, for example the Fishing Cooperative Societies and the Rural Development Societies. In particular the Fishing Cooperative Societies became popular partner organizations for international aid agencies.

In the post-tsunami period common responsibilities assigned to community organizations were to:

- assist in identifying beneficiaries
- organize participants for livelihood projects
- mobilize people for community development projects
- serve as instruments for implementing housing projects

- run community based institutions, i.e. pre-schools

In the relief phase aid agencies delivered aid directly to households. While this approach received much criticism from the communities because it caused unfair distribution of aid, some aid agencies strongly believe that this was the best approach to select genuine beneficiaries. However, during the rehabilitation phase a majority of the aid agencies involved in the livelihood sector replaced this 'individual approach' to aid delivery with a 'community based approach'. The latter calls for the potential beneficiaries either to organize themselves into a community organization or first to form 'small groups' that would gradually be built into village-wide community organizations. Some agencies chose to work through existing community organizations such as Fishery Cooperative Societies and Farmer Organizations.

These community organizations became mechanisms for identifying beneficiaries, for delivering and managing aid and for monitoring its proper use by the recipient communities. Most Sri Lankan organizations believed that community organizations were the best mechanism for ensuring participation, transparency and accountability to the communities. Sri Lankan organizations believed that allegations and criticisms levelled against them by the communities for unfair distribution of aid could be minimized when communities were approached through community organizations.

Despite the benefits of a community based approach, at least three major problems were associated with this approach to aid delivery and management.

- The first issue concerned how well suited community organizations were to ensure *inclusion and representation* of the diverse needs and interests of the communities. Community members criticized community organizations for being formed by relatively powerful groups that manipulated aid while excluding the vulnerable and the marginalized groups. Community organizations were also accused of exerting undue pressure on aid agencies and government officials. Findings from the community studies suggest that valuable aid such as boats and engines and push bicycles were shared among the close network of associates of the office-bearers. The poor and the vulnerable remained silent, fearing intimidation from these powerful groups if they started agitation against injustices committed by community organizations. To overcome this problem some communities preferred a direct link with the aid delivery agencies. The Sri

Lankan organizations agreed that aid delivered at the village level was manipulated by powerful village groups. As such the egalitarian and democratic character of community organizations is questionable. Similarly, accountability also suffered because not all villagers were represented in community organizations.

- Secondly, did community organizations have the *capacity* to respond effectively to the demands made by the aid agencies? Community organizations were expected to apply objective criteria for selecting the beneficiaries, to engage in systematic planning and management of aid, and to adopt participatory and transparent methods of monitoring. Despite the relatively long history of community organizations in Sri Lanka spanning more than three decades, and their capacity to mobilize people in a voluntary manner, their capacity to act as formal organizations with formal procedures for electing leaders, systematic accounting and regular meetings was often very limited. The low capacity of community organizations in governance and accounting was one reason why so many international organizations initiated new community organizations. Building capacities of the community organizations is a relatively long process and requires enormous investments and facilitation. Only a few organizations had given serious consideration to this challenge and had planned interventions. The main consideration of the majority of agencies was how to use community organizations as conduits for channelling aid to the communities. When resources cease to flow the majority of community organizations are likely to become inactive.
- The third issue is the *impact* of creating new community organizations at the village level. While a minority of the aid agencies had chosen to work with existing community organizations and had invested in strengthening their capacities, a majority had decided to form their own community organizations. As a result community organizations had mushroomed in the tsunami affected areas. Communities pointed out that this phenomenon had serious implications for the existing and well established community organizations that were gradually becoming inactive, and many of which were on the verge of collapse. Members preferred enrolment in the newly formed community organizations as membership opened up access to resources from aid agencies. When these gaps and weaknesses in the community approach were raised, the aid organizations responded that they could see no alternatives to community organizations as a delivery channel.

Community organizations were useful to the stakeholders in the tsunami rebuilding process and as a result they multiplied. For members, community organizations were a tool for accessing resources. For aid agencies, they were a mechanism for ensuring participatory aid delivery and accountability. The main weaknesses of community organizations were lack of inclusiveness and democratic governance. Yet when these limitations are taken into account, community organizations may work well for purposes of consultation and resource mobilization.

4.6 Accountability to affected communities

The tsunami aid delivery system lacked comprehensive mechanisms for accountability and transparency to affected communities or to their elected representatives at the local level. On the positive side, there was comprehensive reporting to the government, in particular to the Divisional and District Secretaries. Nevertheless, politicians expressed concern over the lack of accountability and transparency to local communities and other stakeholders. The situation was slightly different in the north and the east where members of the Tamil National Alliance reported that they played a role in monitoring of relief and rehabilitation assistance. Politicians worried that aid did not reach the affected people who most needed assistance and that a sizable number of people were left out. They criticized aid agencies for high administrative costs, high wage levels, the use of expensive cars (all these factors combined are often referred to as waste of resources) and religious conversions by Christian agencies. These views were expressed across party political lines and in all districts. Yet despite their concerns, politicians commended aid agencies for their good work and in general they held more positive views of aid agencies than of the government.

A number of factors could explain the relative lack of transparency and accountability to the affected population:

- The tsunami relief and rehabilitation operation was driven by the need to deliver goods and services as quickly as possible. Other concerns such as establishing mechanisms for accountability and transparency were secondary.
- The affected communities were not organized, but people rather competed with each other to access as much aid as possible. Much of the aid was delivered directly to beneficiaries or through community organizations that generally had weak capacity, and

functioned primarily as instruments for receiving aid. They had neither an interest in, nor the capacity to make demands on aid agencies.

- Sub-national political bodies did not function as effective arenas for planning and decision-making concerning the tsunami rebuilding process. Traditionally the local level political bodies in Sri Lanka have a limited role and few resources. After a few weeks the role of local level politicians became reduced to bringing the grievances of the affected people to the attention of the government and aid agencies. These interventions were often construed as political interference by aid agencies and government officials.
- The coordinating bodies set up by the aid agencies and the government functioned as information sharing bodies and not decision-making bodies.

Many agencies recognized the importance of transparency and accountability. Some agencies said that vague criteria for aid allocation combined with weak communication strategies had resulted not only in weak accountability but also in conflicts in communities. Many aid agencies had made efforts to improve transparency:

- Aid agencies published beneficiary lists in newspapers, in public places such as mosques and temples, in the offices of the Grama Niladharis and Divisional Secretaries and at the head offices and field offices of aid agencies.
- They communicated with people through opinion-makers, field staff, etc.
- Aid agencies discussed beneficiary lists and criteria for allocating resources with communities.
- The use of more innovative models, for instance community based monitoring and social audits, was tried out in a few cases where agencies had established community based monitoring systems for checking beneficiary lists, bills and vouchers.

The above mechanisms have helped in improving accountability and transparency and these practices seem to be spreading as agencies moved into more long-term programmes.

4.7 Individual protests: seeking redress

Just under half of the respondents in the household survey reported that they had approached local governance institutions to discuss their problems with them (July 2005). Most of them had approached village officials (one in four of the respondents) whereas a small number (less than one in ten of the respondents) had approached either local politicians or the Divisional Secretariat. Many households found that Divisional Secretaries were inaccessible. While a majority of respondents in the south had complained to a local governance institution, only a minority of the respondents in the north and east had done so. In Galle affected people had approached local politicians as well. According to the Divisional Secretaries, a large number of appeals concerning entitlement to government aid were made to them, many of them reflecting the inaccuracy of the initial beneficiary lists. Verification of beneficiary lists was time consuming, with technical officers having to revisit claimants.

People from the affected communities also raised concerns directly with aid organizations. In cases where community organizations were found guilty of corrupt practices, villagers had complained. In one case, an international aid agency found that the village people did not agree with the selection of beneficiaries and the dispute subsequently ended in conflict between the villagers, causing the aid agency to withdraw its programme in that village. In other cases issues were successfully resolved following the intervention of aid agencies.

4.8 Protest campaigns: initiated by communities

Very few people had participated in collective protests, and as the previous section explains, many had rather sought redress individually by lodging complaints in writing or in person to government authorities. In spite of perceptions of inequity in distribution, corruption and bribery, affected households were reluctant to protest.

- Many quoted fear of intimidation and death and feared violent reactions from unpredictable local strongmen.
- Others did not want to risk disruption of the incoming flow of relief by appearing to be ungrateful or troublesome.
- In other instances public officials had threatened people and warned them against ‘creating trouble’.

- Families had become more individualistic and were pursuing their own interests. Because many were successful in accessing aid, they took no interest in protesting. Community interests had always been diverse and had become even more so following the tsunami as some were able to benefit from the aid while others were left behind.

Most of the protest campaigns that did take place were organized by the local communities themselves. This finding is contrary to the popular belief that political interests were behind protest campaigns. There had been more community based protest campaigns in the Muslim community than in other communities (survey July 2005). One in three Muslims report that they had taken part in community level protest campaigns, but less than one in five Tamils and Sinhalese had taken part in such campaigns. This may suggest that the Muslims were better organized at the local level than the Tamils and the Sinhalese, but more Muslim protests probably also reflected the relative slowness of the aid effort in Ampara district. There were practically no protest campaigns among the Roman Catholics, who are also the religious group reporting the highest level of aid satisfaction.

4.9 Summary

The Code of Conduct formulates simple yet demanding principles for the delivery of humanitarian aid. Due to the inaccuracy of, and manipulation of, beneficiary lists, the organizational weaknesses of community based organizations, and the initial haste with which aid was delivered, marginal and vulnerable households were initially not adequately targeted, and effective participation and accountability were weak. Yet, as agencies gained knowledge about the local communities, attention began to shift towards these groups. Most aid agencies exhibited a strong interest in consulting communities and households, but many were hindered by weak methodologies for systematic and effective community involvement. The consultations carried out by most agencies were superficial and did not involve households in the management of aid, but as a standard practice households had to contribute their labour for construction projects. The relative absence of community mobilization by aid agencies also suggests that aid organizations had defined the tsunami aid operation as primarily a relief and rehabilitation operation, rather than as a rights-based operation based on community mobilization, organized lobbying and advocacy to overcome weaknesses in government

policies and in the aid delivery system. Many aid agencies initiated procedures to ensure accountability to communities by spreading information in many ways. Weak counterparts, both on the civil society and government side, led to weak institutionalisation of systems for accountability.

5 Coordination: the role of the government

The Sri Lankan government welcomed international aid agencies and invited them to fund and implement the reconstruction programme. The Centre for National Operations (CNO) that was replaced later by the Task Force for Rebuilding the Nation (TAFREN) and eventually by the Reconstruction and Development Agency (RADA) was set up in Colombo to *facilitate* the work of international aid agencies, to set standards and to monitor progress. International aid agencies signed MoUs with RADA, for example for house construction or for the delivery of boats. Later the authority to sign MoUs was transferred to the District Secretaries[69] at the sub-national level. The affected districts through the District Secretary subsequently reported to RADA. The overall responsibility for coordination at the sub-national level rested with the District Secretaries. The sheer number of agencies and the tendency of each agency to work in several districts raised complex issues concerning coordination with the government and other humanitarian organizations.

Relations between the government and Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations were marked by relative indifference until the 1970s, ambivalence in the 1980s and open confrontation in the 1990s when the NGO Commission was established to enquire into the conduct of non-governmental organizations, an act that was widely seen as an attack by the government on one of the largest non-governmental organizations in Sri Lanka and its leader (Wickremasinghe 2001). Yet, since the 1980s, the government and NGOs have collaborated on several development and welfare programmes, most notably in the implementation of the Janasaviya programme, which was introduced with the World Bank funding in 1991 to work in the areas of savings- and credit, capacity building/human resources and nutrition.

[69] The District Secretary is often referred to as the Government Agent (GA) and is the administrative head of the district administration.

The relationship between the government and foreign non-governmental organizations has traditionally been marked by ambivalence. The government acknowledged the need for assistance, particularly in the war affected areas, while it at the same time expected the aid agencies to refrain from advocacy and interventions that questioned government policies or that could be seen to strengthen the LTTE. There has been a vocal opposition to foreign funded non-governmental organizations in Sri Lanka, often articulated in the public discourse through newspaper articles. Bias towards western values, lack of accountability to Sri Lankan institutions, and high administrative costs are common criticisms.

5.1 The role of the Divisional Secretariats

Divisional Secretaries played a key coordinating role. The Divisional Secretariat was the most important operational contact point between aid agencies and the government at the sub-national level.. Especially early on, the Divisional Secretaries were the main contact points between the agencies and the government. Aid organizations liaised with the Divisional Secretaries for needs assessments and for selecting locations. Later on agencies relied on the Divisional Secretaries for beneficiary lists. Divisional Secretaries also introduced agencies to other relevant public officials and provided information pertaining to government regulations and requirements.

Many international agencies relied on the Divisional Secretaries to facilitate approval of plans, authorization and permits. Having a good working relationship with the Divisional Secretaries became a matter of priority for many agencies and many supported the Divisional Secretaries informally, for example by providing much needed office equipment. ‘They support us. We support them’ as one international agency put it. Some agencies complained about the inaccessibility of Divisional Secretaries and aid organizations also felt that the frequent transfer of Divisional Secretaries to other divisions hindered effective collaboration.

5.2 Formal coordination at the district and divisional level

Measured by gaps and overlaps, it is evident that coordination had been a problem in all districts. Despite a fairly comprehensive

institutional structure, agency views concerning coordination were mixed. Chaos reigned in the initial relief phase and the imperative was to deliver as much relief as possible - as quickly as possible. Some agencies argued that better coordination in the relief phase was unrealistic and that coordination was reasonably good in the rehabilitation phase. Others argued that coordination was weak during the crucial early months and that poor coordination persisted, particularly in the livelihood sector.

At the district level, coordination took place through formal district coordination meetings, both multi-sector and sector specific. The multi-sector district meetings were chaired by the District Secretary, or the Additional District Secretary[70]. Weekly meetings were held at the beginning, but as time passed and needs changed, meetings became less frequent. After some time the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) started to provide technical support to the District Secretary through calling meetings, ensuring follow-up and sending out minutes. In addition to the district level coordination meetings, the Divisional Secretary or the division lead agency called divisional level meetings. These meetings were mostly multi-sectoral, but for instance for a huge and complex task like temporary housing construction in Ampara, sector meetings were held at the divisional level.

A *lead agency model* was developed at the district and divisional level to facilitate coordination. At the district level lead agencies were in charge of sectors and most lead agencies were international. At the divisional level the lead agency usually had multi-sector responsibilities. The lead agency provided technical support for coordination meetings and often meetings were chaired by the lead agency.

The relationship between OCHA and the Colombo based Consortium for Humanitarian Agencies[71] was close and complementary in some districts, for example in Hambantota where the Consortium supported the coordination work of Divisional Secretaries and OCHA supported the District Secretary. In other districts collaboration was weak, for instance in Ampara.

[70] The District Secretary is also often referred to as the Government Agent, GA.
[71] Initially set up in the late 1990s to coordinate humanitarian aid to war affected areas in Sri Lanka.

Agency staff lists a number of weaknesses in coordination:

- Some agencies did not turn up for meetings. For example many of the numerous small agencies based in Galle did not attend meetings. Also larger agencies had a mixed record. Some of them said that due to their involvement in several sectors in many divisions in a district, the sheer number of meetings that they would have had to attend made regular attendance impractical.
- Generally coordination meetings were held in English, a practice that became a barrier to effective participation by Sri Lankan organizations and in some cases to effective management of meetings by government representatives. Translations of proceedings were not common, although they did happen on an ad hoc basis in some districts and divisions. Decisions concerning the choice of language in meetings depended mainly on the language spoken by the majority of participants.
- Divisional Secretaries were helpful, but often implementation of decisions took time or follow-through was weak. Some agencies reported that decisions were implemented more effectively if officials in charge of the particular topic attended the coordination meeting.
- Coordination between national and sub-national government officials was poor but improved over time. For example, for construction projects negotiations concerning the same contract had been held at the national and district level without the parties concerned knowing about each other. According to agencies working at the district level, time and resources were wasted and projects were delayed as a result.
- Some Divisional Secretaries assigned the same project to several agencies, causing overlaps and inefficiencies. Divisional Secretaries argued that sometimes this was a strategy intended to ensure that at least one of the agencies delivered on their promises. Some aid organizations concede that they made commitments to carry out projects that they were eventually unable to implement, but most aid agencies were frustrated with the overlaps that sometimes resulted from this practice.
- A number of people also pointed out that successful coordination depended on the skills, competence and authority of the person in charge of coordination. It was reported that often the person assigned to coordination did not have the required skills and competence and experience.

- High turnover among staff, particularly in the relief phase, was a cause of coordination problems because new staff required time to become familiar with the issues.

As the sense of urgency subsided and the number of agencies decreased, a number of agencies found other ways, often informal, of obtaining the required information and many agencies also collaborated informally at the village level. Formal coordination meetings were a platform for initiating contacts that subsequently led to informal coordination.

5.3 Information management

Effective information management was crucial for achieving effective coordination. Nonetheless, aid agencies did not have reliable information concerning beneficiary needs and allocation of assistance at the household and community levels. Inaccurate beneficiary lists became a stumbling block to speed, fairness and equity in aid distribution, and to community consultation in the donor driven housing schemes. Several attempts were made to solve this problem. For instance in Hambantota, the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ) developed a database in collaboration with the Divisional Secretariats designed to track aid allocation to the affected population. The database was subsequently transferred to the Divisional Secretariats where it became clear that the effective operation of the database required active efforts by staff to collect information from agencies. Many aid agencies did not send the information required by the coordinating body, but preferred a system whereby the coordinating body visited each agency to collect information.

While continuing to perform their routine work, government officials were under pressure to improve vertical and horizontal coordination, initially without having the resources and tools for the job. Moreover, they were assigned responsibility for coordination without a corresponding mandate to set standards or priorities for the rebuilding process. Coordination has entailed management of the interface between the Sri Lankan bureaucracy and dozens of organizational cultures from across the world. Whereas the Sri Lankan administration works on instructions from the top and with little use of modern technology for information management and information sharing, the international aid agency culture is based on decentralized decision-making and the use of computers and email. The linking up of these two widely different systems was only partially successful.

5.4 From coordination to planning

Aside from the involvement of the District Secretaries and the Divisional Secretaries in conducting coordinating meetings, significant involvement of other public officials in the recovery process was restricted. Key public officials such as the director of housing, the director of planning, the Samurdhi[72] officers, and the social services were often not adequately briefed on the tsunami rebuilding issues. Whereas effective coordination between aid organizations and sub-national government institutions was the objective of the relief and rehabilitation phase, the development phase required multi-stakeholder planning through a process that needed to go beyond information sharing and consultation.

A number of aid agencies worried that the limited involvement of governance institutions in planning and decision-making processes in the districts was likely to reduce the long-term benefits of the tsunami aid since government institutions had not been prepared to take over public facilities (for example health, water and sanitation facilities), staff did not have the technical capacity, and budgets were not in place to pay for running costs. For example, a number of agencies were concerned about the sustainability of new sanitation facilities. Schools had been provided with toilets on a large scale, but in many cases they had no experience with modern facilities and systems were not in place for maintenance. Sanitation was a problem in many areas even before the tsunami. Tsunami funding had allowed for upgrading of old systems and the building of new, for example in the town of Kalmunai in Ampara where a completely new drainage system is under construction. Secure funding for the maintenance of these new systems is a critical challenge.

The production of the Integrated Livelihood Development Plans was an attempt to improve planning through involvement of important stakeholders in the livelihood sector.[73] By early December 2006 the war and tsunami affected districts, with the exception of Kilinochchi, had formulated Integrated Livelihood Development Plans - in most cases for the entire district. These plans were based on a format created by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and were produced with the assistance of a number of consultant organisations. Most of the international aid agencies were aware of the plans and

[72] Samurdhi is a social security programme

[73] Different institutions produced the plans in close collaboration with ILO and RADA with funding from Norway.

what they entailed. However, only a few of the agencies that were interviewed had signed a Memorandum of Understanding committing them to contribute towards the Integrated Livelihood Development Plans. Most agencies had already designed their livelihood projects based on their previous work in the district before the plans had been introduced. However, aid agencies held the view that for newcomers to the districts or for agencies that had not yet developed plans for the livelihood sector, the plans could offer guidance for the planning of livelihood programmes, with the active promotion of the plans by RADA.

5.5 Manpower, skills and resources

In the months following the tsunami, simple requirements for computers, stationery, communication facilities, office space, vehicles and fuel had not been met at the sub-national government level. A lack of technical officers to support the technical aspects of the construction process had also hampered the rebuilding process. Some government officials appreciated the additional manpower provided by the graduate employment scheme[74], while others did not find them useful because they lacked the required technical competence and experience. Lack of manpower was a particular concern in the war-affected north and east where many positions fell vacant during the war.

Donors started a number of programmes to address the lack of resources that hampered the effectiveness of government institutions at the sub-national level. As a result of these programmes government institutions had been provided with transport facilities, office equipment and technical staff for instance through the CADREP programme[75], and government officials in the south said the available resources were sufficient (early 2006), whereas in particular the shortage of technical officers continued to be a concern in the east.

[74] The graduate employment scheme was introduced by the government and offered government employment to around 40,000 new graduates.
[75] The CADREP (Capacity Development for Recovery Programme) programme that was implemented by UNDP contributed to this outcome. The Norwegian government contributed funding to the programme.

5.6 The national context: top down decision-making

At Independence in 1948, Sri Lanka's administrative system established during the British colonial period was highly centralized. One of its most important features was the provincial and district administration, which came to be known as the "District Administration" or the "Kachcheri System." Under this system, a Government Agent was appointed as the Government's general representative in the province (later the district) and initially was vested with all governmental functions within his area. In 1992, in an attempt to bring the administration closer to the people, under the Transfer of Powers Act No. 58 of 1992, the Assistant Government Agents who functioned at divisional level were designated "Divisional Secretaries" with most functions hitherto performed by Government Agents (now referred to as District Secretaries) being transferred to them. The Divisional Secretariat thus became the focal point of the administration for the implementation of governmental policy.

Public officials and politicians argued that the required powers and authority to effectively implement policies were not delegated to the district level and decisions had to be referred back to the national level, causing delays in the rebuilding process. Hence the real power to coordinate did not rest with the district and divisional level officers, but was vested in the officers appointed for overall coordination of the aid efforts. District staff must await written instructions from above and the lack of such written instructions led to delays. For example, in the fisheries sector, interventions to rectify the poor targeting in the delivery of boats had to await instructions from head office before action could be taken. The implications of the top-down approach was that officials who made decisions lacked knowledge of the reality on the ground. The top-down nature of the process also meant that standardized approaches were adopted by decision makers at the national level without adequate consideration for local circumstances and conditions.

Under normal circumstances, Divisional Secretaries are instructed by the District Secretary and the heads of government ministries and departments in Colombo. With the tsunami, the Presidential Secretariat, officials of the Reconstruction and Development Agency (RADA), the Transitional Accommodation Project (TAP), and the Tsunami Housing Reconstruction Unit (THRU) were also given powers to instruct the Divisional Secretaries. One of the results of this more complex situation was that Divisional Secretaries would receive

contradictory instructions. Another problem was that the instructions were sometimes verbal communications, rather than written instructions.

Another concern raised was that the financial regulations of the government did not allow for flexibility. Deviations from the administrative and financial regulations meant that officials risked facing audit queries and public officials were consequently very cautious about monetary commitments.

Not all districts experienced administrative problems to the same extent. In Jaffna the process seems to have run fairly smoothly. This situation could be due to a number of factors: experience in man-made disaster management at all administrative levels from the years of war, presence of well trained people, hard working government officials and effective disbursement of government funding. Politicians in Jaffna said that years of war had provided the administrators with experience in disaster management and that the immediate relief response in Jaffna was effective. For example, the building of temporary houses in Jaffna was completed quickly. Despite the government's relative effectiveness in providing short term support, the results from the household survey show that Tamils did not expect the government to provide them with support to rebuild their lives. They expected this kind of support primarily from non-governmental organizations.

5.7 Unclear policy framework

Many aid agencies were frustrated with the frequent changes in government policies and poor access to information about those policy changes. The lack of clarity resulted in inequitable resource allocation among tsunami affected households. For example, many felt that changes concerning the buffer zone had not been clearly communicated. In the absence of clarifications agencies tended to proceed on the assumption that existing policies would remain in place. Overall the introduction of the buffer zone created much uncertainty and frustration among agencies. Another area of confusion was over the government's grant policy for the construction of new houses. Affected people who owned completely damaged houses outside the 'buffer zone' were entitled to a grant of Rs. 250,000 from the government. However, aid agencies had adopted different practices concerning the delivery of additional support. In Hambantota people who had received the Rs. 250,000 had also received funding

from international agencies, whereas in Galle some agencies reported that government support was terminated if beneficiaries shifted from the government scheme to the aid agency scheme.

Also, entitlement to houses in resettlement schemes was handled differently from one district to another. The status of at least three groups was unclear:

- people who were not in possession of titles to their land
- members of extended families who did not have ownership of the house in which they lived
- people who lived in rented accommodation at the time of the tsunami

For example, all the three groups listed above had been offered houses in the resettlement schemes in Hambantota, however, in Galle their status was unclear.

5.8 'Political interference'

This section refers to the situation in the districts of Hambantota and Galle as there are no elected sub-national political bodies in the north and east due to the war.

Politicians from all parties agreed that immediate relief was provided in a non-politicized manner and that there was collaboration across party political lines and across ethnic divides. In a number of districts the swift action taken by the JVP was highlighted, including in the district of Ampara where the large majority of the victims were Muslims and Tamils. This sentiment of collaboration was also expressed at the national level, for example in a parliamentary meeting held immediately after the tsunami where all parties pledged to join together in rebuilding Sri Lanka. Yet shortly afterwards the mood began to change. Politicians from all political parties and in all districts agree that the spirit of unity and cooperation evaporated and traditional conflict lines re-emerged and consequently an opportunity for bridge-building and reconciliation was missed. Politicians blame the government for bringing party politics into the aid delivery process, thereby mismanaging the valuable opportunity to build consensus across traditional divides.

What is commonly referred to as 'political interference' reappeared as aid distribution became politicized. For example, in Galle the three

largest political parties, the opposition United National Party (UNP), the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) (the party of the President at the time of the tsunami and the largest government coalition partner) and the JVP blame each other for having brought party politics into the relief distribution. While JVP was accused of hoisting their flag and of exploiting their tsunami work for political purposes, the SLFP and the UNP were accused by the JVP of not having done very much to help the affected people. As a result of the politicization of aid, the notion that politicians used tsunami aid to project their own images is widespread in the south. Politicians blamed some of the aid organizations and international agencies for supporting the politicians to build up their images.

Political interference led to a waste of time and resources as well as delays in project implementation as initiatives were changed or blocked to suit party political interests. For example, in cases where the Provincial Council was under the control of the government and the Municipal Council was under UNP control, the opposition UNP members said the government prevented them from implementing rebuilding projects. Whereas in UNP run municipalities, supporters of opposition parties were allegedly discriminated against in aid allocation.

In Hambantota politicians blame each other for having politicized aid delivery. Politicians were seen to be fiercely competitive for control over aid resources that were distributed through the government machinery. Subsequently aid was distributed to followers of powerful politicians. Politicians admitted that politicization of aid was one of the main reasons for inequity in aid distribution and blamed pressure from voters. They suggested several reasons for politicization of aid:

- suspicion of each other
- pressure from their constituencies for favours
- pressure from private donors who wanted support to be given to party members
- use of relief distribution to create political support
- fear of losing the grass roots power base if politicians did not deliver as expected
- upcoming elections and the need to provide for their own constituencies

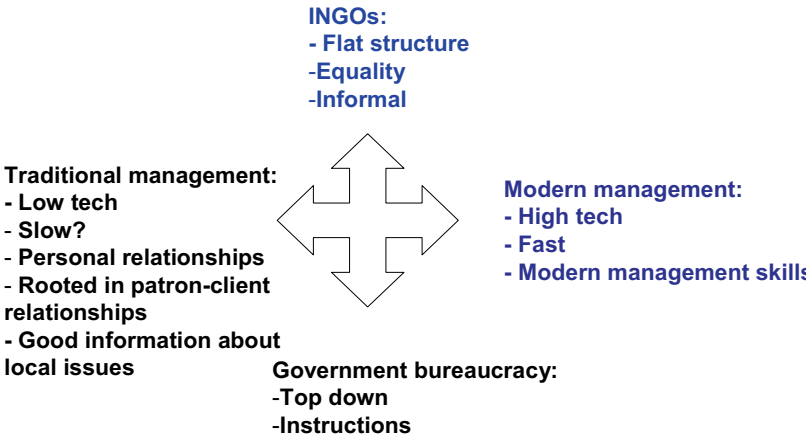
As more valuable items were added to the lists of things being distributed, the battle for control intensified and became particularly

strong in the housing sector. One result was efforts by politicians to influence housing beneficiary lists in favour of their own constituencies.

5.9 Summary: a clash of cultures

Coordination after disasters is extraordinary complex not only because coordination involves a large number of actors, but mainly because expectations, objectives, attitudes, interests, values and beliefs are so diverse. Moreover, most actors do not know each other and are not familiar with the framework within which other actors work, and the factors that govern their decisions and behaviour. Furthermore, whereas the Sri Lankan authorities operated within bureaucratic procedures, aid agencies tended to be informally organized, often with more authority devolved to staff in the field offices.

Clash of organisational cultures



The lack of resources at the disposal of the sub-national governance institutions aggravated the difference in operational space between the two sets of actors. Since English became the medium of communication at the coordination meetings, the discourse became dominated by concepts used by international aid agencies. These concepts structured the discussions in ways that were unfamiliar to Sri Lankan

officials and which did not make sense within their conceptual and organisational frameworks. Yet despite all the difficulties many of the aid agencies agreed that the lead agency model worked relatively well both at the divisional and the district level, but that its success to a large extent depended on the competence and experience of the individuals that took on this challenging task. Effective information management is a prerequisite for coordination and planning. Information management systems should be designed to take into account the highly politicized context in which information is often collected; the difficulties in the compilation of accurate beneficiary lists were only one example. Access to information and control over information are aspects of power relationships and sharing of information means sharing of power.

6 Relations between Sri Lankan organizations and international aid agencies

Sri Lanka is endowed with a rich civil society culture, from trade unions to faith based organizations and donor funded non-governmental organizations. International aid agencies are often criticised for ignoring or undermining national and local organizations. This chapter addresses collaboration between international aid agencies and Sri Lankan organizations.

6.1 The Sri Lankan NGO landscape[76]

The estimated number of community based organizations and non-governmental organizations in Sri Lanka, varies widely. The government appointed NGO Commission estimated the number at 25 000-30 000 in 1993. Others have also put the number in the range of 20 000-30 000. USAID in a 1997 report placed the number at 50 000 (Fernando 2003), while according to Wickremasinghe the number registered with the Ministry of Social Services is 4000 (Wickremasinghe 2001: 82).

The wide variation in estimates reflects, among other factors, the small and informal nature of the majority of non-governmental organizations and community based organizations in Sri Lanka. 'Their budgets are small and hard to measure for they largely depend on internally mobilised resources that are difficult to quantify: the time and energy of their members, the labour of volunteers, the financial contributions of villagers, the small savings of women and the

[76] This section is based on: Haug, M., B. Baklien and C. Weerackody (2004): *Study of the impact of FORUT's work in Sri Lanka: building civil society?* Report commissioned by Norad's Evaluation Unit.

materials of artisans' (Wickremasinghe 2001: 82). There are exceptions to this pattern with organisations such as Sarvodaya, Sewa Lanka and the Federation of Thrift and Credit Cooperative Societies operating throughout the island.

6.2 Sri Lankan NGOs and tsunami aid delivery

The NGOs had been working in diverse fields prior to the tsunami, including savings and credit, entrepreneurship development, community infrastructure, health, education, environment, water and sanitation, housing, fishery, human rights, women's issues, disability, counselling etc. A majority of them (85%) had had the experience of working in their respective districts long before the tsunami catastrophe. 33% of the NGOs had targeted the same communities with whom they had been working before the tsunami whereas another 48% had a mix of both their previous clients as well as the new groups. 19% of the NGOs reported that they did not have any previous association with the target groups they are currently working with. A significant number of NGOs operated in more than one district and the districts of Galle, Hambantota and Ampara recorded the highest number of NGO operations in the tsunami affected communities.

Their previous presence in the tsunami affected communities afforded them an advantage over aid agencies which were not familiar with the communities and the authorities in the areas in which they were working. The table below provides an overview of interventions by sector. As the table suggests, many organizations are involved in a number of sectors.

Table 6.1 *Aid agency interventions: distribution by sector*

Sectors	%
Education	69%
Community/rural development	65%
Women's issues	59%
Health, water and sanitation	59%
Psycho-social issues	52%
Savings and credit and enterprise promotion	47%
Children's issues	44%
Housing	41%
Fishery development	35%
Environment	35%
Peace and conflict	29%
Infrastructure development	25%
Capacity building and training	24%
Youth issues	18%
Human rights	13%
Handicapped	12%
Plantations	11%
Technology and enterprise	9%
Legal issues	9%
Advocacy	6%
Proactive Coordination	1%
Vocational training for widows	1%

N=85

6.3 The role of international non-governmental organizations in tsunami aid delivery

With the tsunami the organizational landscape changed, immediately and completely. Hundreds of agencies arrived in Sri Lanka within days. The agencies surveyed for this study came from twenty different countries. Although international non-governmental organizations have a long history in Sri Lanka, the scale of the response to the tsunami was unprecedented and exceeded any previous responses to emergencies during the two decades of civil war. In addition to the new arrivals, a core group of international agencies had worked in Sri

Lanka since long before the war and others had begun work as a result of the war. Both groups were well placed to respond to the tsunami.

The international agencies can be classified based on history, size and professionalization:

- The large, well known and professional agencies were well represented, such as Oxfam, World Vision, Save the Children, Care, Caritas and so on. They had been running operations in Sri Lanka before the tsunami, in particular in the north and east, and they expanded their work after the tsunami.
- Other agencies were new to Sri Lanka. Some of them were professional relief agencies, for example the Irish organization GOAL, a major player in Ampara, and the Taiwanese organization Tzu Chi, a large provider of housing in Hambantota.
- Some agencies were set up spontaneously after the tsunami as concerned people got together to assist in any way they could. Some organizations were involved in social work in their home countries, for instance the Johanniter Foundation (housing construction in Hambantota) was active in the social sector in Germany. In other cases a coalition of aid organizations and civil society organizations (for example newspapers or schools) joined together to fund new aid organizations. Kurier Aid Austria based in Galle was one example.
- Small organizations or private individuals initiated small projects, in particular in the south. Galle had received much early attention from the media and became a magnet for small initiatives. Galle is also an urban centre within relatively easy reach of the capital Colombo.
- Sometimes Sri Lankans in the West were instrumental in initiating the spontaneous responses and at times they also accompanied aid agencies to Sri Lanka and assisted in setting up the operation.

The strength of international agencies is to respond swiftly and flexibly to crisis in diverse cultural, social and institutional contexts. Yet in responding to the tsunami those strengths led some agencies to take on tasks that were beyond their area of competence. As it turned out, some were unable to deliver and left the country, leaving behind unfulfilled promises to communities and to the government. Other agencies were slow in delivering on their promises. Housing construction was the prime example of a complicated social and administrative process that most agencies were unprepared for.

Nevertheless, for many aid organizations the tsunami was a stepping stone for engagement in new countries and new sectors.

Agency portfolios can be divided into three categories:

- Specialized sector focus, for instance housing construction, water and sanitation. Many of these agencies had decided to 'stick to the knitting' and continued with their pre-tsunami portfolio, while they sometimes established partnerships with other agencies that worked in other sectors. Other agencies had decided to focus on one sector due to the specific needs in that sector, irrespective of their previous experience in the sector.
- Broad, but disconnected approach. Many aid organizations worked in a number of sectors, for example housing construction, livelihood, community infrastructure, etc. However, the interventions were disconnected in the sense that aid was not provided to the same communities and there were no apparent synergy effects. Some of them focused mainly on one sector, for example housing construction, with some work in other sectors.
- Comprehensive and holistic approach. A few aid organizations implemented comprehensive support packages, sometimes with active community involvement. Many organizations were engaged in two sectors in the same community, for example livelihoods and housing construction. In some cases agencies collaborated with other organizations to achieve a more comprehensive approach, for instance water and sanitation agencies worked with agencies specialising in housing construction or agencies that specialized in housing construction partnered with local organizations working on livelihoods.

This study did not systematically compare the outcomes of the interventions by aid agencies that had adopted different approaches. However, the critical variables for successful implementation of the programmes seemed to be the extent of household or community involvement, coordination with other aid agencies, and the working relationship with government authorities – in addition to the organization's own capacity and competence.

6.4 Sri Lankan and international agencies: complementary capacities

It is often assumed that international agencies have high capacity in emergency situations whereas national or local organizations have low capacity. A more useful perspective may be to see the two sets of actors as having different capacities and strengths. The challenge is to build on these diverse capacities and strengths for the benefit of the affected population.

Table 6.2 *A comparison of the capacities of Sri Lankan and international aid organizations*

Sri Lankan organizations	International aid agencies
Strengths	*Strengths*
mobilization of people and communities	emergency management
contextual knowledge	transport and logistics
capacity to target poor and vulnerable	technical skills; engineering, design
knowing the who's: networks	accountability to donors
legitimacy with local communities and authorities	access to donor funding
closeness to communities	knowledge of international standards
consultation	computer skills, access to email
commitment	English skills
Weaknesses	*Weaknesses*
financial management	contextual knowledge
reporting to donors	knowledge of local institutions and organizations; and hence of policies, procedures, rules and regulations
capacity in PRA	capacity to deliver on promises
time management	short timeframes
computer skills	accountability to communities
emergency management	
lack of power to negotiate with donors	

International aid agencies had strong technical capacity in the transport and logistics sector and they were well placed to move large amounts of aid within a short period of time. Moreover, they were strong on technical skills related to project management.

Decentralization of local spending and decision-making powers coupled with effective support from headquarters created conditions for effective agency responses to the emergency. Yet the majority of the international staff did not have previous exposure to a disaster of the magnitude of the tsunami. Some organizations left as they found they did not have the capacity to handle the complexities of the situation and some made commitments that they were eventually unable to fulfil. Other agencies struggled with standards, coordination and the complexities of the housing construction process.

The strength of Sri Lankan organizations was their capacity to mobilize communities and to work closely with them. In many cases they employed staff from the local area with a good knowledge of the local socio-political context. The findings from the community studies suggest that precisely their closeness to the local communities was highly valued by beneficiaries. The communities also found it easier to approach and communicate with people from their own area and from the same ethnic group.

Many decision-makers from international agencies demonstrated a poor understanding of the social and cultural context at the outset. For example some Sri Lankan organizations were critical of the 'cash for work' introduced by international agencies. The programmes had been abused by people from non-affected areas and had undermined established working norms for labourers in the communities. The daily wages paid for people engaged in cash for work were incompatible with the normal wage rates and the prescribed working hours. Sri Lankan agencies criticized international organizations for their inability to reach poor families and for providing aid to people on a 'first-come-first-served' basis or to 'people who cry and stretch out their hands' without adopting clear criteria for selecting beneficiaries. According to Sri Lankan organizations, many international agencies had employed young and inexperienced staff who was manipulated by village cliques, politicians and sometimes local organizations. Some said that the international agency delivery model had led to aid dependency. These problems were aggravated by weak hand-over procedures and weak institutional memory, for example causing repetition of debates and discussions at coordination meetings.

6.5 The rehabilitation phase: towards partnerships

A review of evaluations of humanitarian action demonstrated that '...agencies are failing to live up to their commitments to build the capacity of their local partners' (ALNAP 2004). In particular in the relief phase humanitarian agencies tend to implement directly and to rely heavily on expatriate staff. Despite repeated and numerous recommendations formulated to ensure that local institutions take the lead in humanitarian action, very few fundamental changes have been made. As a consequence of the lack of effective partnerships and capacity-building, humanitarian aid sometimes undermines national and local organizations (Harrell-Bond 1986).

The post-tsunami experience revealed a more nuanced picture. Poaching of Sri Lankan organizations' staff by international organizations took place and efforts to counter this practice were not successful, for example in Batticaloa some international organizations failed to establish a 'do no harm policy' to reduce this practice. However, as time passed the picture changed and six months after the tsunami approximately 50% of the international organizations had a local partner. The number of partners varied from one to seven. This figure included the aid agencies that were present in Sri Lanka and who had local partners before the tsunami.

The majority of Sri Lankan organizations had received funding from more than one international partner. Only 25% of the organizations reported having a single donor and some organizations reported having up to eight international donors. International agencies based in the US, UK, Canada, Sweden and Germany, followed by Australia and Denmark, had the highest number of partnerships with local organizations. Moreover, in 32% of the cases the relationship between Sri Lankan organizations and international donors was restricted to funding whereas another 41% had established *partnerships* with international organizations. 13% had partnerships with UN agencies. 14% had received support from religious organizations, charity organizations and clubs. The large number of funding agreements indicated that the tsunami provided a real boost for many Sri Lankan organizations, endowing them with substantial resources. Many Sri Lankan organizations were on the verge of closing down just before the tsunami due to lack of donor funding, as some major donors were winding up their operations in Sri Lanka.

Perhaps surprisingly, a majority of the Sri Lankan organizations that had been able to establish partnership with international agencies had *relatively long-term contracts* to work with the tsunami affected communities. 46% of the organizations reported that they had a funding contract for more than three years while another 14% had two to three year contracts. Another 24% reported having established partnerships for one year, while the balance (16%) had only less than one year contracts. 87% of the organizations had signed a memorandum of understanding. Others worked either on mutual trust or a letter of agreement. A majority of the organizations (74%) worked independently with financial support from donors or international organizations, and 26% had arrangements for joint implementation with the international partner.

There were a number of partnership models:

- Sri Lankan organizations were implementing partners for international organizations. This form of partnership was typically found in the livelihoods and psycho-social sectors. A few agencies such as Malteser, Oxfam Australia, Kurier Aid, and Christoffel Blindenmission implemented housing programmes through Sri Lankan partners.
- The international agency performed an advisory role and the Sri Lankan partner had complete control of project funding. This was the arrangement between Caritas and Sed-Galle in Galle, but this type of arrangement was rare.
- Joint implementation – funds and technical expertise were controlled by the international agency while their local partner was engaged in community mobilization, implementation, etc.

Sri Lankan organizations assess their partnership with international organizations positively. International organizations had been helpful in numerous ways, for instance by providing infrastructure facilities, training, counselling, information and advice. The international organizations equipped the Sri Lankan organizations with novel techniques and tools for better institutional and financial management. Most of the capacity development programmes focused on management, accounting and reporting. However, some agencies also provided training on substantive issues such as child rights, conflict sensitivity, marketing, mobilization, savings and credit management, leadership skills, etc.

Some Sri Lankan organizations said that international organizations had not invested sufficiently in building the capacities of local

organizations. International aid agencies were sometimes seen to be acting with rush and urgency, imposing unrealistic targets and timeframes and thereby preventing partner organizations from working systematically. Small organizations with deep roots in the communities and a good social orientation found it difficult to partner with international organizations and felt marginalized. They found that international organizations chose to work with relatively large, resourceful and 'popular' organizations and had failed to recognize the skills and capacities of the small organizations. Small organizations also felt that they did not master aid concepts and lacked the English skills to submit proposals acceptable to the international organizations. They blamed the international organizations for 'stealing their ideas' with the promise of future partnerships and for completely ignoring them once they received funds.

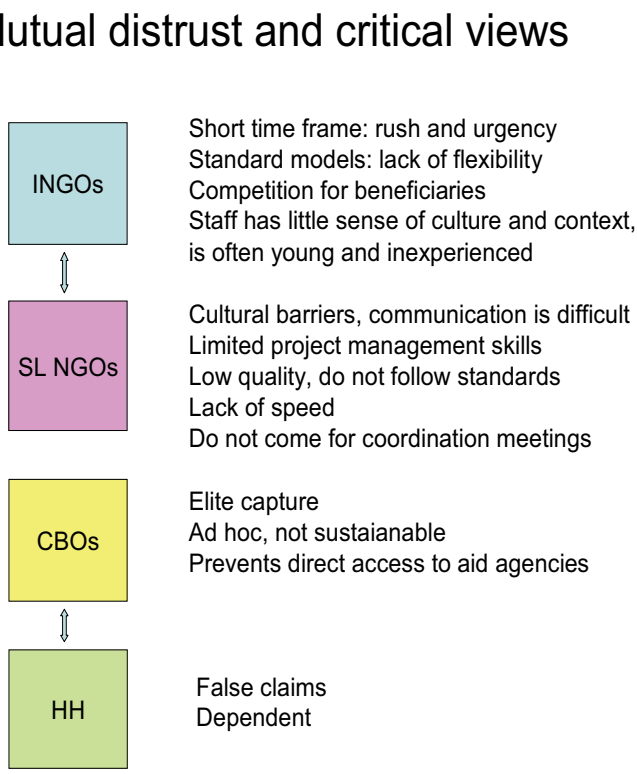
6.6 Aid delivery: collaboration and competition

Despite the positive assessments of partnerships held by Sri Lankan organizations, the relations between international and Sri Lankan organizations were often complex due to language and cultural barriers. Although informal cooperation among international organizations increased, this did not extend to Sri Lankan organizations. International organizations therefore tended to have limited knowledge of the local organizational landscape. A number of international organizations acknowledge that there were problems in the relations between Sri Lankan and international agencies, but they were unsure as to the causes. Some admit to arrogance and that international organizations 'believe they know everything' and that without them 'nothing could be done'. Others believed the use of English as the language of communication created tensions. Sri Lankan organizations criticized international organizations for their arrogance and unwillingness to share information with them. They were concerned about competition for beneficiaries from international organizations whom they accused of giving away aid for free and of not allowing Sri Lankan organizations on their turf. Further, Sri Lankan organizations criticized international organizations for using methodologies that led to tensions in communities.

The model below shows how the different stakeholders held critical views of each other. Yet at the same time, they also had common interests in effective aid delivery and in keeping the aid flowing. Criticisms were therefore balanced by praise and by an appreciation of

the role of the other stakeholders. As the stakeholders became more familiar with each other, their scepticism subsided and collaboration became closer and more trust based.

Figure 6.1 *Stakeholder views of each other*



The tensions between international (INGOs) and Sri Lankan organizations (SL NGOs) were manifest at the coordination meetings organized by the government in the districts. Many organizations reported that they did not find the meetings relevant or useful and many of them gradually abandoned participation, something which international organizations criticized them for. They listed several reasons for their lack of attendance:

- Participants from international agencies dominated the discussions
- Voices of small organizations were not heard
- Meetings were conducted in English and international organizations 'talk a lot'

- Meetings were conducted in late afternoons/evenings and organizations faced transport difficulties
- Meetings were mostly confined to information gathering rather than action

Despite their concerns, Sri Lankan organizations found the coordination meetings useful to:

- Facilitate interaction, communication and informal networks among different actors
- Facilitate informal sharing of information
- Learn about geographical areas and affected families covered by others
- Help avoiding duplication, abuse and waste
- Report on their work

Despite improvements, many coordination meetings continued to be dominated by Western aid workers due to their command of aid concepts and the English language. Consequently Sri Lankan organizations felt intimidated and many of them opted out.

Many international organizations agreed with the views that they themselves should be less assertive, have more patience, show more respect for culture and the 'Sri Lankan way of doing things'. However, in the rush to deliver goods and services, these ideals were not easy to live up to. When confronted with complex environments, aid workers tended to want to 'do things' without necessarily examining how things were done and with whom those efforts were implemented. Some interesting ideas were being piloted to overcome the barriers between Sri Lankan and international organizations. For example, an aid agency from Western Europe made a decision to employ Asian staff rather than European staff to overcome gaps in understanding and communication.

Sri Lankan organizations were also critical of each other and communication, interaction and coordination among organizations were rare. Many preferred to work in isolation and to look after their own territory and resources. Except for occasional sharing of beneficiary lists, there were few attempts to contribute to a common plan of action or to pool resources and work towards a common goal. Some organizations remarked that 'there is no sharing, cooperation and unity among organizations'. This is neither unusual nor unanticipated in light of the history and culture of Sri Lankan non-

governmental organizations which have been characterized by little collaboration. Organizations are weary of joint initiatives and often opt to work in their delineated territories, heavily guarded from outsiders and with the patronage of their respective donors. Therefore it may have been unrealistic to expect tsunami organizations to come together for mutual sharing and collaboration. However, lack of communication has brought about adverse effects such as the duplication of aid, and abuse and misuse by recipient communities.

Several Sri Lankan organizations disassociated themselves from mistakes by blaming 'others', including their fellow organizations. Organizations blamed inequitable distribution of aid on the international organizations, other charitable organizations and individual philanthropists which according to them were ignorant of the socio-cultural context of the communities and lacked the capacity to engage in community development. Because Sri Lankan organizations had trained and experienced staff, the tendency for them to make mistakes was low by their own account. A number of organizations blamed the 'migratory organizations' that were new to the district and not familiar with the communities for selecting the wrong beneficiaries. The organizations that had been working in the districts for a longer period claimed that they had a personal touch with the affected communities and therefore people could not lie and mislead them with wrong information. Sri Lankan organizations also criticized each other for engaging in corrupt practices and for making money out of the tsunami work, for misleading the international organizations for personal benefits, for sharing benefits within their close network of associates such as their own staff, friends and relatives, and for obliging the politicians in providing them with resources to boost their political images.

6.7 Organizational sustainability

Most of the Sri Lankan southern organizations are going to lose their donor funds with the phasing out of several donors from the tsunami rebuilding process. Funding cuts may have serious implications for the work that the organizations have begun or have laid the foundation for. For example, several organizations have set up community based organisations in the tsunami affected areas as appropriate institutional mechanisms for delivery and management of aid as well as for effective implementation of programme interventions. These community based organizations are still in their infant stages and require long-term investments in capacity building. Furthermore, Sri

Lankan organizations perceive community based organizations as a 'system' or a 'methodology' to move forward from the stage of receiving cash grants or equipment to a stage where they could use their institutional strength to further improve their livelihoods and living conditions. The general assessment by the Sri Lankan organizations was that nearly 50% of these newly established community based organizations were functioning well but their capacities needed to be further strengthened through training, guidance etc. (December 2006). However with the gradual evaporation of donor funding beyond 2006, NGOs would be confronted with a major challenge of sustaining these grassroots organizations which they had created after the tsunami.

Sri Lankan organizations have developed a number of strategies in an effort to overcome the anticipated cut in donor funding:

- A number of organizations have begun to provide credit facilities for affected households specifically for furthering their livelihood activities. Organizations such as Janashakthi Women's Development Forum and Sewa Lanka have mobilized their Janashakthi Banks and Sewa Lanka CBOs respectively to facilitate credit to tsunami affected households using their own resources. Janashakthi Bank lends at 1% interest per month for the tsunami affected families. Sri Lankan such as HELP-O and HPDF have accessed credit lines from the National Development Trust Fund (NDTF) and Stromme Foundation, a Norwegian development agency, at 6-7 percent interest which they would lend to affected families. As such savings and credit has now become a coping strategy for a number of organizations particularly the ones that engaged in micro-financing. However, no such clear strategy is yet available for organizations who are exclusively dependent on donor funds.
- Also along with the gradual depletion of external funding, some organizations have accessed funds and other forms of support through private business sector and foundations such as Microsoft, Suntel etc.
- Some organizations are in the process of discussing and working out their phasing out strategies. However, none of them have been implemented yet. Some of the planned strategies include establishing cooperatives of the different occupational groups e.g. coir workers, dry-fish makers etc., networking among such occupational groups, setting up market/sales centres and training and information centres. Meanwhile, a few other organizations

have already taken steps to retrench their staff recruited for tsunami relief and rehabilitation work.

6.8 Summary

The presence of a dense organizational network in particular in the south, enabled international aid agencies to implement many of their projects through Sri Lankan organizations. Despite tensions and a lack of informal interaction, the majority of international aid agencies developed partnerships with Sri Lankan organizations. As part of the collaborative arrangement Sri Lankan organizations received training in a number of subjects such as management, accounting, reporting, marketing, mobilization, savings and credit management, and leadership skills. The critical challenge for many Sri Lankan organizations has been how to sustain their work as tsunami funding was being phased out. A number of organizations had begun to prepare strategies to meet this challenge.

7 Impact on communities and households

Almost half of the affected households had lost their incomes and this chapter examines how they coped with the loss of income and what helped them recover. A year and a half after the tsunami household incomes were lower than before the tsunami (July 2006). A total of 60% of households reported a reduction in monthly income, and the majority of the respondents felt their socio-economic status had fallen. Households had fewer income sources than before, there had been a shift towards casual labour, and many households had not been able to resume their previous income-generating activities. However, the reconstruction also offered opportunities for employment. These factors indicate that many remained vulnerable one and a half years after the tsunami – despite good overall recovery.[77] In addition to the economic impact, households also suffered from the social changes that the tsunami brought about due to dislocation, loss of family members, and resettlement to new and unfamiliar environments.

7.1 Increased poverty

The survey data from July 2005 document considerable reductions in household income[78] compared with pre-tsunami income levels. A new socio-economic category of households who did not have a regular source of income had emerged after the tsunami. This category of 'no income' families was comparatively large in the districts of Hambantota (50%) and Batticaloa (48%). Findings from the community studies suggest that this 'no income' category consisted of families belonging to all three pre-tsunami socio-economic categories;

[77] Good progress in income recovery was also noted in the ILO surveys, see for example: ILO (2005): Third Needs Assessment Survey for Income Recovery (NASIR 3). A survey sponsored by the ILO. October 2005.
[78] Income in this context means earnings from a paid job.

the well-off (rich), the middle-income and the poor. The number of families who earned a monthly income above Rs. 5000 before the tsunami had fallen by 30-50%, with Jaffna district recording the greatest drop (45% to 2%). The number of families earning less than Rs. 5000 had also dropped dramatically (except in Ampara for families earning less than Rs. 3000).

Table 7.1 *Income levels before and after the tsunami*

District	Income levels before tsunami (per month)			Income levels after tsunami (per month)			
	Less than Rs.3000/-	Rs.3000-5000	Above Rs.5000	No income	Less than Rs.3000/-	Rs.3000-5000	Above Rs.5000
Ampara	44.7	32.1	23.2	26.1	46.3	13.8	13.8
Batticaloa	42.0	28.8	29.3	48.1	32.2	7.0	12.7
Galle	20.7	31.4	47.9	33.9	32.1	19.0	15.0
Hambantota	11.3	30.4	58.3	49.6	24.3	11.3	14.8
Jaffna	37.3	17.6	45.1	32.2	46.3	6.3	2.1
Kalutara	6.9	22.9	70.3	13.0	31.3	18.3	37.4

A year and a half after the tsunami (July 2006), the survey results demonstrated that households felt that their socio-economic status remained dramatically different from their pre-tsunami status.[79] The number of households who categorized themselves as *poor* had increased in all communities, whereas the number of households who reported that they were *very poor* had increased markedly in the east. Around 50% of households categorized themselves as poor.[80] Moreover, in the two communities in the east around one third of the respondents reported they were very poor.

In Kudawella 9% of the households perceived themselves as *well-off* families before the tsunami. However, none of the households claimed to be well-off after the tsunami. 85% of the households in Kudawella defined their pre-tsunami status as average, whereas after the tsunami only 39% placed themselves in the average category. The households who perceived themselves as poor increased from 6% before the tsunami to 56% after the tsunami.

Nobody in Koggala perceived themselves as well-off after the tsunami. In the pre-tsunami period, the percentage of well-off families in Koggala was 6%. The percentage of households who saw

[79] When comparing the findings from the July 2005 survey with the findings from the July 2006 survey it is important to note that the sampling frames were different and that the data are not directly comparable.
[80] There is a possibility that households have under-reported their incomes in order to attract more support from aid agencies.

themselves as average before the tsunami was 91% and this proportion had been reduced to 42% after the tsunami. The *poor* category of households had increased to unprecedented levels from 3% to 52% after the tsunami. The very poor households who constituted only 0.7% before the tsunami had increased to 7%.

The number of households who perceived themselves as *very poor* had increased significantly in both Kirankulam and Sainthamaruthu and figures were extremely high compared to the two southern communities. In Kirankulam, the households that identified themselves as very poor had increased from 3% to 28%. Sainthamaruthu (42%) had the highest proportion of households who claimed to be very poor after the tsunami. In comparison only 1% reported that they had been very poor before the tsunami. The percentage of households who saw themselves as *poor* households had increased in both these eastern communities, from 28% to 48% in Kirankulam and from 26% to 45% in Sainthamaruthu.

The percentage of households who claimed to be of *average* standing had also dropped substantially in the two eastern communities. 60% of the households in Kirankulam identified themselves as average before the tsunami and this proportion had decreased to 23% after the tsunami. The percentage of average households in Sainthamaruthu was 66% before the tsunami and had been reduced to 12% after the tsunami. The percentage of well-off families after the tsunami had also been reduced in both Kirankulam and Sainthamaruthu, from 10% to 1% and from 8% to 0.3% respectively.

A corresponding decrease was observed in the income of households that earlier fell into the higher income brackets. The number of households earning Rs.5000-10,000 a month fell from 38% to 29% in Koggala. In Sainthamaruthu, the decrease was from 28% to 21%, whereas in Kirankulam the drop was from 29% to 23%. However, the situation in Kudawella was somewhat different from the other communities in that there was a slight increase in the households earning Rs. 5000-10000 a month. This could be either because some of the low income families who were earning less before the tsunami were now earning more as a result of new income sources such as cash for work; or alternatively because families who were earning more than Rs. 10000 a month before the tsunami had fallen down the income ladder.

A significant decrease was also seen in the number of households earning Rs. 10000-15000. In Koggala the percentage of households in this income category fell from 8% to 4%. In Kudawella it decreased

from 18% to 11%, in Sainthamaruthu from 19% to 11% and in Kirankulam from 15% to 9%.

7.2 Impact on socio-economic groups

This picture from the household survey was confirmed through the five participatory community studies and interviews (October-November 2005). The participatory exercises asked residents to rank community members into 'wealth categories.' For this exercise, residents in each community selected specific criteria. In all the communities residents created three categories: the 'well-off', the 'middle-income' and the 'poor' families. In the two villages in the south, roughly a third of the population was classified as poor and in the three villages in the north and east more than 45% were classified as poor.

Households in the *'well-off'* category were entrepreneurs, contractors, money lenders, tour guides, owners of paddy fields and high land fields, owners of vans, lorries, engine boats and shops, and people who received foreign remittances. They owned large, well furnished houses, with electronic household goods. In Batticaloa and Jaffna, government employees were categorized in the well-off group, while they were placed in the middle-income category in other districts, perhaps a reflection of lower incomes across the north and east.

Residents felt that although the assets of the well-off had been affected, they had been able to access income sources from relatives and friends in unaffected areas of Sri Lanka and abroad. Some had savings that they used to restore business premises and houses or they had accessed loans from the government. Others had made use of new business opportunities, in particular in the construction field. Some individual experiences suggest a more nuanced picture of the experiences of households in the well-off category. Some suffered because they had to bear the costs of retaining crewmen and labourers while waiting for a new boat to be delivered. Money lenders suffered as a result of loss of documentation concerning loans, or the death of customers. Others explained how they had lost all assets accumulated over the years and aid from humanitarian agencies could not make up for their losses.

The *middle-income* category was a more disparate group of people. The category included government employees (at lower levels), trishaw and van owners, boat owners, employees in aid organizations, owners of paddy fields cultivated by share croppers, families having

members working abroad, self-employed people such as small grocery owners, tour guides, owners of communication centres and poultry farms. This group also owned houses furnished with electronic equipment. Some had recovered with help from family members abroad, and others had found work in the construction business and with aid organizations. Aid organizations had employed a large number of people as psycho-social counsellors, teachers for private tuition classes and for pre-schools, and in a number of other functions. Others had not recovered. For example, boat owners had not yet been supplied with new boats and people had been unable to recover their livelihoods and their supplementary incomes.

The *poor* category was composed of fishermen, farmers, (casual) labourers, masons, carpenters, self-employed, petty traders (fish traders), fish net menders, guards of boats and nets, people employed in hotels, laundry and grocery employees, barbers, tailors, and people whose families were working in the Middle East. The monthly income of this category was between Rs. 5000-Rs. 10000 before the tsunami. They lived in semi-permanent or temporary housing and some depended on Samurdhi benefits. Many owned push-bikes.

The findings from the community studies carried out in October and November 2005 revealed that the impact of the tsunami and the tsunami aid on different socio-economic groups was complex. Households from all income categories had seized new opportunities for work in the construction sector or job opportunities in aid organizations. Some had started new businesses in relocation settlements. Others had received capital and implements. On the other hand, severely affected households suffering from trauma or the loss of family members had not been effectively targeted. Households that had lost financial assets were less visible and many found it difficult to restart their businesses. At the same time the cost of living has increased considerably. The challenge for aid agencies was to develop flexible strategies and comprehensive packages that took into account diverse needs.

Whereas there had been a loss of fishery related employment, job opportunities for casual labourers, masons and carpenters were good. For example, in the village in Batticaloa incomes of all three categories had increased as construction activities provided steady employment. Masons and carpenters earned more, and in some areas in Ampara and Batticaloa people claimed incomes had almost doubled. However, agriculture suffered due to salinity. In other areas masons and carpenters were unable to work because their tool kits had not been replaced. Increased competition for work in some areas

depressed wages as fishermen, farmers and skilled labourers had joined the workforce.

7.3 Poverty dynamics

Around 45% of the affected families claimed that the tsunami had either completely or partially destroyed their income-earning activities. There were a number of reasons for the decline in the incomes of the affected families. The examples below illustrate the complexity of the issue:

- Boats that were lost or completely destroyed had not been fully replaced yet. The crewmen in particular were still unable to find work. This problem was reported from the study locations in the south, east and north.
- Many small businesses had not been able to restart yet due to lack of sufficient capital.
- Fish traders in Kudawella used to buy fish in bulk quantities during the glut periods when fish prices were relatively low and kept them stored in their refrigerators so that they could sell when prices were high. When refrigerators were destroyed in the tsunami, these fish traders could no longer store fish and benefit from price fluctuations.
- In Kudawella, several coir-making industries run by women were affected. Sometimes they were organized into small neighbourhood groups and when members of those groups were scattered after the tsunami, the women were no longer able to run their enterprises. This form of dislocation had affected several handloom workers in the Ampara district as well. Furthermore, they were unable to operate coir machines from their temporary shelters where there was a lack of space for such activities.
- Sometimes the male breadwinners in the family had to forego their economic activities temporarily in order to personally attend to the house construction/renovation work using the financial grants they had received from either the government or from the aid organizations. Hence construction work kept them away from their economic activities, which resulted in a reduction in earnings. This was particularly the case for fishermen who used to work in multi-day boats and spend several days out at sea. Some families compensated for the lack of income during the construction period by using part of the cash grants for day-to-day consumption purposes.

- Some crewmen reported having developed breathing problems after getting caught up in the tsunami water. Hence they could no longer work in the multi-day boats which requires them to spend several days at sea at a time. Some fishermen suffered from a state of fear that prevented them from resuming their fishing activities.
- Casual work is generally available at harbours or landing sites for people who frequent such places and work is offered on a first-come-first-serve basis. Families who had found such casual work at times when boats were landing their catch or departing to sea, for example unloading fish, cleaning nets, or fuelling the boats etc., could not find work as they were displaced or relocated far away from the harbour or the landing sites. Messages were not sent to them, or if they were sent not much work was left for them by the time the labourers reached the landing sites.
- Displacement or relocation from their original land caused some families to lose their supplementary incomes from domestic gardens, such as from coconut trees.
- In Koggala several families ran boarding houses for employees working in the factories located in the free trade zone. Those families could no longer let out rooms when their houses were destroyed. A number of families in Koggala were engaged in making dresses which they sold to tourists and the employees who boarded in their houses. After the tsunami these markets have shrunk considerably.
- Incomes of fisher-families in the north had been reduced largely due to security regulations preventing them from fishing in the deep seas.

The physical injuries or psychological problems many people faced after the tsunami continued to hinder a number of families from engaging in economic activities. Although many had been able to recover from their illnesses and temporary disabilities such as body fractures, around 10% of the households reported that their breadwinners had not fully recovered from physical illnesses such as breathing problems, wounds or from a mentality of fear and depression. Consequently they found themselves unable to engage in any form of productive activity.

7.4 Aid dependency

Aid agencies raised concerns about aid dependency as a result of the free distribution of aid. A number of agencies were concerned that people continued to expect more 'free' aid and believed that the affected population wanted to extract as much aid as possible while it was still plentiful. Irrespective of whether 'dependency' is a good description or not, the free flow of aid has had consequences for how agencies work with communities. Aid agencies found it difficult to adopt a 'needs based' approach because targeting of vulnerable groups caused discontent in the communities, with higher levels of conflict as a result. Moreover, through cash for work schemes people had become used to immediate rewards for their efforts. A shift towards more long term developmental approaches such as micro credit programmes that required more sustained efforts on the part of beneficiaries had become difficult because households did not see the immediate benefit.

7.5 Post-tsunami income sources

After the tsunami the income patterns of households changed significantly. Income from fishing, cottage industries and self-employment, and the number of families with multiple incomes was reduced, whereas casual labour became more important for family incomes.

7.5.1 Differences in employment between the villages in the east and the south

Before the tsunami there were striking differences in income sources between the two southern districts and the two eastern districts. Households in the two eastern villages were poorer before the tsunami than households in the southern villages, and they had less reliable sources of income. Of the four villages surveyed only Kudawella was predominantly a fishing village, with nearly 80% of the people being engaged in fishing. In the two communities in the east the fishing sector was less important. However, the most dramatic difference between the south and the east was in relation to self-employment and casual labour. In Koggala almost everybody was self-employed before the tsunami and in Kudawella almost 60% were self-employed. In the east, however, fewer than one in four in Sainthamaruthu and fewer than one in five in Kirankulam was self-employed. The figures were

reversed for casual labour as an income source. 55% of the people in Kirankulam and 50% of the people in Sainthamaruthu depended on casual labour for their income before the tsunami. There were also significant differences relating to the number of income sources of each household. In the southern communities, 38% of households in Kudawella and 50% of households in Koggala had two sources of income before the tsunami, whereas in the eastern communities 13% of households in Kirankulam and 12% of households in Sainthamaruthu had two incomes. The dependence on casual labour and access to only one income source per family in the east resulted in significantly lower income levels in the east compared to in the south.

7.5.2 Fishing

Before the tsunami a majority of the households in the two communities in the south, Kudawella (78%) and Koggala (58%) made their living from fishing supplemented by other sources of income. Fishing was less important in the two communities in the east, and before the tsunami fishing was the source of income for 40% of the families in Kirankulam and for 36% of the families in Sainthamaruthu. Several families reported that they lost their boats, canoes, nets and fishing gear in the tsunami, with Kudawella being hit hardest (33%). In Koggala 12% of the families reported having lost their crafts and gear, in Kirankulam 10% and in Sainthamaruthu 4%.

At the time of the July 2006 survey, the number of families dependent on fishing had dropped to 28% in Kirankulam and 29% in Sainthamaruthu. Fishing related activities were also less important in Kuddawella (61%) and Koggala (48%). There are at least three possible reasons why people had not returned to fishing. Firstly, there were still gaps in the provision of boats and gear. Secondly, fishermen also feared returning to the sea. This factor seemed to apply in particular to older fishermen, a number of whom said they did not want to return to the sea again. Thirdly, fishermen from several communities reported that the low quality of the crafts they received and their lack of seaworthiness prevented them from using their new boats.

7.5.3 Cottage industries and self-employment

Cottage industries and self-employment activities had been drastically affected and a significant proportion of families had lost their income sources from such self-employment activities. Households had engaged in a range of self-employment and cottage industries before

the tsunami, including dressmaking, running boarding houses, food preparation, running retail groceries and tea kiosks, coir-making, Maldives fish or dried fish-making, tour guiding, fish and vegetable vending, provision of fuel supplies to boats etc.

In Koggala, almost all the households were engaged in self-employment activities or cottage industries at the time of the tsunami, often as a supplementary source of income. The proportion of households engaged in self-employment activities had dropped to 75% at the time of the survey. In Kudawella the percentage of households involved in self-employment activities had fallen from 58% to 29%. In Sainthamaruthu the percentage of self-employed households fell from 22% before the tsunami to 14% after the tsunami and in Kirankulam the percentage fell from 17% to 10%.

7.5.4 A shift towards casual labour

Before the tsunami, households in the two eastern communities depended on casual labour work. In Kirankulam 55% of the population depended on casual labour work while 49% of the households in Sainthamaruthu had engaged in casual labour work before the tsunami. In Koggala and Kuddawella less than 10% of households had depended on casual labour.

After the tsunami, the percentage of families engaged in casual labour had significantly increased. In Kirankulam 65% of households received income from casual labour compared to 55% before the tsunami. A similar shift in the casual labour force was observed in the southern communities. For example, in Kudawella the casual labour force which was 3% before the tsunami has increased to 14%. In Koggala, the increase was from 7% to 17%. Loss of former livelihood sources is the major reason why individuals undertake casual labour work. In Sainthamaruthu such a distinct increase could not be observed after the tsunami and the proportion of households engaged in casual labour remained at around 50%.

7.5.5 Reduction in the number of families with multiple incomes

Having multiple sources of income strengthens the economic position of families and reduces their vulnerability. Accordingly, loss of multiple income sources increases vulnerability to poverty and deprivation. Many households had multiple income sources before the tsunami. In Kudawella, 37% of households had two sources of

income, while in Koggala 50% of households had two income sources. However, the number of households with two income sources had dropped remarkably to 13% in Kudawella and 30% in Koggala. Meanwhile, the percentage of households that depended on a single source of income had increased from 52% to 77% in Kudawella and from 27% to 46% in Koggala.

On the other hand the number of households with two income sources had increased in both Kirankulam and Sainthamaruthu. The increase in Kirankulam was from 13% to 20% while in Sainthamaruthu the increase was from 12% to 16%. In many families children had stopped schooling and had engaged in casual labour work in order to support their families living in camps or temporary shelters. Several families had members who found work in the aid agencies. A similar pattern was not found in the two southern communities.

The number of households living on a single income had increased slightly in the east whereas the number of families who had three sources of income dropped from 23% to 12% in Kirankulam and from 20% to 9% in Sainthamaruthu.

In addition to the reasons listed above, a number of factors caused the relatively slow recovery of people's incomes:

- The inadequacy of the livelihood support grants to ensure complete recovery of economic activities. The damage to economic assets was extensive and the relatively small amounts of cash disbursed by the aid agencies did not meet the needs. Aid agencies and other micro-finance institutions tended to give cash grants and sometimes credit of Rs. 5000 to 40,000. With the escalating inflation and price increases of raw materials, these amounts were not sufficient for a worthwhile investment.
- The lack of flexible credit facilities and the inability of the affected families to meet the criteria imposed by commercial banks such as collateral, high interest rates, etc.
- Some families had been unable to resume their former economic activities, either because their previous markets no longer existed, due to displacement of their customers, because they were not in the right 'frame of mind' to work, or their breadwinners were physically unfit to work after the tsunami.

7.6 Community cohesion: a mixed picture

One in two households reported that competition, suspicion and ill feeling had increased after the tsunami. These feelings were more prevalent in the south where a majority reported tensions and divisions in the communities. The following statement may be extreme, but it demonstrates the depth of competition and suspicion that dominated in the south: 'Before we used to exchange food, now we believe others want to give us poison.'[81] There were numerous examples of tension among people, for instance households that built temporary houses on other people's land were later asked to leave as relations became hostile. In the midst of competition for money and resources, traditional attitudes of respect for parents and elders had diminished. As opposed to the communities in the south, respondents in the north and east felt that communities had come closer together after the tsunami. There were interesting differences between religious groups in the way that households responded to this question. The majority of Catholic and Hindus agreed that their community had become closer, whereas Muslims were divided and Buddhists disagreed. Since most of the Buddhists resided in the south – where households reported high levels of tension - this pattern is not surprising. The large amount of small aid agencies, the abundance of aid, and the apparent randomness in the distribution of aid are some of the factors that perhaps explain these perceptions held by the southern communities. The second survey (July 2006) revealed fewer signs of tension in the south, whereas other concerns and worries were on the increase in the east.

7.7 Family well-being

Very few households in the four communities said that their lives had returned to normal 18 months after the tsunami. 13% of the households in Kudawella, 9% in Sainthamaruthu and 7% in Kirankulam perceived their lives as normal. A higher percentage of the families in Koggala said their lives had returned to normal, probably due to the new houses they had received from the Lion's Club shortly after the tsunami.

[81] No doubt that people felt very emotional and that some felt highly aggrieved by the experiences after the tsunami. We experienced fist fights in one of the work shops held in one of the communities and in another community relations between some of the people were clearly hostile.

A majority of the households observed that their lives were characterized by feelings of hopelessness, uncertainty, unhappiness, discomfort, fear and anxiety. 46% of the southern households observed that their lives had become uncomfortable. These perceptions were very high among families who were 'well-off' and 'average' in terms of their socio-economic status before the tsunami. These feelings were also expressed by those families who continued to live in their temporary shelters almost a year and a half after the tsunami, under deteriorating housing conditions. This finding is not unexpected. However, families who had moved into the new housing schemes where both the quality of housing and other infrastructure facilities remained in an unsatisfactory state also expressed such negative feelings.

Uncertainty and hopelessness characterized the state of mind for 43% of the households in Sainthamaruthu and 21% of the households in Kirankulam. It was also the state of affairs for 20% of the southern households. 45% of the Kirankulam households said that they had to live in fear and anxiety. 10% of the households in Kudawella and Koggala and another 16% of the households in Sainthamaruthu also expressed feelings of fear and anxiety. In Kudawella, several families reported recurrent sleeping problems and loss of memory, particularly among women. Also some families mentioned having to run away with their children in the middle of the night even at a slight disturbance or noise. Some fishermen working on multi-day boats referred to their difficulties in spending several days away from their families as they were always concerned about the safety of family members. All these feelings and perceptions of people across different economic strata highlight the fact that aid has not been effective in addressing the well-being of the affected people in general and their psycho-social well-being in particular.

7.8 Kinship and neighbourhood relations

A year and a half after the tsunami 60% of the households in the two southern communities felt that the relationships to their kinsmen and neighbours had changed significantly. Many fewer of the households in the east reported that changes had taken place in their communities (Kirankulam 30% and Sainthamaruthu 46%). A few households in the two southern communities and in Kirankulam (6-7%) said that people had become more cooperative and concerned for each other. A relatively high number of the households in Sainthamaruthu (23%) were of the opinion that people had become more cooperative and

concerned than earlier. Perhaps this may be due to more intense interaction and a sense of shared problems in the camps where many of the people in Ampara still lived. Some respondents commented that many people had begun to realize the impermanent nature of life and thus were trying to resolve their differences with fellow-villagers. In the southern communities a number of respondents stated that people spent more time in the temples performing religious and spiritual activities. However, jealousy over aid still prevailed and this phenomenon was significantly more widespread in the southern communities (26%) than in the eastern communities.

Reduction in support from relatives

The July 2005 survey showed that 45% of respondents had received assistance from relatives. One year later, in July 2006, very few households in the south (6%) reported that they received help from their relatives. Although a higher share of the households in the east continued to receive support from relatives, only 14% of the households in Kirankulam and 12% in Sainthamaruthu had received support from relatives. In Sri Lankan villages families are largely linked to each other through kinship ties and live close to each other. In the south many families were displaced and had to move into temporary shelters built elsewhere or to the new housing schemes constructed outside their places of origin. Thus families became somewhat cut-off from their immediate kinship networks and interaction was reduced. Some families also related how their kinsmen had come to help them soon after the tsunami but gradually stopped helping as they were not in a position to provide assistance over a long period of time.

Loneliness and isolation

A significant proportion of households in the southern communities (28%) felt loneliness and isolation as a result of neighbours moving into other areas. Households in the eastern communities did not report this problem to the same extent, probably because they had either not been relocated (Kirankulam) or many were still in camps (Sainthamaruthu). Affected families who were living away from their pre-tsunami homes, and families who were resettled in new locations noted that it had become more difficult to get practical help in times of need, for instance to leave a child in the care of neighbours when parents had to attend to urgent work. Their trusted neighbours had moved elsewhere or they could not rely on the neighbours in their new vicinity. Some families also felt threatened by the presence of half-collapsed buildings and houses in which various forms of anti-social activities such as alcohol and drug use, sexual activities and burglary

were taking place. In such a situation where families were shifting to new areas, building of new networks and relationships was of greater importance among the southern households (8%) than in Kirankulam (3%) and Sainthamaruthu (4%). For example, some families in Kudawella were relocated in places such as Ranna and Bata-ata that are situated almost 15 km away from their original place of residence, resulting in people having to reduce their regular interactions with their kinsmen and former friends. In Koggala families were not dislocated to the same extent as in Kudawella as their new houses were rebuilt at the same locations. Others lived within a single camp set up adjacent to their village. Therefore the feelings of loneliness and isolation expressed by the people in Koggala were relatively fewer.

Social stigma

18% of the households in Sainthamaruthu complained of being stigmatized and of losing their social status, primarily because they were still lodged in camps. It was reported that they had been labelled and referred to as 'tsunami karayo' (tsunami people) in their day-to-day interactions in the community and sometimes in public places such as schools. This concern was very high among the poor and very poor families in Sainthamaruthu. Similarly, in Kudawella some of the well-off and average families related how they had been treated with respect before the tsunami and how they had previously been invited to public events, but with the collapse of their financial position, they did not enjoy the same respect as before.

7.9 Summary

All socio-economic groups had suffered serious losses. At the same time complex poverty dynamics made income recovery a time consuming and challenging process for many. Due to complex changes in local markets, psychological and physical factors at the individual level, and ineffective design of livelihood programmes, income recovery was going to take time. On the other hand, the tsunami rebuilding process also offered employment opportunities in particular in the construction sector and in aid agencies and these income sources were significant in some areas. The big challenge for aid agencies was to find ways of identifying clients for small grants and loans in a cost effective manner and to ensure that the multitude of programmes on offer did not undermine each other or weaken existing institutions for credit provision.

8 Community perceptions of aid

During the relief phase, affected communities and households had concerns regarding equity, quality and standardization of aid delivery. These weaknesses led to tensions and mistrust in communities. Some of the weaknesses were rectified in the rehabilitation phase as aid agencies gained experience in working with communities and households.

8.1 Difficulties in accessing aid

Despite the abundance of aid, many households found it difficult to access aid and these difficulties did not seem to ease with time. Households in the south (49%) encountered fewer difficulties in accessing aid than people living in the two eastern communities (57% and 60%)[82]. 'Buffer zone' households reported more difficulties than others. A number of barriers were identified:

- Capture of aid by non-affected or less affected persons and distribution of aid among relatives and friends of aid workers were reported mostly in the east. 57% of the households in Sainthamaruthu and 31% in Kirankulam reported capture of aid by non-deserving persons.
- A major concern in the two southern communities was the lack of response from government officials to concerns and difficulties. Families in Kudawella (67%) and in Koggala (43%) recalled how their voices were not heard by public officials, despite repeated visits to them. In Velvettithurai 50% of the families reported that they were ignored by the officials and in other instances officials had provided misinformation and favoured particular households.

[82] Household survey July 2006

- Political interference and favours in the distribution of aid were particularly reported from Kudawella where 37% of the households related how their names had been deleted from the housing entitlement list by the local politicians.
- Opposition from fellow villagers in accessing aid was reported from Koggala (44%) and Kudawella (26%). This figure suggests fierce competition over aid in the two communities.
- In the east, access to aid continued to be constrained by lack of information on the date and venue of the aid delivery. Lack of this type of information was identified as a serious concern during the early phase of the tsunami rebuilding process.
- Households complained of corrupt practices in the granting of cash donations. Grants had been given to non-affected families and other families had been given more than they were entitled to receive. Another concern was the practice of having to pay bribes to officials to secure the release of cash instalments.
- Delays by the authorities in releasing the cash grant instalments were reported.
- In the north and east, households who received cash grants for housing said they were unable to complete a house with the sums that had been allocated, as a result of escalating prices of building materials and labour wages.
- Inability to produce or claim entitlement to the land they had been living on prior to the tsunami was a major constraint for 15% of the households in Kirankulam.
- 15% of the families in Koggala could not access aid as they did not hold a separate household registration before the tsunami. The reason is that they had been living in an extended family. 10% of the families in Kudawella had encountered a similar experience.

8.2 Intra-community inequity: gaps and overlaps

Unfair distribution of relief and rehabilitation goods was a pervasive complaint in all the five communities, in particular with regard to the more valuable items such as boats, bicycles, sewing machines and permanent housing. Some households had received the same items several times, while others had not received any support at all, for example some had received several boats, while others had not received boats at all. The lucky ones had been allocated a number of

new boats, while their old boats were being repaired. Others had received boats although they had not owned boats before the tsunami. In one of the villages in the south, seven to eight organizations had provided boats, despite the fact that only 23 boats had been damaged. In the same village 265 temporary houses were needed and 515 had been constructed.

Boats, nets and engines dominated early livelihood interventions, while communities felt that other livelihood needs were ignored. As the rehabilitation process got under way and aid agencies started to plan development programmes, this problem subsided. The findings from the household survey suggested that fish workers were nominally more satisfied with the aid they had received than other groups, perhaps a reflection of the early and plentiful support provided to fishing communities.

Equity issues were particularly serious in the housing sector where the cost of each house is high. Firstly, because of inadequate beneficiary lists and a lack of monitoring, some had received grants from the government for rebuilding their old houses, in addition to having new houses built for them by non-governmental organizations. Secondly, agency expenditure on housing varied, with agencies spending from Rs. 250,000 to Rs. 1.8 million on a new house. Thirdly, some organizations that funded housing construction actively supported households to ensure that they also received support from the government, whereas other organizations accepted that government grants were stopped when households had received support from an aid agency.

Distribution of aid to *non-affected* people was widespread. Relief, water tanks, temporary houses, boats and permanent houses had been diverted by politicians to non-affected people and non-affected households had accessed aid through forgery, stealing of documentation and by paying bribes to public officials. The winners and the losers in the distribution of aid are listed below:

Table 8.1 *Unequal access to aid: winners and losers (community data October 2005)*

Winners	Losers
• Politicians who strived to build their image and increase their vote base • Local government officers who tried to earn extra money • Aid agency staff • Office bearers of community organizations • Housing officers • People who did not have sewing machines, boats/canoes before tsunami • People without proper vocational skills • Non-affected families • Non-fishermen • Non-registered households • Less affected families • Friends and relatives of politicians • Friends and relatives of local administrators • Friends and relatives of community leaders • Those living 'by the road side' • People who lost only their kitchens or firewood storage huts • People whose boats had already been repaired • Families who lived outside 100 or 200 metres border • Rich people who bribed and influenced the aid delivery process • Non-affected communities outside the affected area who supported the local politician	• Families who lived on land that belonged to others • Families who could not prove ownership to land • Second generation families who did not have a separate identity/registration with the Grama Niladhari • Families who had mortgaged their land • Affected persons/families who lived with their relatives and friends • Displaced farmers • Heavily affected persons/families, i.e. injured • Affected persons/families who still grieved over their lost family members and were suffering from mental disorders, lack of motivation etc. • Still there are genuinely affected people who have not been able to access aid: families whose houses were completely or partially destroyed, some real fishermen, some legally registered households, some people with vocational skills • *Catamaran* fishermen who had lost their boats and nets • Families who lived within 100 or 200 metres • People who did not get information about the venue and time of aid delivery • Families belonging to the political opposition

The table indicates that affected communities believed that aid allocation had been systematically biased against households without resources to negotiate with aid agencies. Households with few assets and households that had been severely physically or emotionally affected had lost out. Whereas extended families used several strategies to access aid, families who had lost family members had fewer individuals who could be dispatched for meetings and assessments. Communities felt that genuinely affected people had not received their fair share. Lack of information concerning distribution of aid and application forms for aid programmes further impinged on their access to aid.

8.3 Quality

Low quality was a persistent problem throughout the relief and rebuilding process. Many households found that the flour included with dry rations was of sub-standard quality, tool kits were often of low quality or they were incomplete, and some boats were not seaworthy or had been distributed without nets and engines. In the rush to provide boats quickly, perhaps agencies did not consider lead time for nets and engines. In some cases aid agencies waited for engines from Japan, whereas boats were manufactured in Sri Lanka.

The quality of temporary housing varied widely. For some agencies quality was important, and they had spent well above the average budget on temporary housing and had produced temporary houses supplied with water and sanitation facilities, as well as electricity. Even though many temporary houses were of excellent quality, poor quality was a concern in some areas. In Ampara, where progress in the construction of permanent housing was slow, the problem was described as a 'bottomless' pit, and aid agencies had to begin work to raise standards, for instance by making sure that each shelter had two rooms and that the foundation was sound. Some aid agencies concede that they were initially not aware of internationally accepted standards (such as the Sphere standards) and that their priority was to build as many temporary shelters as possible and as quickly as possible. They also blamed the government for delays in issuing guidelines. Guidelines were not made public until the construction of temporary houses was well under way in all districts and completed in some.

Permanent housing construction was also affected by low quality. For example, the first housing projects completed within a few months of the tsunami were seen as major achievements, but then problems of

leaking roofs and crumbling walls began, in part due to the use of non-traditional and sub-standard material.

Sub-standard quality was caused by a combination of factors:

- The imperative to deliver quickly to meet urgent needs and to spend large funds within a short time
- Inadequate knowledge of international quality standards; this problem applied to international as well as Sri Lankan agencies
- Contractors who did not deliver according to the requirements set out in the contract
- Delays in standard setting by the government

Agencies with clear priorities and policies found it easier to reconcile quality and time considerations whereas many of the agencies who jumped on the bandwagon found it hard to make the correct decisions.

8.4 Standardization

In the initial phase aid tended to be delivered in the form of standard packages, rather than being adapted to individual and household needs. For example, large quantities of flour were distributed to families who were used to rice, and dry rations were not adapted to individual household size. Moreover livelihood interventions were standardized, rather adapted to needs and vulnerabilities. Some examples were:

- Boats, engines and nets for fishermen
- Push cycles, fish boxes, weighing scales for fish traders
- Toolkits for masons and carpenters
- Sewing machines for women
- Seeds and animals
- Utensils (paddy boiling pots, food preparation machines, etc.)
- Flour grinding machines/blenders
- Cash grants (Rs. 5000 – Rs. 10,000)
- Subsidized/interest free loans
- Vocational training

Often the same people had received the same intervention several times and sometimes oversupply resulted when new households

started production that they had not previously been engaged in. Households contributed to the impression that standard interventions were needed by asking for them, because they expected that standard items were easy to get. In the rehabilitation and development phase agencies diversified livelihood interventions and attempted to select beneficiaries more carefully.

Many households wanted to make adjustments to new permanent houses to make them more culturally and practically suitable. In particular resettlement schemes were based on standard designs although relatively simple, yet important, requirements could have been fulfilled if individual adjustments had been allowed for. For example, some wanted flat concrete roofs that would allow for extensions, rather than sloped roofing that would complicate the building of another floor.

8.5 Bribery and corruption among aid agencies

The affected population had several concerns about non-governmental organizations:

- Some field officers took bribes in return for goods. For instance, in Ampara non-affected people had bribed field staff to get access to relief goods.
- The difference between actual costs and budgeted costs lined the pockets of contractors and aid organization staff.
- NGO staff favoured friends and relatives by assigning them a disproportionate share of goods and services.

Communities accused staff of community organizations of being partial and of favouring friends and relatives. Less valuable items were plentiful and were distributed relatively equitably between members, whereas valuable goods such as boats, nets and bicycles were often distributed first to committee (board) members and their informal networks. For example, Fishing Cooperative Societies were supposedly biased in favour of selected members who had a special relationship to the committee members. As a result, boats were allocated to people who had never been engaged in fishing. Communities complained that distribution of boats and nets was based on such special relationships and not on pre-tsunami ownership patterns. Fishing Cooperative Societies had gained in popularity and

legitimacy as donors channelled funds through them but some of the affected households resented the fact that Fishing Cooperative Societies acted as an intermediary between them and the aid agencies and preferred a direct relationship with aid agencies. They also believed donors were unaware of corruption in the societies.

In the village in Batticaloa a village development council had been set up three months after the tsunami. The committee allegedly charged between Rs. 8000 and Rs. 25,000 for application forms for tsunami grants for housing construction. In the same village the committee had retained Rs. 15,000 of the first instalment of the government housing grant, supposedly to redistribute to people who were not eligible for housing grants. In some cases poorer households said they had received some funds from the committee. In other cases they had not.

8.6 Aid satisfaction

A majority of the respondents said they were satisfied with the relief aid they were currently receiving (August 2005). However, although relief had effectively met their immediate needs, a majority said that the assistance they had received had not been helpful in *rebuilding* their lives or in replacing valuable assets.

8.6.1 Aid satisfaction and poverty

There were no significant differences in aid satisfaction levels between different income groups, between the sexes, or between the young and old. However, households without male adults of working age (female-headed households) were less satisfied, but the difference was small. These findings suggest that aid agencies had been relatively successful in targeting female-headed households. Individuals with academic degrees were least satisfied. One possible explanation is that this group had better access to information about the large amounts of funding available and had higher expectations of benefits. Households with unemployed members were more satisfied than others. Perhaps those who owned few assets before the tsunami and who managed to get access to valuable resources, for example a new house were better off after the tsunami than before.

Early on communities complained that aid distribution was unfair, in particular for more valuable items such as boats, bicycles, sewing

machines and permanent houses[83]. Residents believed that aid delivery was systematically biased against households that did not have the capacity to negotiate access to aid with aid agencies. The community perception was that the genuinely affected households and the real victims had not received their fair share. In the view of community representatives, households that were poor before the tsunami and households that suffered after-effects from the tsunami, either physically or emotionally, lost out in the aid allocation process. For example, families who had been affected by loss of family members were often not able to attend when aid was distributed or to take the time to meet with agencies, whereas extended families were in a position to use multiple strategies for accessing aid. These perceptions are supported by the survey data. Households with disabled members had been less successful than others in recovering pre-tsunami income levels and small families (one to three members) were less satisfied with aid than larger families. Inequity in distribution created tension and conflict in communities as families fought over access to aid, although these tensions were reduced over time. Later on aid agencies began to target the poorest more systematically and data from July 2006 show small differences between income groups in terms of the support that households had received.

The link between socio-economic background and aid satisfaction differed between the east and the south. In the south aid satisfaction was highest among the poor families. 62% of the well-off families in the south and 64% of the well-off families in the east expressed their dissatisfaction with the aid they received. Views among the average, the poor and the poorest families varied widely depending on whether the families lived in the south or the east. 74% of the average families in the east were dissatisfied with the aid they received, whereas the opinions of the average families in the south was divided almost down the centre with 48% showing dissatisfaction and 51% expressing satisfaction with the aid received. It is also interesting to note that 86% of the poor families in the east were dissatisfied, whereas 77% of the poor families in the south were satisfied with the aid they received. Among the very poor families in the east, 86% expressed their dissatisfaction with aid whereas the opinion among the very poor families in the south was equally divided between the satisfied and the dissatisfied. This pattern suggests that the abundance of aid provided in the south had reached the poor and the very poor and that capture of aid by the well-off has not been as problematic as the qualitative data from the previous community studies suggested. Aid satisfaction

[83] Data from October 2005.

among the poor may also have been higher than among the well-off because the well-off suffered greater material losses and perhaps had higher expectations about the amount of aid that they would be given. This picture was turned on its head in the east where the well-off were the least dissatisfied with aid in a situation where the large majority from all socio-economic backgrounds were dissatisfied. This suggests that of the relatively limited aid that was given, more of it had reached the well-off than other groups.

8.6.2 Aid satisfaction and housing construction

The single most important factor that explains aid satisfaction is residential circumstances. Households that had rebuilt their new house on their own plot of land reported the highest level of aid satisfaction (80%). Most of these households had rebuilt their own houses with donor funding channelled through the government. Households that had been resettled in new houses reported much lower levels of aid satisfaction (46%). This finding reaffirms the high human costs involved in resettlement. Only between 30% and 40% of households that lived in camps, in temporary shelters, with friends and relatives, and in renovated houses reported that they were satisfied with the aid they had received. The dissatisfaction is not surprising since these households had not received support for a new house; the most valuable form of support.

8.6.3 Aid satisfaction and the 'buffer zone'

Households that had lived within the buffer zone (100 metres in the south and 200 metres in the north-east) reported much lower levels of aid satisfaction than those households that had lived outside the buffer zone (July 2006). 64% of the households who had lived outside the buffer zone expressed their satisfaction with the aid they had received. The households that had lived inside the buffer zone were less satisfied (35%). Households that were not affected by the buffer zone had received more aid than households who had lived inside the buffer zone. The introduction of the 100-200 meter zone slowed reconstruction efforts in numerous ways. The introduction of the zone initially meant that over 50,000 families were compelled to shift from their original locations to new land[84]. The construction of new houses on new land was a complex technical, bureaucratic and social process.

[84] Following the reduction of the zone, the authorities revised the figure to 36,000.

Lack of suitable land for resettlement, problems in identifying beneficiaries, and changes in government policies were common problems that caused delays.

At least three factors account for the difference in aid satisfaction between the two groups. Firstly, the destruction within the 100-200 metre zone was more severe and more houses within the zone were completely destroyed. Hence damage to property as well as life and person was more extensive in the buffer zone and the resources needed for rebuilding were greater. Secondly, progress in housing construction was much faster outside the 'buffer zone' because houses were rebuilt on the same plot of land. The completion of construction of a new house on the same site of land made a huge difference in relation to aid satisfaction and 80% of the households whose houses had been rebuilt on the same site were satisfied with aid. Thirdly, many households were unhappy about having to move to new resettlement schemes because the move threatened to disrupt social and economic ties, whereas provision of services such as transportation, education and health often lagged behind the process of housing construction. Moreover, the relocation process consisted of many time-consuming steps that left the affected population in uncertainty and despair.

The 'buffer zone' population's situation was further aggravated when they moved to new houses outside the zone. Disruption of social networks, negative impacts on livelihoods, and delays in the provision of community and public infrastructure were common problems in the resettlement schemes. Moreover arrangements had not been made for the transfer of ownership of the land. Consequently the value of those new houses as collateral for loans was much less than the corresponding value of their former houses located within the 'buffer zone', except for households that had lived in temporary shelters and on encroached land. Restrictions also applied to the sale of the houses. The 'buffer zone' population showed their frustration through low levels of aid satisfaction.

8.7 Reasons for aid satisfaction

Effective disaster response

A majority of the families (63%) who expressed their satisfaction with aid said they were satisfied because it had met their basic needs at a time when they had lost everything (July 2006). The affected population appreciated the life-saving aspect of aid and the rapid

reaction that characterized the first phase of aid delivery. However, aid had not been sufficient for people to recover from their losses and to rebuild their lives.

Housing

Support for housing was another factor that contributed strongly to aid satisfaction. Among the households that were satisfied with aid, 80% of the people in Sainthamarathu were positive because they had been able to renovate their houses. Households in the other villages also referred to housing as important for aid satisfaction. Of those households who reported that they were satisfied with aid, 42% of the households in Koggala and 29% in Kudawella were satisfied because they had received a new house.

8.8 Reasons for aid dissatisfaction

Inadequacy of aid

The major reason for dissatisfaction was that households felt that aid had not been sufficient for them to rebuild their lives. These families felt that the amount of aid they received did not help them to recover from their losses. Of the dissatisfied households, 84% of the households in Koggala and 82% in Kudawella complained about the inadequacy of aid given. 98% of the households in Sainthamaruthu and 96% in Kirankulam reported dissatisfaction with the amount of aid given to them.

Broken promises

The second major reason for dissatisfaction was the inability of the government and other aid agencies to fulfil the promises they had given to affected households. In Sainthamaruthu 70% of the dissatisfied households mentioned that support such as housing had not been fully delivered to them yet. Similar sentiments were expressed by 35% of the dissatisfied households in Koggala, 30% in Kirankulam and 23% in Kudawella. Moreover, families who had lived within the 100 metre ‘buffer zone’ and who were expecting a new house in a relocated settlement became totally disgusted with the subsequent changes made to the buffer zone boundaries from 100 metres to 65 metres. Accordingly people complained of having been deprived of opportunities to receive housing assistance from aid agencies, fearing they would neither receive a house under the original donor driven scheme, nor under the new owner driven scheme.

Delayed housing grants

A significant number of households in the eastern communities had not yet received the full housing grant authorized to them. 33% of the households in Sainthamaruthu and 31% of the households in Kirankulam reported that they had not received the housing grant in full. This problem was less serious in Koggala (13%) and Kudawella (12%). The delay in releasing the full housing grant could be due to several reasons such as inaction on the part of government authorities, bribery and corruption involved in releasing the grant, the inability of the beneficiary families to provide the necessary documentation to trigger the next instalment, or barriers related to the security and war situation.

Mismatch between houses and needs

Another reason for dissatisfaction with aid was the mismatch between the new houses and the needs of the affected families. 24% of the families in Kudawella and 6% in Koggala were unhappy with the new houses given to them. Relocated families claimed that the new locations were inconvenient for them and that the shift had made it difficult to engage in their pre-tsunami livelihood activities that had been primarily based in and around their former houses. Many families also found it difficult to find suitable transport to travel from the new locations to their original villages. This problem applied to students in particular. Furthermore, relocated families were also unhappy with the quality of the houses that were given to them as they did not match their needs, interests, values, etc.

8.9 Summary

Throughout the rebuilding process the aid agencies struggled to find good delivery mechanisms for aid that would ensure equitable distribution of aid according to needs. There was no easy way around this problem and hence weaknesses in the allocation of aid, often due to factors beyond the control of aid agencies, led to dissatisfaction among the affected population. The one factor that really made a positive difference was effective delivery of housing, which many households saw as a precondition for the resumption of a 'normal' life. However, in cases where households had to resettle to move into a new house, dissatisfaction was strong, and clearly revealed the high costs involved in resettlement.

9 Politics, conflict and aid delivery

The tsunami struck almost three years after the government and LTTE signed the ceasefire agreement in February 2002. In late 2004 there were concerns about a resumption of the war, but the tsunami on December 26 resulted in a nationwide effort to help the affected population. However, after six months it became increasingly clear that the tsunami was not to have the conciliatory impact that many in Sri Lanka had hoped for and tensions began to resurface in the north and the east and gathered momentum from late 2005. In August 2006 regular battles between government forces and the LTTE resumed, although none of the parties were prepared to abrogate the Ceasefire Agreement. The mounting tensions manifested themselves in an increasing gap in progress in reconstruction of tsunami-affected areas. Progress in the south continued, whereas reconstruction in the north and east became caught up in the conflict.

9.1 From collaboration to traditional politics

Representatives from all political parties agreed that there was cross-party mobilization and cooperation after the tsunami, but that the opportunity to build a spirit of national unity was lost as key actors reverted to traditional competitive politics. Members of the Tamil National Alliance felt that the opportunity to capitalize on the surge of national solidarity was missed by the government. A number of southern politicians also see the post-tsunami period as a lost opportunity to resolve the ethnic conflict. The increasing contestation over how tsunami aid should be delivered culminated in the rejection of the joint tsunami aid delivery mechanism (P-TOMS) by the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka in August 2005. This mechanism had been designed to encourage and facilitate collaboration between the government and the LTTE in the delivery of tsunami aid.

The spirit of collaboration was also reflected in aid delivery to communities. For example, a unit of the Sri Lankan Army, the Special Task Force (STF), contributed to the rescue efforts in Tamil areas just after the tsunami. Their vehicles were used for transport of injured and affected persons. STF provided cooked meals, dry rations, medicines, kerosene oil, clothes, etc. They were also credited with having prevented people who were not affected by the tsunami from stealing relief items, and for reducing robberies and looting. Furthermore the STF worked with international aid agencies, for instance to clean drinking water wells.

Interestingly, in one of the communities the LTTE and the STF were ranked as number three and four respectively in terms of the aid that had been provided to the same community. It is likely that at least an informal understanding would have been in place between the two parties for a simultaneous intervention in the same community. The LTTE assisted in the distribution of food items, clothes and drinking water, provision of medical services, establishment of communication centres, provision of temporary housing, etc.

However, after a few months the initial sense of unity evaporated and Tamils and Muslims expressed their distrust of the government in a number of ways. Muslim politicians in Ampara felt that their influence was limited and that it was hard to push for the interests of Muslims within the Sri Lankan political system. Several Tamil and Muslim politicians argued that the government was partial in the distribution of resources and that the government favoured the Sinhalese. The lack of political influence held by Tamil members of parliament was also suggested as a reason for the relative slowness of the rebuilding efforts in Tamil areas.

Perhaps reflecting a long history of war and unfulfilled expectations, the tsunami-affected Tamils did not express the same trust in the central government as the Sinhalese and the Muslims did and expected non-governmental organizations to be their most important supporter in rebuilding their lives. The trust Tamils had in the non-governmental organizations may also reflect the swift response of non-governmental organizations in providing relief to the Tamil areas.

9.2 Aid satisfaction: differences across districts

The findings show differences across districts and over time.[85] It is interesting to note that the initial survey in July 2005 showed that Tamils reported the highest levels of aid satisfaction, with 80% of the respondents in Jaffna reporting they were satisfied. The Muslims were consistently the least satisfied. In Ampara less than 20% were satisfied in July 2005. There were considerable variations among southern districts, with Galle reporting the highest level of satisfaction and Kalutara the lowest. As for the east, households in Batticaloa were equally divided between satisfied and dissatisfied.

In a way the story of the tsunami recovery is two stories. One is the story of the south and the other is the story of the east. Figures from July 2006 show that a majority of the Tamils and Muslims in the two selected communities were dissatisfied with aid.[86] 72% of households in Saintahmaruthu and 86% of households in Kirankulam were *not* satisfied with the aid they received. 51% of the households interviewed in the two southern communities reported that they were satisfied with the aid while another 48% were not satisfied. Only 1% of the families said that they were highly satisfied with aid received. The findings indicated that reconstruction progress was slow in the east and that households were not satisfied with the aid they had received. The situation in the village in Batticaloa was particularly dismal and even more so in view of the optimism that prevailed one year earlier. The impact of increasing tensions in the east was clearly demonstrated in the village. Feelings of fear and insecurity prevailed in addition to dissatisfaction with the progress of reconstruction.

Several factors may explain the difference in aid satisfaction between the south and the east. The war turned the situation around for Tamils in Batticaloa – from optimism to despair. In Ampara a combination of topographic, geographical, political, administrative, and institutional factors explain why rebuilding has been slow. All these factors reinforced each other to produce a crisis in the reconstruction process in Ampara, manifest in the low level of aid satisfaction and in a feeling of neglect and discrimination expressed by politicians and civil

[85] The data sets are not directly comparable because the first survey was based on a representative sample from the districts whereas the second survey covered all affected households in four villages.
[86] Please note that as discussed in the methodology chapter the figures from the two surveys are not directly comparable.

society leaders. The institutional structure for aid delivery also differed. Sri Lankan organizations delivered most of the aid in the south whereas the government delivered most of the aid in the east. Membership in community organizations was much higher in the south (90% in Hambantota and 79% in Galle) than in the east (31% in Batticaloa and 28% in Ampara), a reflection of differences in the prevalence of community-based institutions. Civil society organizations in the east had been weakened due to the war, and aid delivery to communities was subsequently made more difficult.

The July 2005 survey did not highlight significant differences with regard to the support received by different *ethnic groups*. Measured by the number of interventions reported by each ethnic group divided by the number of respondents from that group, a surprisingly consistent pattern of 3-4 interventions for each household across ethnic and religious groups emerges. Although the absolute number of interventions is likely to go under-reported, the spread across religious and ethnic groups should be valid, unless some groups under-report more than others. The survey was conducted before substantial progress in the housing construction so it does not reflect the results of this important intervention. This finding from the household survey is backed up by data from the community level. The community studies reveal an equitable pattern of distribution of relief and transitional aid in the five communities, with the exception of the community in Hambantota which had received more aid than the other communities.

However, with the start of housing construction differences in aid satisfaction grew between beneficiaries of housing cash grants in the east and in the south. Over 60% of the recipients of housing cash grants in the south reported that they were satisfied with aid whereas in Batticaloa 25% were satisfied and in Ampara 37% (July 2006). The differences in aid satisfaction between recipients of cash grants for house construction reflected the slow progress of completion of houses in the east compared to the south. Since grants were paid to beneficiaries in instalments, slow progress in the east meant that households had received less cash. [87] Another factor was that cash grants from aid agencies and charitable organizations were more common in the two communities in the south than in the east.

The relatively high aid satisfaction in Jaffna early on was perhaps due the effective response by the district administration and the LTTE.

[87] Acccording to government figures the completion rates for owner driven houses were: Galle (69%), Hambantota (79), Ampara (17%) and Batticaloa (28%). Progress in the donor driven scheme was also slower in the east.

Both the district administration and the LTTE had been exposed to disaster management during the war and had extensive experience in this area. The tsunami response offered the resources that had been lacking during the war and those resources were put to effective use. Moreover, large Sri Lankan and international aid agencies were present in the district due to the conflict and they mobilized quickly, benefiting from their previous experience in the district. Another explanation may be that in comparison to previous assistance to war victims, the tsunami response was more comprehensive and perhaps the response exceeded the population's expectations. Personal factors such as the experience and the standing of the Tamil head of the district administration of Jaffna help explain the effective response. Lastly, the damage in Jaffna was relatively modest and more geographically concentrated than in other districts and hence responding was easier.

Households in Ampara reported the lowest level of aid satisfaction, in 2005 and 2006. Ampara was the most severely affected district both in terms of the number of deaths and the number of houses destroyed. At the same time the areas affected by the tsunami were heavily populated, with houses located very close to the sea. The habitation pattern was ethnically divided, with Tamils and Muslims living in separate but adjoining villages in a patchwork pattern on the coast, and the Sinhalese living inland and dominating the district administration in the district administrative centre, Ampara town. A number of reasons explain why households in Ampara were less satisfied than others:

- The lack of available land for relocation of people from the densely populated coastal strip dramatically slowed rebuilding progress.
- Security issues aggravated the situation as households from the same ethnic group traditionally lived together in one community and individual households did not want to move to new areas without the security offered by their group. Households were also reluctant to move to 'border areas' where they could become vulnerable to attacks in the event of war.
- The distance from the capital Colombo had caused delays in transportation of supplies and difficulties in hiring contractors. As security started to become a major issue, contractors and others became reluctant to travel to the east resulting in a further slow down of reconstruction work.
- Many politicians were of the view that Ampara was discriminated against in the central government's resource allocation process.

Since the affected households in Ampara were Muslims and Tamils, it was felt that their needs were not adequately dealt with by the predominantly Sinhalese administration in the district centre of Ampara town and by the central government in Colombo. For instance, the CADREP programme was introduced relatively late in Ampara although needs were more acute there than in any of the other districts.

- The fragmentation of Muslim political interests, where Muslims were represented through several political parties aggravated the situation.
- Residents in Ampara were also relatively well-off before the tsunami and their losses were large compared to the compensation offered by the government and aid agencies.
- Muslims in Ampara had a relatively weak tradition for provision of services through non-governmental organizations. Non-governmental organizations in Ampara were also divided in two competing coordinating bodies before the tsunami.
- Formal collaboration between local non-governmental organizations and international agencies was not as good as in some other districts. For instance, links between OCHA and the local NGO consortium were weak.
- As 'hartals'[88] increased in numbers and strength, agencies lost 3-4 working days each month as staff were not allowed to travel around freely.

9.3 Operationalization of conflict sensitivity

Most of the aid agencies were aware of the need to be conflict-sensitive and the 'Do no harm' concept was widely referred to. Agencies interviewed in the east tended to operationalize conflict sensitivity in four ways. Firstly, they aimed to work in the north, the east and the south. The notion of being present in different geographical areas was a very common approach to operationalizing conflict sensitivity and was designed to ensure that aid agencies maintained good relations with the central government in Colombo. Secondly, aid agencies tried to work with war-affected and poor households, as well as tsunami-affected households in an attempt to ensure that the tsunami aid intervention did not create new conflicts between people who had received aid and those who had not. This

[88] Hartal means the shut down of activities and travel in a specific area as a protest.

analysis was often made without regard for the existing conflict divides in Sri Lanka and was based on the assumption that inequities in aid distribution could lead to new conflicts. Thirdly, a number of aid agencies had employed staff from different ethnic groups. In this way, they also strived to ensure that they were seen to be impartial in relation to ethnic groups. However, this strategy was problematic during times of crisis where staff did not want to go and work with communities from a different ethnic group. Moreover, communities themselves tended to prefer to work with staff from the same ethnic group as themselves. Fourthly, a number of aid agencies said that they strived to base their work on honesty, openness and transparency. For instance one agency said: 'We have meetings with everybody, where we tell them: "This is the budget. This is your contribution. This is your role. We are transparent with finances."' The latter point is important because a major concern for Sri Lankan politicians and opinion makers is the lack of transparency in resource allocation by aid agencies. The large majority of aid agencies operationalized 'Do no harm' in a minimalist manner and often displayed limited understanding of the meaning of the concept. 'Do no harm' was applied to staffing and to the selection of beneficiary groups, but most aid agencies did not apply the concept in programming.

9.4 Summary

The post-tsunami sense of national unity did not overcome the traditional divisive politics in the south, nor did it persuade politicians in the south that the post-tsunami rebuilding offered an opportunity for reconciliation. In the view of many southern politicians the tsunami rebuilding process became yet another example of how southern politicians favoured their own constituencies. On their part aid agencies had adopted a minimalist approach to being conflict sensitive that did not exploit the potential for using aid as a means of reintegration of communities that through economic and social dynamics had been torn apart by the war.

10 Conclusions and recommendations

10.1 Conclusions

The relief phase was characterised by a mixture of urgency, competition and pressure to spend money quickly. This combination created a drive-in aid delivery that enabled agencies to distribute relief items quickly and to complete the building of temporary houses within six months in most districts. The relief phase was successful in covering basic needs. However, from the recipient's point of view aid delivery was not predictable in terms of the critical questions of *what, where, how much* would be delivered *and for how long*. Moreover, services and resources were not equitably distributed, criteria for distribution were not transparent, and quality was often poor. Aid efficiency and aid effectiveness suffered as a result. At the same time the aid agencies that had well defined intervention methodologies were not so easily caught up in the spending frenzy.

The pressure to deliver quickly is difficult to resist for many reasons. One is that the ability to spend large funds within a short period of time is often seen as a prime indicator of agency capacity and effectiveness. However, the humanitarian principles emphasize the importance of *how* aid is delivered. The cross-cutting theme is effective *participation* by households, communities, organizations and sub-national governance institutions in decision-making and planning, not only in implementation of projects. Participation ensures that the rebuilding process also builds crucial *competence* in decision-making and planning at the local level.

Aid organizations delivered large quantities of aid after the tsunami, and rebuilding was in many ways a success but did international aid agencies live up to the principles guiding the delivery of humanitarian aid?

- Practically all affected households had received assistance. Whereas there were gaps in livelihood support, the match between *needs* and resources was better in the housing sector. The most important resource, a new house, had either been received, construction had started or houses had been promised for most households one year and six months after the tsunami. Nevertheless, aid distribution had not been equitable within communities, and for many reasons – including the conflict – progress in house construction was slow in the conflict-affected east. Initially *vulnerable* groups had not benefited as much as others due to the 'replacement mode' of the aid operation, but with time aid agencies made a concerted effort to include vulnerable groups.
- The tsunami rebuilding process was characterized by *much consultation and some participation at the project level*. Through cash programmes some aid agencies even transferred control of resources to households, for instance when cash for house construction was disbursed to households. However, the affected population had very little influence on decisions on policy and resource allocations. In this sense the aid delivery system was top-down and not participatory. Few aid agencies had put in place mechanisms to secure accountability to communities.
- *Sri Lankan non-governmental organizations* received a huge amount of funding after the tsunami, their activities flourished and they gained experience in relief and rehabilitation work. Capacity-building programmes accompanied funding in many cases. Several of the programmes that were started, such as micro credit, were funded for the short term whereas sustainability of the programmes depends on long-term funds.
- *Government institutions* responded to immediate relief needs with an unprecedented commitment and achieved broad outreach. After some time aid agencies began to address government resource constraints by committing resources to strengthening the sub-national level government machinery.

10.2 Recommendations

The recommendations below are concerned with how aid agencies can intensify their efforts to support households, organizations and governance institutions after disasters and how donors can facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations.

Aid agency methodologies. Positive impact, aid efficiency and effectiveness depend on *how* aid is delivered. Agency applications and programmes should not only be assessed by objectives, outputs and outcomes but also by the agency's approach, methodologies and tools. Agency capacity to apply methodologies and tools for targeting, consultation, participation, quality control, transparency and accountability is critical for aid effectiveness.

Explore the use of cash. Aid agencies should further explore models for the use of cash. Cash support transfers control from aid agencies to the affected population who become their own aid managers. Households are better positioned than aid agencies to make informed decisions on needs and to ensure that goods and services meet quality standards. Vulnerable groups may need extra support in addition to cash.

Monitoring. Aid agencies should improve the monitoring of humanitarian aid to minimize corruption, to improve targeting, to ensure quality and to increase usefulness of aid. Monitoring should be integrated with organizational learning systems. National governments should also monitor to ensure that aid agencies meet performance criteria and that aid agencies are accountable and transparent.

Realistic timeframes. Realistic timeframes should be established at the outset of operations to enable agencies to adopt appropriate methodologies that allow them to operate according to the principles for the delivery of humanitarian aid. Time frames should be assessed in each case, for example on the basis of the type of intervention that is needed (life-saving versus construction) and the relevant category of emergency (conflict versus natural disaster, recurring natural disasters or one-off disasters).

Geographical focus. Agencies should prioritize quality relations with a small number of communities over superficial relationships with a large number of communities to improve knowledge of communities, organizations and institutions. Such knowledge is required to implement the humanitarian principles. As an additional benefit a more selective approach would ease coordination problems.

Coordination and information management. Effective coordination depends on access to timely, accurate and relevant information. The interface between coordination and information needs further study. Donors, governments and international aid agencies should allocate resources for the development of tools and human resources in this area. Models for collaboration between government and aid agencies should be explored.

Joint planning and decision-making with sub-national governance institutions. International agencies should work closely with sub-national governance institutions in order to reduce gaps and duplication, to improve planning, and to help build local competence to sustain interventions in the long term. Flexible funds to meet resource requirements at the sub-national governance level should be made available by donors.

Collaboration between international, national and local aid organizations. Effective collaboration between international aid agencies, national and local organizations should build on an explicit recognition of the strengths and weaknesses of the each organization. Coordination frameworks should be structured to ensure an equal playing field, for example by allowing for the use of local languages. The prevention of new disasters and the sustainability of interventions depend on the creation of effective links to existing local economic and political processes.

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Appendix 1

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Tsunami GIS maps

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Appendix 2

Historical timeline in one community in Batticaloa: aid delivery after the tsunami

Date of the community assessment: 30th October 2005

Number of participants: 27

Day 1: 26th December 2004:

- With tsunami, people ran to the nearby Kovil and the school. The STF (Special Task Force) provided food, water and medicine. They also guarded the houses of those who vacated them and sought refuge in the camps. All fishermen's houses located close to the shore were destroyed. Seven men lost their lives. Three bodies were found. Nearly 40 canoes and 5 engine boats were destroyed.

1st week:

- STF provided food and clothes on 2nd and 3rd days. Two dead bodies were found on the 2nd day; two other dead bodies were found on the 3rd day.
- The GN and the DS came and inspected the area and requirements were noted.
- A local NGO funded by an international agency provided a food basket worth of Rs500/- to the 7 families who lost their family members.

- The DS decided to construct latrines for the two camps and to provide water.

2nd week:

- A substantial amount of relief aid such as food, clothes, candles, mosquito coils, and water bottles was brought from outstations e.g. Kurunegala, Kandy, Colombo for distribution. Many who brought them were Sinhalese. Medical camps were also held.

3rd week:

- Officers from the Divisional Secretariat provided groceries such as rice, dhal, coconut oil to cook food inside the camps. The Kovil authority helped in food preparation. However the groceries provided were not sufficient.

2nd month:

- A local NGO provided tents, plastic buckets, mosquito coils and 3 meters of clothing material to every individual.
- People spent the first two months in the camps. Thereafter they came back to their houses during day time and returned to the camps in the night.
- The Divisional Secretariat provided a few water tanks.
- A Sri Lankan NGO started constructing temporary houses. Those who completely lost their houses were provided with building materials worth of Rs50, 000. This included cash grants of Rs4700/- for masonry fees; Rs2700/- for labour fees and another Rs2000/- for buying sand. Building materials such as cement, tiles and planks were provided directly by the NGO. They helped to build about 200 houses. Floors were cemented; roofs were tiled; walls were covered with cadjans.
- An INGO provided canoes for 22 fishermen each valued at Rs80, 000.

3rd month:

- An international agency provided school books, clothes, shoes and bicycles to children who lost their mothers. Quantities given are not known.

- Divisional Secretariat conducted a survey and each family was provided with Rs5000/-. This stipend was given only for 3 months.
- A Sri Lankan NGO provided cash grants for 32 fishermen.
- An NGO provided medicine for people in the camp.
- During the first three months, the STF brought into custody all relief aid that came to the camps and distributed them to the families once in three days. These relief aid included food items and clothes. Nearly 2000 families who occupied the camp were provided with aid.

4th month:

- The DS took the initiative to set up a committee of seven members. It included the GN as well. This committee did not act impartially. Their relatives and friends were helped abundantly. It also distributed the forms to apply for tsunami aid. Some people had to pay Rs8000/- to Rs25, 000 to get those application forms. The people who had money obtained these forms. It is said that this money is given to the DS and the GN.

5th and 6th months:

- A Sri Lankan NGO started building 200 houses. The work is not completed and only the foundation has been laid.

9th month:

The government approved Rs250, 000 for those who completely lost their houses. The first instalment of Rs50, 000 was granted to about 100 families. About 15 families who could not prove their ownership to the land did not receive this money. A sum of Rs15, 000 was taken away from the first instalment by the committee. It was said that this money will be utilized to construct houses for those who could not show evidence to prove their land ownership. However, many such families did not receive this money. The government also decided to provide Rs100, 000 to families whose houses were partially damaged.

Appendix 3

Relief and rehabilitation assistance delivered by five Sri Lankan aid agencies in Galle

A local NGO operates in 3 tsunami affected DSDs[89]	**A national NGO operates in 7 tsunami affected DSDs**	**An international/local environmental NGO operates throughout the district**	**A local NGO operates in 5 tsunami affected DSDs in Matara and Galle districts**	**A local NGO established in 1999 and operates in one tsunami affected GND[90]**
- cooked meals - sanitary ware - kitchen utensils - school bags and stationery (3000 students) - uniforms for 2000 students - temporary tents for 12 damaged schools - 5 model houses - 50 kitchens - renovations to 40	- cooked meals - medicine/first aid - temporary toilets - temporary huts - dry rations - clothes - drinking water - cleaning of drinking water wells - 213 - 50 water tanks - psycho social counseling/programmes - attended to lost documentation - permanent toilets – 1364	- cleaning of 6500 drinking water wells - food - medicine and a medical camp - mosquito nets - 40 water tanks - improving home gardens – 20,000 families targeted - a nursery for plants - 50 temporary shelters - water tanks, water - food - tents - clothes - 1225 temporary	- household items (a pack of 26 items) to 1500 families - school books, bags - coir machines – 1200 - vocational training – masonry, carpentry – 152 - psycho-social counseling - equipment for pre-schools - credit facilities-loans ranging from Rs.5000-8000 for small enterprises – 115	- ran a camp for 750 affected persons - psycho-social programmes - 242 permanent houses for those outside 100 meters with household goods and home gardens - land purchased to construct 160 houses for those lived within 100 meters - renovations to 160 houses with maximum cash

[89] Divisional Secretariat Divisions
[90] Grama Niladhari Division

damaged houses - 50 toilets - 250 home gardens - cleared a wetland and regenerating mangroves - 1 class room - water scheme - repair of a well - community hall - library - nets, fish boxes, bicycles, sewing machines etc. for 40 families - renovating a coir mill - mat weaving machines for 14 women - cows - poultry - psycho-social counseling - Kids clubs – sports goods, libraries to 21 villages - uniforms, school books to 30,000 students (southern province) - computers, desks, chairs etc. to 15 damaged schools in Galle - permanent buildings for 4 schools (H'tota and Galle – 2 each) - planned to construct 3000 houses for the	- toilet repairs – 320 - rain water harvesting tanks -9 - garbage bins (compost) – 1145 - construction related tool kits– 24 - cash for work to the value of Rs.4, 200,000 - permanent houses – 147 (on private land) - permanent houses – 23 (by a partner - livelihood assistance – coir machines, sewing machines, knitting etc. - scholarships, libraries, cultural centres in 3 DSDs (each Division was given Rs.500,000 - 49 bicycles for students - reviving pre-schools - constructing play grounds (Rs.6,500,000) - cash for work for 10,000 people to clear debris - 25 boats and engines - 100 push bicycles with boxes, weighing scales and	shelters - 425 permanent toilets - 11 drinking/bathing wells - 2 tube wells - maintaining 14 temporary housing complexes (water and sanitation, community halls, pre-schools) - psycho social counseling - helping to get lost documents - HIV/AIDS prevention programmes - Livelihood assistance for 500 families (Rs.82 million) - Raw materials and equipment for 824 coir workers - Market links for coir workers - 80 permanent toilets - 16 common wells - eco-tourism project in Unawatuna - construction of school buildings in 6 schools - handicraft training for mothers of pre-school children	widows - clearing debris - first aid - distribution of drinking water - distribution of relief items e.g. clothes, toys, mats etc. - kitchen utensils - planned to construct 2500 permanent houses – 273 are being constructed - all infrastructure facilities to housing complexes - major water scheme including tube wells - support for improving markets for cinnamon - 10 outboard motor boats with gear – another 30 to be given - 10 canoes - vocational training for masons, carpenters, electricians with tool kits – 54 - school uniforms	grants of Rs.125,000 - livelihood assistance to 400 families - developing infrastructure facilities in 7 schools - 75 scholarships to students - relief aid distributed to children, youth and families in 8 villages - dry rations to the value of Rs.1500 per family to 132 families - renovations to the temples in the area - re-starting the computer training facilities - children's clinic – 200 patients are treated a week - re-starting the maternity clinic - English language classes for children and youth - a library for children - vocational training for women in sewing and handicrafts - religious preaching programmes - Running a cement block making industry - volley ball court - coir and brush

south - 700 temporary shelters ($ 400 per house) - cash for work to clear debris (Rs.400 per day) - Rs.100 million allocated to help fishermen in H'tota district - Livelihood support for petty businesses – gold smiths, vegetable vendors, sewing machines (60), push cycles (100), coir machines (2000, diving (3-4) etc.	knives - livelihood assistance for 800. another 1200 planned - 29 permanent houses on private land purchased (Rs.5-6 lakhs per house) - 70 toilets (Rs.19,000 per toilet) - pre-school - community hall - counseling programme			making industry –employed 40 youth - 53 new toilets and renovation of 68 toilets