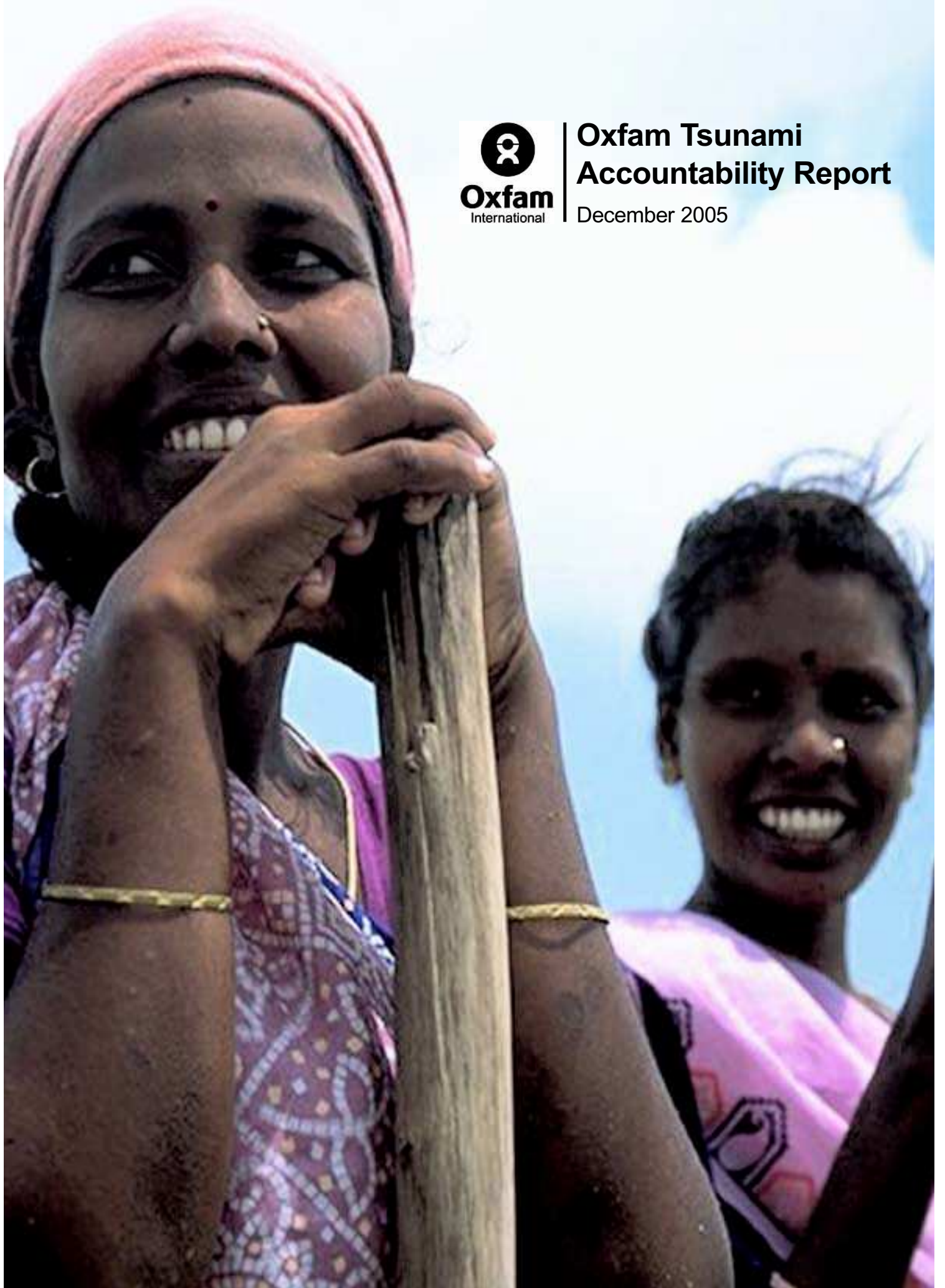




# Oxfam Tsunami Accountability Report

December 2005





Two brothers, Rahmat and Ari, survey the devastation from the wreck of their home, Banda Aceh, Indonesia, February 2005

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**Cover Photo:** Pushpa Valli, takes a break from rebuilding her community's damaged salt pans in Vedaranyam, southern India. Oxfam is working with local partners to support thousands of people like Pushpa, to ensure they can start earning a living once again.

**Photographs:** Marie Banu Jawahar, Jane Beesley, Howard Davies, Jenny Enarsson, Jim Holmes, Mona Laczó, Manasi Rajagopalan, Tori Ray, Rajendra Shaw and Matthew Vasilescu

## Foreword

**The tsunami that swept across the Indian Ocean on 26 December 2004 brought about a disaster almost beyond comprehension. The communities that were hit by the waves will never be the same again.**



Loved ones were lost, livelihoods destroyed, homes reduced to rubble. The physical rehabilitation will take many years. The psychological recovery will take much longer.

For aid organisations, the tsunami has proved to be a unique challenge. The magnitude of the disaster demands a response on a scale beyond any previous experience. It has also generated an unprecedented upsurge of generosity from people around the world. The result is that, for perhaps the first time ever, the international aid community has sufficient money to fund programmes for as long as they are needed.

This has imposed a massive responsibility on organisations such as Oxfam to demonstrate to donors that we are spending their money transparently and wisely, in co-ordination with others, and addressing long-term as well as immediate needs. It will be a marathon effort, not a sprint, and we recognise the need to make explicit commitments for the long term. This report, which sets out what Oxfam and our local partners have achieved so far, and what we intend to do in the future, is part of our accountability to those who gave so generously, but also to those whose lives we are trying to improve and whose rights we are trying to ensure.

One year on, with other disasters emerging to grab the headlines, we cannot allow the world to lose interest in the people who survived the tsunami. Oxfam's belief is that we should not just be aiming for a restoration of the pre-tsunami reality. For many of the affected communities that was a reality of poverty, inequality, marginalisation, and the constant threat of conflict.

Central to our efforts are the rights of the survivors. Recovery should not just be measured in terms of physical reconstruction. It should also encompass the degree to which individuals and communities are fully able to realise their rights to livelihoods, to physical safety, to basic services such as clean water and sanitation, to healthcare, and to education. And people, especially women, have a right to a say about how their lives will be rebuilt, where they will live, and how their needs should be met.

Accountability is central to human rights. It is not just about spending donations efficiently and transparently. It is also about honouring our commitments to the survivors and their families.

I sincerely hope this report contributes to our objective of being accountable. And, along with everyone at Oxfam, I thank all our supporters deeply for their generosity, compassion, and solidarity.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Honorary President, Oxfam International

**“The magnitude of the disaster demands a response on a scale beyond any previous experience.”**

# Introduction: an unprecedented challenge

The impact of the tsunami will continue to be felt for many years. More than 230,000 people died or are missing and more than 1.8 million people were displaced. Many hundreds of thousands lost their livelihoods.

The disaster prompted an unprecedented level of solidarity and generosity from around the globe. In total, Oxfam will have received US\$278 million from members of the public, corporations, and institutional partners. They placed their trust in us – as an organisation with strong grassroots links with partner organisations – to meet the immediate and long-term development needs of communities affected by the tsunami. We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all of our supporters for making the speed and scale of our response possible .

Country	Number of beneficiaries
Indonesia	315,000
Sri Lanka	627,000
India	645,000
Andaman & Nicobar	154,000
Somalia	20,000
Maldives	25,000
Burma & Thailand	23,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,809,000</b>

Since the tsunami, Oxfam International's 12 affiliates and their local partners have assisted over 1.8\* million people. This response constitutes the largest humanitarian effort we have ever undertaken.

Our immediate priority was to save lives, reduce public health risks, ensure adequate shelter, and contribute to the restoration of assets and livelihoods. Our approach was not to compete with other NGOs in the same area of work, but rather

to work in areas most appropriate to our expertise, especially among the poorest people. In the weeks following the disaster, we rushed emergency aid to survivors, distributing essential relief items and shelter materials. We set up clean water and sanitation services, and promoted good health and hygiene. Despite the huge numbers of people in need of assistance, the international aid effort successfully prevented major outbreaks of water-borne disease.

### The longer term: escaping poverty

The need for emergency relief has continued in some areas, but overall, the focus has shifted towards helping communities to find longer-term solutions to their problems. With our local partners, we are providing sustainable sources of clean water; helping people to restart small businesses; reclaiming and rehabilitating agricultural land; giving women and men a greater say in issues that affect them; and building durable transitional shelters. Where possible, we are helping residents to build permanent housing. In other areas, we are working with partners to build a dialogue with governments, to try to solve complex issues of land ownership.

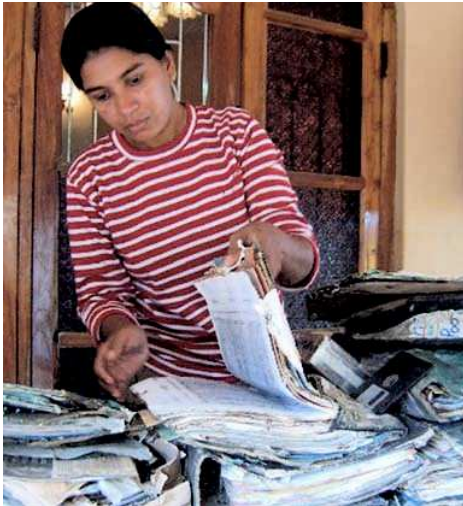
In order to co-ordinate this programme work, to ensure accountability to donors and beneficiaries, and to maximise the impact of the money donated, Oxfam's 12 affiliates created the Oxfam International Charitable Fund, details of which can be found on page 7.

Ultimately, our aim is to develop what we call 'Reconstruction Plus', through which we will help poor communities to escape the poverty that made them so vulnerable to natural disaster in the first place.

**More than 230,000 people died or are missing and more than 1.8 million people were displaced. Many hundreds of thousands lost their livelihoods.**

\*While we're proud of the number of people we have been able to assist, the beneficiary numbers quoted provide only the roughest indicator of our effectiveness. In the rush to reach people in need during the early phase of the response, it was impossible to ensure that no double-counting occurred. In addition, the meaning of even the most accurate numbers is diminished by the fact that a beneficiary might have received something as small as a bucket of relief items, or as large as a permanent home. As is standard in beneficiary reporting, we calculate the total number of people we assist by assuming five people per family.

## Introduction: an unprecedented challenge



Oxfam has worked in Sri Lanka since 1968 and it is thanks to our existing presence, our good working relationship with local partners, Kinniya Vision, and an outstanding response from local staff (many of whom were themselves affected by the tsunami), that we were able to respond so quickly. Within 24 hours, Oxfam was distributing clothes, mats, sanitary kits, lanterns, and buckets to more than 4,000 families.

Sepali Subasinghe, Oxfam Livelihoods project officer, (pictured left), sorts through the debris in the Oxfam office in Trincomalee, eastern Sri Lanka, after the tsunami. She and a security guard were in the office when the wave hit, and managed to escape to the roof. "Five of the staff here lost their homes and possessions, but we all just worked together, non-stop," remembers Sepali. "After 10 days we were exhausted, but I'm very happy with the things we've done. I know I've been part of something that has really helped people. An emergency can tell you new things about yourself."



**"Oxfam can create changes in people's lives, but when we work with local organisations we benefit a wider community and have a more lasting impact."**

Yanty Lacsana, Oxfam Partner Support and Liaison Manager, Aceh, Indonesia

### Helping local voices to be heard

Central to our philosophy is the need for aid organisations and governments to consult local populations (especially minorities and vulnerable groups).

To this end, we have been supporting affected people in engaging with their governments as well as lobbying international bodies such as the World Bank, UN agencies and European institutions. We produced studies three and six months after the tsunami, assessing respectively its impact on women and on those living in poverty.

These help us to ensure that the money is spent helping those who need it most, and that the voices of the most vulnerable are heard.

It is important though that we not only address the needs of individuals but adopt a community-wide approach working with partners to tailor programmes to the needs and wishes of the whole community.

With many new NGOs now working in the tsunami-affected areas (approx 500 were

# Introduction: an unprecedented challenge

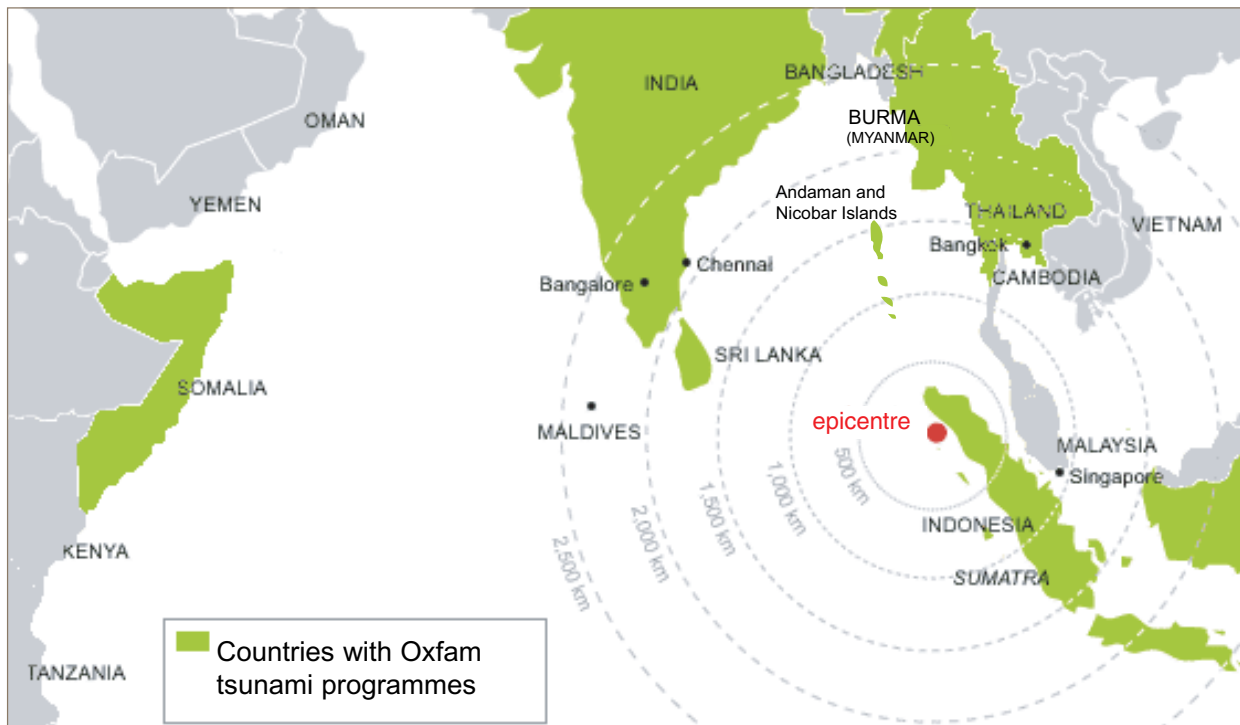
in Aceh at the start of the emergency), we have pressed strongly for co-ordination between agencies and for the observance of international humanitarian standards. 'Sphere standards' set minimum requirements for service provision in disasters, and the Red Cross Red Crescent Code of Conduct seeks to maintain high standards of organisational independence, effectiveness, and impact.

The aid and reconstruction effort has not been without complications, and many challenges lie ahead. The damage

to infrastructure has severely hampered the recovery process; the issue of land ownership must be resolved before people can be permanently re-housed; and pre-existing challenges such as poverty, conflict, and the lack of access to resources need to be tackled if tangible progress is to be made.

In order to record and share what we have learnt, monitoring, evaluating and reporting will continue. Learning will be shared with other NGOs and applied to future emergency situations.

## Where we work



For a full list of Oxfam's local partner organisations and districts in which we are working, please contact the Oxfam International Secretariat (see page 34).

# Financial overview

The 12 Oxfam affiliates will in total receive donations worth US\$278 million. The scale of the disaster and financial response to it has required a new approach to programme co-ordination and accountability.

In January 2005, Oxfam established the Oxfam International Charitable Fund as an independent company and registered charity in the UK. Its Board of Trustees is composed of the Executive Directors of the 12 affiliates\*, and management of the Fund is carried out by the Tsunami Fund Management Team (TFMT). Its primary functions are to allocate the Fund's resources, and to ensure that its work is managed, reported, and communicated in an effective, accountable, and transparent manner.

## How the Fund works

The programme work of the Fund is carried out by Oxfam and local partner organisations. In order to avoid duplication it was agreed that some affiliates would operate country programmes while others would provide funding and support. Each operating affiliate submits programme proposals to the TFMT, which then allocates funding as appropriate.

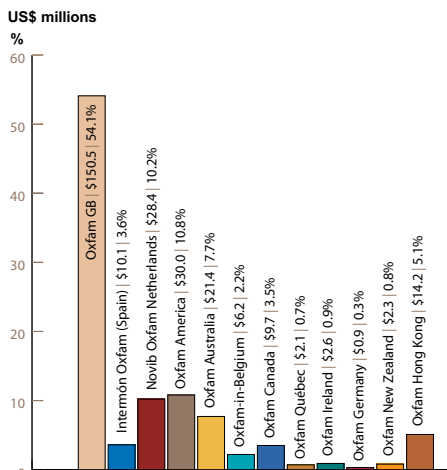
The Fund has a small secretariat of four people in Oxford, UK, to manage the allocation process, operate its accounts, consolidate reports from the affiliates, and communicate results. They also arrange external reviews and audits. Owing to its international nature, the Fund maintains its accounting in US dollars, as does Oxfam International itself.

## Where the money came from

Just over half of the US\$278 million raised has come from Oxfam Great Britain. The contributions from all affiliates are shown on the bar chart below.

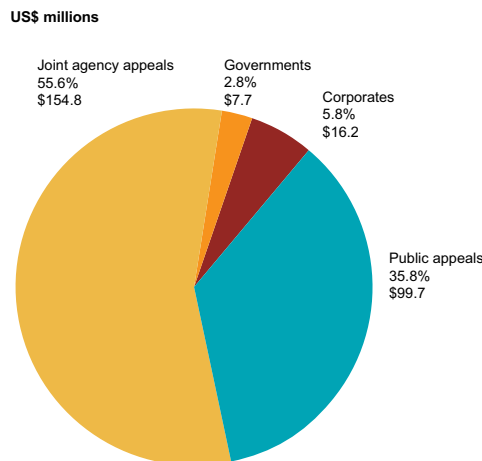
The great majority of the funds (91.4%) came from public appeals, either individually from Oxfam affiliates or jointly with other NGOs. Corporate supporters have donated \$16.2m (5.8% of the total). The remaining 2.8% comes from government donors. Interest earned on donations not yet spent will be added to the Fund.

Funds raised by each Oxfam affiliate



\*see pages 33 and 34 for a full listing of Oxfam affiliates

Oxfam funds raised, according to donor



# Financial overview

## Where the money goes

When the fund was set up, a cap of 10% was put on administration and fundraising costs. However, we estimate that only 6% will be required, leaving 94% to be spent on programmes. Due to the extremely high level of need in Indonesia, the TFMT decided that approximately 40% of the Fund would be directed there. We aim to spend 31% in Sri Lanka and 22% in India.

The major sectors of expense are public health, water and sanitation (particularly during the emergency response), and the restoration of livelihoods, which has grown in importance as work moves beyond relief to rehabilitation.

Programme management refers to the cost of staff not working directly on specific projects. It also covers related costs such as food, accommodation, travel and the rental, equipment and maintenance of office space.

## Reporting schedules and progress to date

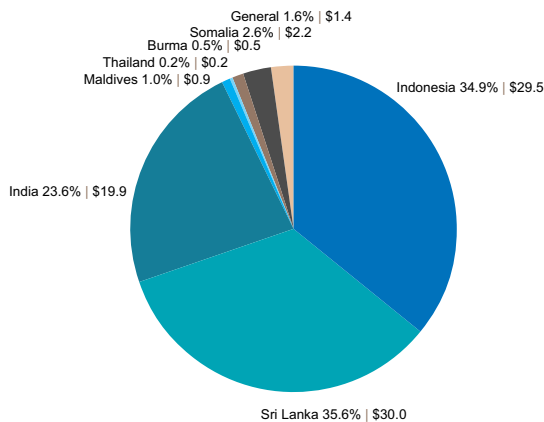
All affiliates produce monthly reports summarising their income for the Fund and, in the case of operational affiliates, how much they have spent to date across the major sectors of expenditure.

These reports are consolidated and released in monthly bulletins. Each quarter, more detailed reports containing greater analysis and commentary are produced.

Until the end of September 2005, programme expenditure amounted to \$84.5 million, approximately 30% of the total funds received. This is slightly lower than planned, principally due to complex land issues slowing the construction of permanent homes. The full breakdown is shown below by country and sector. General costs include cross-cutting work with other NGOs, research and evaluations.

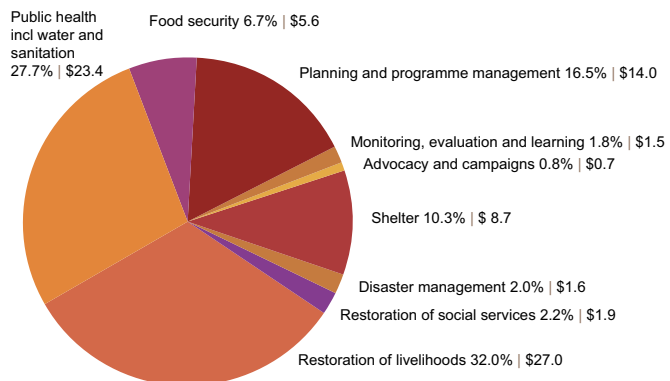
## Where tsunami funds were spent by country Jan-Sept 05

US\$ millions



## How tsunami funds were spent by sector Jan-Sept 05

US\$ millions



# Financial overview

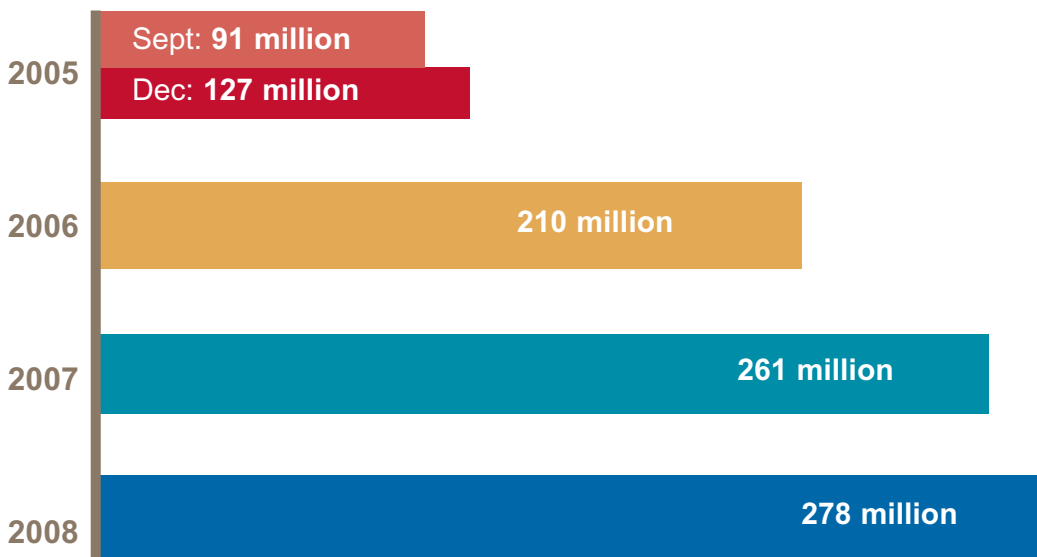
## Spending plan

Programme expenditure for the fourth quarter of 2005 is expected to be \$31 million. This will bring the total expenditure after the first year, including the \$8.6 million fundraising and administration costs, to a \$127 million, approximately 45% of total funds raised. Although slightly below original estimates, this represents a good rate of progress and currently we still plan to disburse the full value of the fund

within four years. The exact timing of expenditure is difficult to forecast but we estimate that it will be broadly according to the timeline below.

Oxfam is fully committed to accountability, as well as impact and efficiency in our work. It is therefore important that we strike the right balance between the resources invested in detailed reporting and programme work itself.

## Spending on programmes (including admin and fundraising)



All figures in US dollars

# Indonesia

Due to its proximity to the epicentre of the earthquake that preceded the tsunami, the Indonesian province of Aceh, already affected by 30 years of conflict, suffered the heaviest loss of life and the most widespread destruction. The tsunami submerged miles of coastal land, severely damaged infrastructure and washed away entire villages. An estimated 169,000 people either died or are missing and almost 600,000 were displaced. Three months later, on 28 March, a second powerful earthquake hit the island of Nias, south east of Aceh.

Oxfam had worked in Aceh from 2000 until 2003, when political tensions forced us to leave. In response to the tsunami, we were able to return to the province in December 2004, implementing an emergency programme within days. We brought in essential supplies; installed temporary services and infrastructure; and are now aiding reconstruction through extensive public health, shelter, and livelihoods work.

Programmes incorporate the opinions of the communities involved to ensure that their specific physical and cultural needs are met, and that their rights are respected. Key principles such as gender equality and humanitarian accountability are implemented at all levels of the rehabilitation programme.

In the coming months, Oxfam will be working more closely with a larger number of partners as we look to scale up our collaboration with local and national NGOs. We will identify NGOs with partnership capabilities and work on strengthening them through support and

training. So far, we have worked with 63 Indonesian NGOs, working on a wide range of issues, from anti-corruption groups to NGOs that support farming or fishing communities, and women's rights groups.

So far, we have helped more than 300,000 people in Aceh and Nias.

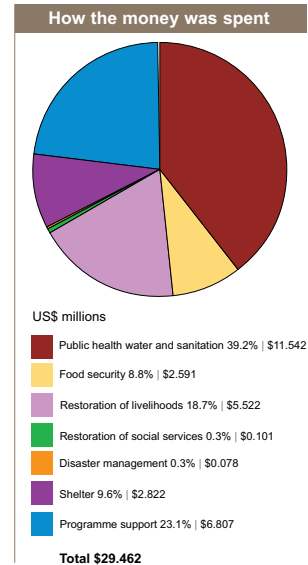
## Distribution of food and relief items

Two days after the tsunami struck we were able, with our partner DNKIS, to deliver medical equipment for 1,000 people and body-bags. Food items were also distributed throughout the first few months, benefiting 18,000 people. As soon as it was feasible, this programme was replaced by livelihoods projects which offer greater food security and have a stabilising effect on the local economy.

Almost 80,000 people across Aceh and Nias have benefited from Oxfam's distribution of relief goods, such as hygiene kits (containing toothpaste, soap, detergent, and toothbrushes), kitchen kits, and household items. We also distributed essentials such as sanitary towels and headscarves for women.

**“I don't want to be in trauma forever. I want to do something for myself and my community.”**

Dedi, Indonesia, who lost his family in the tsunami but volunteered as a vital liaison person between his village and the Oxfam team in Aceh



# Indonesia

## Shelter

Shelter is a top priority. Owing to the urgent need for housing, Oxfam initially distributed tents and household items such as jerry-cans to approximately 6,000 households, and provided materials and tools for building temporary shelters. A further 2,344 shelter kits were distributed after the earthquake in Nias, each containing two family-size tents, sleeping bags, blankets, cooking utensils, water purification tablets and tools, in total benefiting approx 23,000 people.

Oxfam is currently committed to building 2,100 earthquake-resistant houses by the end of 2006, of which 700 will be completed by December 2005. If more housing is needed, we could build up to 4,000 houses in total. In the interim, we will continue to provide and maintain water and sanitation facilities for people in temporary shelters. The location of the houses, and the first people to receive them, are identified by the community, with preference given to vulnerable families with widowed or disabled members.

Oxfam is campaigning on particular issues relating to shelter, including ensuring that temporary shelters built by private contractors meet international Sphere standards. We have also been working at community, district and provincial levels for clarification of the rights, responsibilities, and procedures related to housing, land, and property. Included in this are community participation in the re-construction process; secure land tenure and the protection of property rights of women, children, the socially and economically vulnerable, and minority groups.

Because sustainable timber is scarce in Indonesia, Oxfam has been consulting with the Indonesian government, other NGOs and the local community about reconciling the huge demand for wood with finding sustainable and environmentally-friendly options for sourcing timber. We have revised our house design to use less timber, and we are trying to source sustainable supplies from abroad to reduce environmental impact.

**Oxfam is currently committed to building 2,100 earthquake-resistant houses by the end of 2006, of which 700 will be completed by December 2005.**



For the first time in our history, Oxfam leased helicopters to deliver emergency relief. By April, along 900km of Aceh's coastline, we had delivered 440 tonnes of aid by cargo helicopter to more than 20,000 people completely cut off by the tsunami.

# Indonesia



Oxfam supported the community of Alue Deah Teungoh village, Banda Aceh, in the replanting of mangroves destroyed by the tsunami. The tree-seedlings will grow to provide protection for the coast, shellfish for consumption and sale, and a habitat for wildlife.



A carpenter building a temporary shelter in Aceh Besar

Saifullah Akbar used to own a building materials business in Banda Aceh. Today he works as a supervisor with Oxfam in Aceh Besar where communities have started to return home and rebuild their lives after the tsunami. His team of six people visits seven villages to help communities to find new settlement sites that are safe and acceptable, and to prepare them for construction. “The tsunami caused not only a lot of destruction to property but it also totally changed the coastal landscape,” said Lilianne Fan, advocacy co-ordinator at Oxfam, Aceh. “A lot of land is now under water. Rice fields, house plots, and beaches have disappeared and the sea is now in some places up to 500 metres further inland from where it was before.”

For the communities who used to live in these areas, the only possible solution is to find and move to new land, a difficult task in itself, given complex issues of land ownership, the location of new settlements and compensation to landowners. The Government of Indonesia estimates that 30,000 families need relocation to new land because their original land has been submerged or is unsafe. Oxfam is helping develop the policies to allow this to be done in a way which puts communities in charge, and allows them to make informed choices about their future.

# Indonesia

## Livelihoods

The tsunami had a huge impact on the livelihoods of people across Aceh, whether through damage to tools and equipment, materials, or to agricultural property and fishing ponds. To date, Oxfam has assisted more than 60,000 people through short-term cash-for-work projects and grants to rebuild small businesses.

Cash-for-work was introduced early in the relief phase as a means of providing people with money for essential items, while engaging communities in urgent recovery activities such as repairing roads; building bridges, community centres, and mosques; clearing land; draining water from fields; and rebuilding fish ponds and dykes.

These programmes injected significant cash into the local economy and involved people in the rehabilitation of their own environment and communities.

Cash-for-work provided a platform for the introduction of long-term livelihoods

schemes, such as cash grants, the distribution of materials and tools, and financing community groups. Our livelihoods programme targets groups that may be especially hard-hit, such as the fishing community, small-scale farmers, small business owners, and tradespeople. In Meulaboh, Oxfam and our local partners have supported 1,267 farming families with tools, hand-tractors, fertilisers, and seeds. Nearby, we support a metal-working group which produces farming tools. This builds self-sufficiency and interdependency in the local economy.

By August 2005, more than 1,600 hectares of rice fields had been cleared and more than 7,300 kilometres of farmland had been re-fenced.

Since June, we have been working with partners to replant mangroves. This will support the rehabilitation of coastal ecosystems, form a natural barrier against future floods and cyclones and provide areas for shell-fishing.

**More than 60,000 people participated in cash-for-work projects, which injected significant cash into the local economy**



In camps for displaced people, children received pens and colouring sheets featuring hygiene messages. Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

# Indonesia

## On the road

From the beginning, we have tried to ensure that local organisations that survived the tsunami were able to get back on their feet and participate in the response. Working with local NGOs increases the overall support to survivors, beyond Oxfam's direct humanitarian programmes



Since the tsunami, we have met partners to hear their needs, to provide training, and to discuss strategies. We will continue to support our partners well into the future, as our own direct interventions are reduced over time.

A brightly-painted *becak*, or three-wheeler taxi motorbike, outside a small house in Banda Aceh marks the office of Oxfam partner PERTISA, a foundation for *becak* drivers. PERTISA lost half its members to the tsunami. The remaining 300 have no homes, no vehicles, and no financial prospects due to the loss of their *becaks*. With funding from Oxfam, 60 drivers will receive vehicles from PERTISA under a loan system. One of PERTISA's founders, Mr Tarmizi (above left), explains that the recipients were chosen by members according to the hardship the driver had suffered and the scale of destruction in their area.

Each of the drivers will gradually pay back the 15 million rupiah (approx \$1,250) cost of each vehicle. This money is then recycled to fund more *becaks*. "The drivers are a close-knit community, so default on payments will be rare," says Mr Tarmizi. PERTISA's founders hope that eventually every driver in their organisation will own a vehicle. They have also set up a trust fund for the children of *becak* drivers who died in the tsunami and need assistance to continue their education. "We are trying to help any way we can. We are happy to be part of Oxfam," says Mr Tarmizi.

**"We are trying to help any way we can. We are happy to be part of Oxfam"**

Mr Tarmizi, member of PERTISA, the *becak* drivers foundation

# Indonesia

## Public health

The tsunami destroyed much of Aceh's water-supply system. In response, Oxfam's short-term water delivery methods ranged from installing water bladders to trucking drinking water to temporary living centres. So far, Oxfam has delivered more than 300 million litres of drinking water.

Over the past few months, with more people moving back to their villages, we have adopted more sustainable solutions: more than 3,200 wells have been built or repaired so far, and water systems are being put in place to provide villages with piped water from springs. We are also planning to undertake major work on town water-supply systems in two locations.

Our initial sanitation programme in temporary camps included emergency latrines and bathing areas. These are segregated to create privacy, and electric lighting units have been installed to make facilities safe for women at night.

Greater awareness of disease prevention and health and hygiene issues is central to our programme. We have used radio broadcasts to spread health and hygiene information through interactive talkshows, news programmes, and public information messages. Health promotion staff regularly engage local communities in workshops and discussions on disease prevention, and keeping living areas free of waste and stagnant water. They also monitor the quality of sanitation facilities and water sources. We have also organised the collection, disposal, and recycling of household waste.

## Social services

Working in partnership with Education International, a local NGO, we are reconstructing 28 schools. This project aims to benefit the poorest affected families and orphans, and includes training teachers to deal with trauma. The schools will be equipped with locally-made furniture and built with local labour. We expect this programme to benefit at least 12,250 people.

**In the past few months, with more people moving back to their villages, we are adopting more sustainable solutions**



In January 2005, Oxfam public health engineer, Andy Bastable, and his team restored water to households in Meulaboh, Aceh, after the tsunami destroyed the existing water-purification plant.

"We have put up an emergency water-treatment unit to clean river water and we are pumping the clean water into the distribution system," explains Andy. "This provides a supply for tankers to take to camps where displaced people are living, as well as instantly providing drinking water for around 6,000 households. We're hoping that with the aid money coming in, there will be an opportunity to upgrade the whole system."

An extension of the Meulaboh water distribution network is now under way to provide water for new settlements, and will be completed in 2006.

# Sri Lanka

As estimated 35,000 people are feared to have died when the tsunami hit the coast of Sri Lanka. More than half a million, many already affected by conflict, were displaced. Oxfam has a long-standing presence in Sri Lanka, so our relationships with local civil society organisations gave us privileged access to devastated communities. They also ensured we were attuned to the views and needs of the affected population.

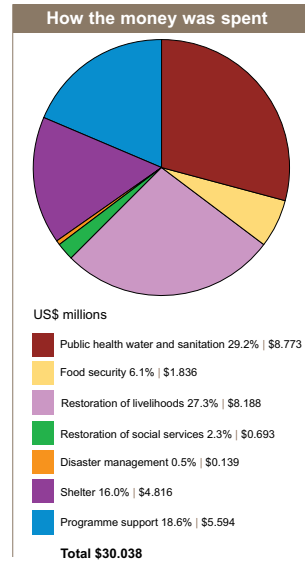
After the initial disaster relief phase, we were one of the principal agencies helping to restore assets and livelihoods of families affected by the disaster. The thrust of our longer-term rehabilitation programme is to help Sri Lanka's poorest and most vulnerable tsunami survivors – especially women – to make a better living. We also aim to reduce their vulnerability to future disasters.

Since the tsunami, we have worked with 44 local partner organisations, to assist 627,000 people. Their activities include providing food rations during the emergency phase, raising awareness of disaster preparedness, training teachers in psycho-social counselling, constructing 12 school buildings and distributing school materials to thousands of students.

## Livelihoods

More than 60,000 women and men have participated in Oxfam's livelihood programmes in Sri Lanka. This has been achieved in collaboration with local partner organisations, such as SEEDS, CHA and Sewa Lanka. After identifying families in need, we have provided equipment, vocational training, cash grants, and loans to help restart small businesses (including tailoring, poultry rearing, fishing and related trades, carpentry, bicycle repair, and laundering). Basic farming equipment, seeds, livestock, and agricultural training have also been provided. We are offering vocational training to those who wish to change their occupation to a safer or more sustainable alternative.

Innovative methods of improving market access have been introduced: 3,500 fishing families in the north have been given refrigerated trucks to enable them to sell their catch in better markets. In Matara, Oxfam is supporting 3,000 women and men working in the coir (coconut fibre) industry, while in Ampara, masons and carpenters who received tool kits are helping to build transitional shelters for tsunami survivors. In Jaffna and Mullaitivu, Oxfam has provided financial assistance to fishing communities to enable them to join a government pension and insurance plan.



**“My mother applied for a grant from (Oxfam partner) Sarvodaya. She gave them a business plan and we were given an initial grant of 7,000 rupees (US\$ 70). It is going very well and it is good to have something to do for ourselves – we lost our house and everything we had.”**

Kumuthini, in her mother's shop at Samuthirapuram camp near Batticaloa, Sri Lanka



# Sri Lanka

## Shelter

Oxfam and our partners have completed the construction of more than 3,700 transitional shelters, designed to be durable but removable. We have also constructed acclaimed model temporary shelters so that other aid agencies and local communities can reproduce them or adapt the designs to their needs. The process of moving people to permanent housing is expected to be lengthy. While many families have been granted the right to a permanent home, many do not yet have land on which to build it and are forced to squat on public land. With people likely to be living in transitional housing for up to three years, Oxfam is providing funds to families to help them purchase household equipment such as furniture and kitchen items. We are also continuing to press for the shelter needs of the poorest families to be met. Community consultation is central to our shelter programme, and we urge other agencies to include it in their programmes. Partner organisations, KPNDU and TCDO have taken the lead in the consultation process. We are also building infrastructure for settlement sites, including roads, drainage, and children's play areas. To ensure that building materials come from renewable sources, we have imported 7,750 cubic metres of timber from Australia.

## Gender

Oxfam is providing gender-sensitive bathing, sanitation, and shelter facilities that give women and girls privacy and security in Ampara, Batticaloa, and Kilinochchi. Measures include providing solar lights to provide security at night in washing areas. We are also acting to change attitudes by training camp managers and the security forces in how to respond effectively to gender issues (particularly violence against women), and working with camp management committees to give women greater roles in decision making. Our partner organisations are offering referrals for survivors of gender-based violence, raising awareness of the threat of alcohol-related violence against women in camps for displaced people, and discussing women's safety issues with the government. In response to requests for assistance in Ampara, Oxfam has been distributing information to women in camps on issues such as land rights. In Kilinochchi, we are offering specific support to women on ways to make a living.

**“I am very proud of myself and everything I have done... I have earned money for my family when we needed it. My husband and I worked together... with Oxfam and neighbours. There was no difference between men and women. I enjoyed it very much.”**

Shamali Kodikara, 36-year-old mother who built her own home through Oxfam cash-for-work scheme in Matara, southern Sri Lanka



# Sri Lanka

## “To us, it’s a palace”

Under an Oxfam cash-for-work scheme in Tangalle, southern Sri Lanka, families have been trained and paid to build temporary houses. They were also fully involved in discussions about the design. Oxfam provided materials, tools, training, and wages.



“When I saw there were going to be houses built here, I came to ask for some work as a labourer – any kind of work I could do,” says Kaluhandadige Lalitha, a mother of four who moved in at the end of February. “All I had was taken by the tsunami. Foreigners I don’t know have given this to me because of the tsunami and it was my part to work to build the houses. I learned how to prepare ground, how to build and use materials – everything was new for me. The salary I got from the labouring work with Oxfam will keep me and my children for some time. When we were given the keys to our new homes, I was so happy... I knew we’d be OK.”

Comprising one main room, with cooking and storage spaces outside, the houses exceed the minimum space requirements agreed by international humanitarian agencies. Walls of wooden sheeting set in concrete blocks support tin roofs lined with wood to prevent overheating inside. The houses can be dismantled and the materials are reusable so that families can use them to build permanent homes in the future. There are temporary latrines and water points outside for residents to share.

“We discussed the various materials with the families early on and have used what they chose,” explains Oxfam Public Health Engineer, Zulifiquar Ali Hidar. “The space left outside each house can be used for storage, drying clothes, or maybe as a small business area. A key success has been the families’ involvement. It has given them ownership and a greater awareness of the importance of women. I was told by the community that they knew Oxfam didn’t own these houses and that they really owned them. That really made me proud.”

Tangalle resident, Premananda, sums up the community’s feelings: “It’s just one room, but for now we think it’s a house,” he says. “Not just a house but a palace, for it helps us to live without being a burden to anyone.”

**“It’s just one room, but... it helps us to live without being a burden to anyone.”**

Premananda, Tangalle resident

# Sri Lanka

## Public health

Oxfam is working with the government and aid agencies to deliver 700,000 litres of clean water a day across seven tsunami-affected districts. We have installed hundreds of water tanks that provide more than 65,000 people with safe water, and have distributed 5,000 water filters for household use across the country. To date, Oxfam and our partner organisations have cleaned or constructed more than 5,000 wells. Our water-testing programme (which involves collecting 350-700 samples each month) is ongoing. We have provided more

than 4,500 latrines and have constructed bathing cubicles, women's changing rooms, and laundry areas throughout the region. We have also distributed 22,000 hygiene kits (containing items such as soap, sanitary pads, and water buckets) and helped residents of newly-built houses to get connected to drinking water supplies. With our partners, we have carried out activities in camps for displaced people aimed at promoting hygiene awareness, and are running free basic health clinics in a number of tsunami-affected villages.

The tsunami polluted thousands of wells across Sri Lanka with salt water and debris, each of which had provided many families with water for drinking, washing, and cleaning. In Batticaloa, Oxfam carried out a programme of well-cleaning to return them to their original state, so less water had to be trucked in and people's resources were restored. This helped to speed up the process of returning home.

Oxfam paid, trained, and equipped four well-cleaning teams. By August, they had cleaned more than 4,800 wells – hot and filthy, but invaluable work. “It takes a team of four about 30 minutes to pump out the wells,” explains Ravinthiran, a team member. “The first time we clean a well, salt water comes back in from the ground but by the second or third time there's no more salt. It's a difficult job but people have really suffered and I want to help them. We've started by cleaning the wells in the camps and then will be going out to areas where people have resettled. People are really thankful that we're doing this, so it makes it worthwhile. This job is full-time so it's good for me too. When we have finished a well and we are sure it's clean, we test it and also try drinking some ourselves. People have watched us work on the wells and if we drink it they trust us. They know it's safe and that we've done the job well.”



**“People have watched us work on the wells and if we drink the water they trust us. They know it's safe and that we've done the job well.”** Ravinthiran

# Sri Lanka

## Meeting women's needs

“Before the tsunami there were some very serious issues regarding the level of violence against women in this area,” says Shanthi Sivanesan, Oxfam Gender and protection officer in Sri Lanka. “We need to continue to consider this during our tsunami response.”



A tsunami camp water tank carrying messages from Oxfam's 'WE CAN' campaign to end violence against women.

The text reads 'My father is always shouting at my mother. – Why?' and 'Violence destroys the whole family'

In Batticaloa Oxfam is working with long-term partner Sarvodaya to improve women's rights, safety, and health. In the camps after the tsunami, existing social problems facing women were amplified. They had to cope with washing, dressing, and breast-feeding without privacy. “Initially we went to each camp to see what would be needed,” explains an Oxfam Health Supervisor. “We collected data on facilities, and formed small separate groups of men and women to ask what they needed.” Oxfam lobbied for separate washing areas and lamps to make facilities safer for women at night, and ran training sessions for people on camp management committees, to try to influence decisions.

More women than men were killed by the tsunami – a situation that changed social structures profoundly. For example, many women survivors came under intense pressure to marry men widowed by the wave. Oxfam is working throughout the region to highlight this issue and help relieve social pressure on women – a continuation of our existing programme.

“There are big challenges to ensure women are protected from discrimination and violence,” explains Shanthi Sivanesan. Oxfam has joined other local NGOs to form a group called Genderwatch, a women's co-ordination group for disaster management.

“Shanthi educated us,” says camp resident Pathimalar. “At first, many of us would not even speak, we were so shy. If our husbands or children wanted anything we would immediately go and care for them. Then a few women started talking about their issues and how they were going to solve them. Some women have changed their lives very much.”

**Oxfam lobbied for separate washing areas and lamps to make facilities safer for women at night**

# India

When the tsunami struck India's south-eastern coast, more than 18,000 people are feared to have died and 150,000 homes were fully or partially damaged. Many thousands lost their livelihoods when agricultural land was ruined and fishing boats destroyed. The Asian Development Bank estimated that the tsunami would directly or indirectly affect the livelihoods of about 645,000 families, or 3.2 million persons, in southern India.

Since the disaster, Oxfam, working with 29 partner organisations, has helped more than 600,000 individuals.

## Public health

In the weeks immediately following the tsunami, the threat of disease was our key concern. We deployed dozens of water engineers, sanitation specialists, and health promoters, and distributed hygiene kits to more than 30,500 families. This activity was vital in preventing mass outbreaks of water-borne disease. By the end of the first quarter, Oxfam had established water and sanitation facilities for approximately 7,000 households (including rehabilitation of existing water supplies); supplied immediate food relief to 42,000 households; and distributed replacement kitchen equipment to 7,000 households. Thanks to the work of a local partner organisation, 360 *Adivasi* (tribal) families who were affected by the tsunami were finally recognised and included in the government food-relief programme.

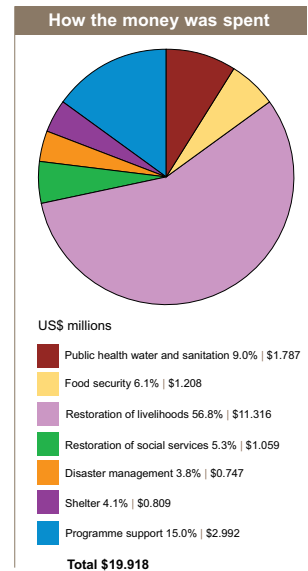
In another part of our public health programme, a partner organisation, SEVAI, trains children to visit schools as public health ambassadors. They also put on street plays about sanitation issues.

Wherever possible, Oxfam also includes HIV/AIDS prevention work within our programme work. In South India, we are supporting our partners to be able to respond to the HIV/AIDS threat through workshops and training.

## Shelter

In our initial response, we provided temporary shelter for 1,103 households. Oxfam plans to construct permanent houses when land is allotted by the government. However, this may take time as securing suitable land is a complex process. It is also important that sufficient time is allowed to ensure that families are full participants in the decisions that affect them. Regular meetings are held with families in some transitional shelters to update them with the latest government information.

Between April and June, Oxfam strengthened hundreds of existing shelters to prepare for the monsoon season. We also distributed 430 pedestal fans to reduce temperatures in the temporary shelters. In June in Kargil Nagar, 2,300 non-Oxfam shelters were destroyed by a fire. An Oxfam partner provided 30 community tents until the authorities were able to provide individual temporary shelters again.



**“I used to feel like a bonded labourer, working for a contractor in a construction site. Now, I can take care of my family and at the same time earn my income, besides providing employment to seven other people.”**

Palaniamma, who has set up a coconut-fibre business with a loan from Oxfam, Parangipettai, India

# India

## Livelihoods

Since March, Oxfam's emphasis in South India has shifted from relief activities to rehabilitation programmes. Through our livelihoods programme we have been able to support more than 70,000 families. While we are doing a lot of work with fishing communities, our livelihoods work emphasises other trades and businesses where we have identified unmet needs, including cash-for-work programmes to reclaim canals, ponds and agricultural land.

One of Oxfam's partners, PREPARE, that has a long-standing relationship and rapport with fishing communities, offered training in crab and seaweed farming to 150 families in five villages. This was an innovative programme and was so successful that the government of Tamil Nadu now plans to launch its own income-generating project based on crab and seaweed culture. Oxfam is working with partners in the East Coast

Development Forum to restore livelihoods to 13,000 people.

In the South Indian agricultural sector, it is estimated that around 12,000 hectares of crops and agricultural land were damaged by the influx of saline seawater. Many of those affected were small and marginal farmers from the underprivileged *Dalit* and *Adivasi* sections of society. Oxfam partner, DHAN Foundation and affected families used their knowledge of soil and water management to reclaim and rehabilitate the land. They also restored ponds and other crucial water sources that had been damaged. The affected families were fully involved through cash-for-work programmes, which enabled them to meet their basic needs at a time when they had no other source of income. Since then, several families have planted new crops on their rehabilitated land and in a few months they will be able to harvest again. So far 600 families have benefited, but many more will follow.

**“We are learning new things that have been brought from outside that we didn't know before, and they are helping us to build up our lives.”**

Ganesh, Indian farmer, whom Oxfam and partner CCD, paid through cash-for-work to restore fields destroyed by the tsunami and protect them from future flooding.

The community of Rasapettai in Tamil Nadu, India, sits on an island, with estuary on one side and sea on the other. They rely on manually-operated boats to get to the mainland. It was one of the worst-hit villages in Cuddalore district, but mercifully, houses had been built on high ground and so were saved from damage. However, two people were killed and more than 300 fishing boats destroyed, dealing a terrible blow to a community dependent on the income they make from fishing.

Working with local partner, Sumanahalli, Oxfam is supporting the 422 families that make up this fishing community, as well as assisting four other villages near Cuddalore. Sumanahalli's work includes the repair of boats and nets, insurance coverage and fostering self-help groups, including 17 for women. There is also a newly-formed confederation of boat owners which takes responsibility for annual maintenance of the boats, with members sharing costs.

“I'm happy to be a joint-owner of a motor boat. Before this, only men owned boats, now, women own them too. The catch is shared equally amongst group members,” says Kasthuri, who lives in the village with her children.



# India

## Earning from the sea

In Tamil Nadu, south-east India, people have made a living for centuries by evaporating seawater to extract salt – interrupted only when the tsunami destroyed their saltpans. Oxfam instigated a cash-for-work scheme that enabled the salt producers to rehabilitate their damaged pans so that they could start earning a living again.



“The area was destroyed by the tsunami. Nothing was left – only drains that were silted,” remembers Dr Ravi Chandram, Director of FACE, a collaboration of 16 grassroots organisations working with Oxfam in tsunami-affected areas. “The saltpans are worked by marginalised communities – mostly very poor people, unable to borrow money and reconstruct their saltpans.”

Oxfam recognised the plight of the salt workers and paid them to drain and rebuild the pans. “You took us from nothing to something,” says Murugayan, a saltpan leaseholder. “The payments you gave meant we could start to produce salt, and it give us the confidence that we could start to earn a living again. Without the support we wouldn’t have been able to do anything here at the salt pans.”

“Equal wages for the labourers were introduced by Oxfam – the first international organisation giving equal wages to women,” says Dr Chandram. Anjammal has worked on the pans for 20 years. “Before, I used to get 50 rupees (1.11 US\$) and now we’re getting 72 rupees (1.60 US\$), and we’re very happy. It’s not just that we’re getting equal wages but we’re also getting equal rights.” With Oxfam’s support, FACE wants to change prevailing social attitudes and achieve equal wages for women in the long term.

“We want to develop this opportunity and make this an advocacy point. It’s a very good initiative which we want to sustain,” continues Dr Chandram. He also wants to help the leaseholders to produce better quality salt and to market their produce directly, so that they don’t lose money to middlemen.

With help from FACE and Oxfam, it is hoped that the saltpan workers will have brighter prospects than they did before the tsunami struck.

**Oxfam recognised the plight of the salt workers and paid them to drain and rebuild the pans.**

**“You took us from nothing to something,”**

Murugayan, a saltpan leaseholder

# India

## Andaman and Nicobar Islands

More than 3,500 people lost their lives when the tsunami struck the remote Indian archipelago of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, where settlers from all over mainland India live alongside an indigenous population.

Much agricultural land and many plantations were polluted by saltwater. Fresh water supplies were contaminated and stagnant pools were trapped everywhere.

### Livelihoods

We have provided more than 11,400 days of cash-for-work activities, concentrating on desalinating wells, installing flooring for shelters, and clearing debris from agricultural land. In addition, we have provided assets such as bicycles and sewing machines.

### Shelter

More than 1,500 people have benefited from Oxfam's construction of 220 intermediate shelters and the distribution of nearly 200 shelter kits including items such as stoves, saucepans, water filters, and mosquito nets. We have also built four community centres which are now in use.

### Public health & social services

More than 1,600 families are now using Oxfam emergency latrines. We have desalinated 300 wells, distributed hygiene kits (containing soap, traditional sanitary towels, and toothbrushes) to more than 3,000 families, installed more than 70 water storage tanks, constructed 872 washrooms, and created 420 'rainwater harvesting' structures to increase the water supply.

Oxfam provided the Directorate of Education with 120 tents to use as temporary schools and, working with All India Radio, has been broadcasting public health messages in six regional languages. Oxfam has also distributed natural mosquito repellent to help prevent the spread of malaria.

A three-day workshop was organised for Oxfam staff, stressing the need for increased understanding about highlighting the HIV/AIDS issue in all our programmes. We plan to hold similar workshops for partner NGOs and will support them in developing specific action plans to integrate HIV/AIDS in their long-term rehabilitation strategies.

**All India Radio, has been broadcasting public health messages in six languages.**



In India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Oxfam has distributed radios in the camps for people displaced by the tsunami. We are working with All India Radio broadcasting public health messages in six languages, including Bengali, Hindi, and Nicobari. Resident Jayanti Gupta (left) says the messages are very supportive. "I listen to the radio many times a day," she explains. "I hear health messages from Oxfam, like 'Boil water for 20 minutes before drinking' or 'Use the toilets and keep them clean', and how to make oral-rehydration solution if we are ill."

# Somalia

The tsunami waves still carried great destructive power when they reached Somalia, more than 5,000 km from the earthquake's epicentre. The worst-hit area was a 650km stretch of coast in Puntland, where 289 people were reported dead or missing, and homes and water sources were destroyed. Hafun almost totally vanished under the tsunami's weight and nearly everyone remaining in this historic town was left homeless. The affected communities also lost the boats and fishing equipment which had been essential for their livelihoods.

In the initial phase of the emergency, Oxfam assisted 20,000 people in Hafun and Mudug districts with food and relief items, including shelter materials. The immediate humanitarian needs of the population have largely been met but an estimated 50 per cent still need food aid or cash assistance. Oxfam is also seeking to assist nomadic herding communities inland, some of whose members had been forced by drought to migrate to the coast in search of work and who have now returned destitute. With our partners, we are well placed to assist as we were already present in these communities before the tsunami struck. Our work in Somalia is taking place in a context of considerable insecurity, as Somalia has been without an effective central government since 1991.

## Shelter and social services

Oxfam received funding from the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee) to work with Muslim Aid on the construction of 60 houses for those left most vulnerable in Hafun and Garacad. These will be completed by November 2005. Working with our partner, the

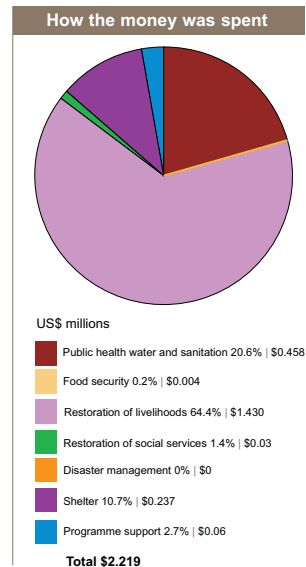
Tadamun Social Society, we have also built one new school and rehabilitated a further nine in conjunction with Somali NGOs, the Centre for Education and Development and SRDO.

## Livelihoods

Cash-for-work has been an important component of our programme in Somalia. Working with several partner organisations, we have used cash-for-work to clear debris, restore protective mangrove forests, and repair roads. We have also been involved in rehabilitating wells and other water supply systems. We are planning to donate boats and equipment to fishing communities. Muslim Aid, with our support, is also providing 80 fishing boats, engines and fishing supplies to affected families.

Working with local NGOs, we have launched a programme assisting 2,500 of the most vulnerable households in Iskushuban, 1,000 of them through cash-for-work schemes. This seeks to address short-term problems associated with insecure livelihoods, notably food and water shortages, and increased debt. The selection of beneficiaries will take place after consultation with the community, in particular a village committee which will include women's representatives.

In January 2006, we will begin a two-year alternative livelihoods project focusing on rebuilding the infrastructure needed for agriculture and water provision, capacity building, market expansion, and environmental rehabilitation. With a total budget of around US\$ 0.9 million, the project will be implemented through our partner, Horn Relief.



# The Maldives

According to the United Nations, the tsunami affected one-third of the Maldives' population of nearly 300,000, damaging and destroying homes, livelihoods, and the social infrastructure. More than 15,000 people were made homeless. The financial impact was enormous, estimated at \$470 million, or 62% of gross domestic product.

Oxfam was one of the first international organisations to respond to the disaster in the Maldives, dispatching an assessment team on 3 January 2005. Our programme ran until May 2005, consisting of equipment to provide emergency water supplies, and financial support to stimulate economic activity and restore purchasing power to 22,000 people on various islands. Oxfam worked in close collaboration with the National Disaster Management Centre and authorities at national and local level to ensure that the programmes were well co-ordinated with government plans and policies.

## Livelihoods

Working with partners Care Society and Foundation for the Advancement of Self-Help in Attaining Needs (FASHAN), Oxfam's cash-for-work projects provided 13,642 day wages for 683 men and 758 women on 14 islands. The work generated, among other assets, a total of about 900,000 cement blocks used for reconstruction. A third partner, Society for Health Education (SHE), distributed equipment for 20 boats on Vilifushi island, Thaa Atoll.

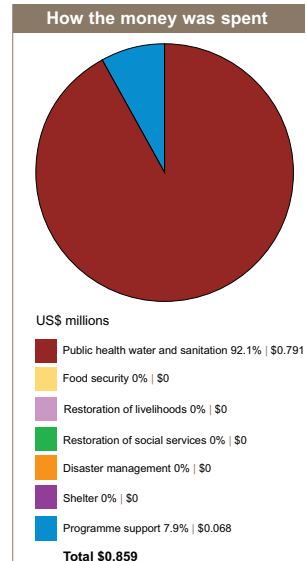
## Water and sanitation

Oxfam's assessment showed that the provision of clean water to affected islands was the most critical immediate relief need. We installed three permanent desalination plants, capable of producing 10,000 litres of fresh water per day and with a life expectancy of 10 years. These were given to the communities on Muli, Viligili and Goidhoo islands along with spare parts, training for plant operators, and operating expenses for three months.

Additionally Oxfam provided water storage tanks capable of holding a total of 190,000 litres on Gan and Thinadhoo Islands to support desalination plants.

We completed our emergency relief operations in May, and carried out an evaluation to assess the impact of the programme and capture any lessons. Oxfam's temporary office in the capital, Male, closed on 15 May 2005, after we had ensured that the aims of the programme had been achieved.

**After we had ensured that the aims of the programme had been achieved, Oxfam's temporary office closed on 15 May 2005.**

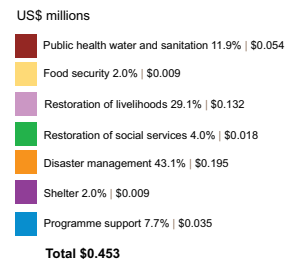
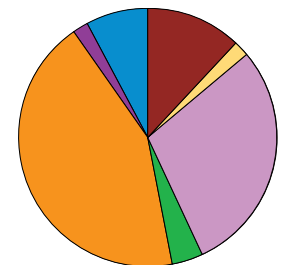


# Burma (Myanmar)

The cost of the tsunami to Burma's coastal communities is hard to measure, but it is estimated that nearly 100 people lost their lives and more than 5,000 were made homeless. The disaster highlighted the poverty and vulnerability of people living in the Ayeyarwady Division of Southern Burma. In the first few weeks, Oxfam, working with a local partner, provided 517 households with rice, blankets and mosquito nets, and renovated a public drinking water point used by 50 families. In Ngapudaw district, we helped 4,000 inhabitants by rebuilding a bridge and ensured safe drinking water for 10,000 residents by renovating their drinking water reservoir.

By May, our work had benefited almost 17,000 inhabitants, half of whom were women. This included helping 126 households to resume work by providing them with fishing boats, nets, and other equipment, and repairing 35 houses in Shan State. Our partner has a strong track record in community development in northern Burma and is now establishing an office in the South. In Laputta, we facilitated meetings to help communities produce their own development plans, including 23 proposals to repair and renovate school buildings. We hope to assist a further 12,000 people, and help 48 villages as they develop their own community plans.

How the money was spent



# Thailand

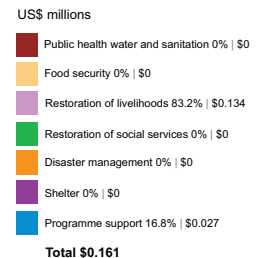
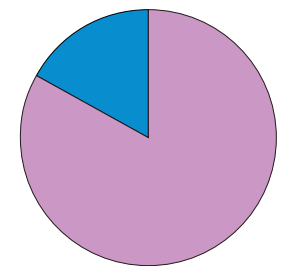
The tsunami is estimated to have taken the lives of more than 8,000 people in Thailand. Vast stretches of coastline were damaged. Oxfam, working with the Save Andaman Network (SAN), assisted small-scale fishing communities on isolated islands and along the Thai Andaman coastline. By the end of September, 2,920 sets of fishing equipment had been distributed and 1,406 damaged boats and 193 houses had been repaired.

Of the known dead 2,500 were Burmese migrants, registered to work in Phang-nga and Phuket provinces. There were also an unknown number of unregistered migrants. Immediately after the tsunami, the authorities started sending migrants back to Burma. Some joined Burmese communities in other parts of Thailand, others returned to Burma. In many cases, they had no access either to Thai or

Burmese government assistance. They were isolated, had no livelihoods, were in psychological shock and host communities were being stretched beyond their means.

Following a needs assessment on 28 December, a local NGO, supported by Oxfam, began providing relief assistance to more than 2,500 migrants. In February, Oxfam partner, the Foundation for Migrant Assistance Program helped 7,500 migrants (half of whom were women) to reclaim their registration documents. Without these documents they were unable to claim legal employment or to get medical insurance. Working with other local NGOs in the Tsunami Action Group (TAG), our partners helped to transport migrants to hospital for medical attention, offered translation services and, if needed, financial assistance.

How the money was spent



## Evaluation and learning

**The tsunami was a disaster on a scale and of a complexity never before experienced. Inevitably mistakes were made, but Oxfam is determined to learn from the difficulties faced.**

In the first days following a large emergency, assessments and co-ordination are of prime importance. Once programmes are up and running, monitoring becomes essential. It is not possible to run programmes on the scale needed after the tsunami without making mistakes, and evaluating our work ensures that we identify and improve poor programming. If partners and beneficiaries alert us to mistakes, we aim to rectify the situation and capture the learning to ensure a better quality of future work.

- In India, when the heavy monsoon rains began to fall, it became clear that some of our temporary shelters were not strong enough and the ground became waterlogged. In response we have now strengthened the walls and roofing, covered shelters with heavy-duty tarpaulin and used sand to create drainage around the sites. We will ensure that any future shelter used in monsoon-prone areas will be durable.
- In Sri Lanka, the use of a new kind of water tank presented us with considerable technical difficulties. After overcoming problems relating to its installation, siting and protection, we have shared our findings with others intending to use these tanks.
- In the fast-changing and logistically challenging context in Aceh, our conventional approach of doing assessments first before determining our assistance package led to frustrations and delays in our response in the first few days. By the time our teams had consulted communities, collated information, and turned it into an

intervention plan, the needs of those affected had changed. In reality, the level of devastation was so high that people needed many forms of assistance, and logistically what we were best able to provide was water and sanitation. We recognised that we needed to integrate assessments with provision of immediate assistance, and use those interactions with communities to build up a clearer picture on ongoing needs.

One way we share the findings of our evaluations is through workshops. In September we held a, “Learning from the tsunami” workshop in Chennai, India and outcomes from this will be used to improve our current programme and help beneficiaries more efficiently in future emergencies. Knowledge gained from our tsunami programming has already been used in other humanitarian crises such as the October 2005 South Asia Earthquake.

As well as meeting the expressed needs of tsunami-hit communities, Oxfam has also pledged to meet agreed international principles and standards. Critical among these are the Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) Code of Conduct and the Sphere Standards in water and shelter provision. Oxfam is also a signatory to other principles and standards that ensure proper accountability to people affected by disaster, and to our many donors and staff. We also learn from other reports such as the (RCRC) World Disasters Report and the Fritz Institute report “Lessons from the Tsunami.”

In order to ensure that Oxfam’s own requirements for assessments do not put strong demands on the country programmes, a co-ordinated approach

**It is important that Oxfam’s own monitoring and evaluation is supplemented by evaluations from credible external sources.**

## Evaluation and learning

to assessment has been established. Oxfam affiliates have created a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, employed dedicated monitoring and evaluation staff, and are implementing a plan that involves tsunami-affected communities in monitoring and evaluation. This complements evaluations carried out by other organisations.

It is important that Oxfam's internal monitoring is supplemented by evaluations from credible external sources. Evaluations are being carried out by organisations such as the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition, Disasters Emergency Committee, and PriceWaterhouseCoopers. Most of the results won't be available until early 2006. These evaluations will look at not only how effective programme work has been on the ground, but also how Oxfam as an institution managed its response and found, through the establishment of the 'Tsunami Fund', a new way for affiliates to work together.

The OI Charitable Fund will be taking their recommendations forward to ensure that Oxfam's co-ordination works even better in the future.

We have also been commended for the opportunities we have created for communities to manage the response themselves. For example, in Sri Lanka, India, and Indonesia, we have helped form camp committees and in Aceh and Sri Lanka we have complemented these with suggestions/complaints boxes. In Sri Lanka there have also been 'watch' committees to monitor gender discrimination and the effective distribution of aid.

Oxfam has also pushed to improve the quality of the general response. In Aceh, for example, our Sphere advisers were able to promote gender and protection issues in a situation where there was pre-existing conflict. In Sri Lanka, we have supported the needs of disabled people, who were particularly affected by the tsunami but have been unintentionally ignored by many agencies. To work effectively with others, we need to be able to point with confidence to our own programmes and evidence of our own improvement.

The search for learning itself raises many challenges, for example:

- how to ensure that we are truly accountable to the people that we seek to assist
- how to identify the extent to which our programmes have contributed to peoples' recovery, and the nature of this contribution
- how to assess accurately the cost-effectiveness of our interventions so we can make better decisions in the future.

But our monitoring has also revealed lessons about what has been done right. For example, Oxfam affiliates have found it much easier to work in areas where we already had a presence. The research has also highlighted the many benefits of working through partners, such as:

- high levels of genuine participation by tsunami-hit communities
- increased effectiveness in working with local governments to ensure that policies respect the needs of people affected by the tsunami



A suggestion box in Leulingke village, Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

## Evaluation and learning

- increased knowledge of local regulations and requirements
- easier access to marginalised groups.

A key challenge for our future programme will be to ensure that relief work does not create or exacerbate tensions within communities. In many areas, people have been affected by multiple disasters – conflict, poverty, drought, or floods, but most funding is expressly for the tsunami-affected population.

It is integral to Oxfam’s programme that we help affected communities to become more resilient to future disasters. Our experience in Sri Lanka is that long-term work around people’s rights strengthens social institutions and helps communities to deal with disasters better.

We must ensure that experience gained since the tsunami not only contributes to Oxfam’s work with affected communities, but also to help prepare for and deal with future emergencies wherever they strike.

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### Accountability to beneficiaries

Money is donated to Oxfam to ensure that lives of people in need are improved. The people best placed to decide how this money is spent are therefore the beneficiaries. It is important we listen to beneficiaries when planning our programmes and keep listening as the programmes take shape.

- In eastern Sri Lanka, communities were involved in deciding who should receive grants and donations from Oxfam. These results were publicly displayed to allow others to voice any concerns. Alterations were made and donations given out. A similar project was set up for fishing co-operatives in the north-east.

- Throughout Sri Lanka, the design of temporary shelters changed, depending on discussions held with different communities. Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist families all had different requirements for their shelter and the Oxfam engineers incorporated their needs into the designs.

- In Aceh, we have put up information boards in 96 villages and used local radio and newspapers to inform people of their rights. Posting the cost of assistance on noticeboards has increased the transparency of Oxfam’s projects, reduced the chance of corruption and fraud, and increased trust in Oxfam.



“We were already an established local NGO working with the Muslim community on development projects but we only started working with Oxfam in January in the immediate aftermath of the tsunami. With Oxfam we organised a public meeting for all the families and were shown two models of transitional shelters – we suggested some amendments to the design – for instance having more rafters on the roof to make it stronger and we have been very happy with the shelters.

Each Friday evening we meet with the community and bring to Oxfam any concerns.”

Fateema, field officer with MEESAN, Oxfam partner NGO, and resident of Sigaram camp in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka.

# Future planning

**Oxfam's work in the first nine months of our programme has generated numerous successes, but it has also highlighted the many difficulties involved in emergency work on such a large scale.**

We have learnt much from our experience since the tsunami, and are using this knowledge both to inform our longer term programmes in the affected countries, and in other emergencies throughout the world.

We have found specific solutions to some of the particular problems encountered:

## **Helping to ensure land ownership**

It is crucial that displaced people be offered dignified shelter, yet complex land-title issues are slowing (and in many cases halting) the construction of temporary and permanent homes. In Aceh, we are setting up legal offices to help ensure that people who lost all of their legal paperwork are able to reclaim their land.

## **Ongoing social challenges**

Addressing inequalities based on caste, gender, and economic status is an ongoing challenge. We build gender issues into all of our programming and are working to ensure that issues such as equal pay are still taken seriously after our help is no longer needed.

## **Improving shelter and facilities**

Earthquakes and torrential rains since 26 December 2004 have inflicted additional psychological hardship on tsunami-affected communities, damaged some temporary shelters, and made many roads difficult to navigate. We will ensure that all future buildings, both temporary and permanent, are monsoon-proof, gender-sensitive and culturally suitable.



In Sri Lanka, Oxfam has given grants of 5,000 rupees (\$50) to help people to begin earning a living again. Valliyamma, aged 65, is a prawn-catcher from Batticaloa.

**“When the Tsunami hit our village we lost everything. We heard there were grants available so we applied and were given a grant which enabled us to buy lights and nets so we could fish again. We sell the prawns to a businessman we know. This way, we are able to earn some money.”**

# Future Planning

## Ensuring local voices are heard

The recovery depends in part on government decisions – such as how and when to carry out major infrastructure repairs. We will continue to hold talks with the local communities, and ensure their voices are heard by campaigning with them for better shelter and for access to decision makers, and for standards such as those set down by the Sphere humanitarian project to be adhered to.

## Support for neighbouring communities

People in the affected areas were already living with the effects of poverty and conflict. Those not directly affected by the tsunami are also in desperate need of our help. We ensure our programme takes into account the wider social and economic context in which it takes place, and that communities living alongside the tsunami-affected region are also receiving support.

Recovery from the tsunami is a long-term process: it is likely to be years before all survivors have permanent homes. But we

are proud of the work that Oxfam and our partners have been able to accomplish so far. We have saved lives while protecting the dignity of survivors, and we have worked hard to ensure fairness in the rebuilding of communities and livelihoods.

Our work to renew and improve these devastated communities will continue until at least 2008. It is crucial that our engagement goes beyond simply providing decent homes. We must ensure that communities have stable livelihoods which enable them to help themselves, that they are well-prepared for future disasters, and that their rights are respected. In short, Oxfam will continue to ensure the money we received helps families such as Pemawathi's to re-establish dignified, self-sufficient lives.

**“It’s so good Oxfam is helping me to earn a living and have a normal life again. I need to earn my own living, and Oxfam have been the ones to help me. Thank you very much.”**

Pemawathi Kankanange, coconut-fibre producer, Sri Lanka



Mrs Rasidha, a seamstress aged 24, living temporarily in a Sri Lankan camp, applied for an Oxfam grant so she could replace the sewing machine she lost in the tsunami.

**“Initially, there was a great need to make school uniforms for the children when they returned to school – most of these had been lost in the tsunami. Oxfam paid about \$1 for each uniform we made under a cash-for-work programme. I have a lot of work now making dresses, which brings in money which we’ll put towards rebuilding our house.”**

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The following organizations are currently observer members of Oxfam International, working towards possible full affiliation. We work together on specific issues to ensure that our combined efforts have maximum impact:

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Children play by Oxfam's water tanks in Sagamam camp, Ampara District, Sri Lanka