

ASSESSMENT OF TSUNAMI RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION IN JAFFNA DISTRICT*

A. OVERVIEW OF THE DISTRICT

1. The tsunami-affected areas of Jaffna District include territory under the control of the government and under the control of the LTTE. A total of 2,640 people died, 1,647 were injured, 1,240 reported missing and 41,000 were initially displaced. In Point Pedro, 17 *Grama Sevaka* (GS) Divisions were affected and 15 in Maruthankerny, with the humanitarian impact strongest in the north-eastern tip (Point Pedro), which is more densely populated than areas further south on the eastern coast. The tsunami also reached islands off the northwestern coast, mainly causing damage to livelihoods and infrastructure.

2. There are currently nine Temporary Accommodation Centres (TACs), of which eight are in LTTE controlled areas. Interim Resettlement Camps with transitional shelter are being constructed. Prior to this disaster, most of the 589,000 population of Jaffna district were displaced from their homes by the conflict during the previous 15-20 years, many of them several times. There are currently approximately 63,810 conflict IDPs in Jaffna, 8,954 of whom live in welfare camps, unable to return to their homes in high security zones and/or in other conflict-affected areas.

3. As a result of their previous experience with emergencies, tsunami-affected populations moved into welfare centres previously used for conflict displacement and registered with local governmental structures and LTTE representatives automatically. An unprecedented show of goodwill was witnessed in the Jaffna District to care for the injured, provide for those who took refuge in public buildings and bury the dead in a dignified manner. As in the past, many took refuge in the homes of friends and relatives.

4. Rehabilitation of the fisheries, education and health sectors in the District and economic development are the main priorities for recovery. These need to go hand in hand with the overall rehabilitation of the District that has suffered two decades of conflict.

B. FINDINGS OF POST-TSUNAMI DAMAGE & NEEDS ASSESSMENTS FOR JAFFNA

5. There is no dearth of needs assessments for the District, carried out by the government, LTTE and the development partners, although some stakeholders contend that these assessments failed to consult a broad enough range of stakeholders. The March 4, 2005 situation report prepared by the Government Agent (GA) provides a comprehensive picture of the needs. The report includes long- term development needs that include a two lane divided highway, widening and rehabilitating damaged roads, repair of electricity lines and provision of power to houses, implementation of a new water supply project, and construction of salt exclusion bunds among others. Eight schools are to be relocated, and health institutions are to be upgraded. A total of 3,708 houses have been fully damaged and another 1,700 partly damaged. Many NGOs have already signed MOUs with the GA and TAFREN to build houses in areas allocated to them.

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6. Meanwhile 4,206 fishing boats and crafts were previously damaged as a result of conflict and another 2,279 were affected by the tsunami. As with housing, many NGOs have already begun to deliver boats and fishing equipment and carry out boat repairs. In addition, much of the fishing infrastructure along the coastal areas has been damaged. Damage to agriculture was largely due to the incursion of salt water, damaging paddy, onion, banana, lime and tobacco farms. Over 60 public and common buildings, 5 co-operative buildings and nearly 600 private business and trading establishments were damaged.

7. Sectoral Committees headed by the local heads of Government Departments have been established to cover fisheries, education, roads, agriculture, health, food, housing, water supply and sanitation, resettlement and relocation and ports and communication.

C. KEY CONTEXTUAL ISSUES

8. Jaffna District is considered politically and strategically important in determining the resolution of the national ethnic conflict and bringing lasting peace to Sri Lanka. Many of the pre-tsunami issues of concern to civilians remain after the tsunami. They relate to disempowerment of people in the economic sector, a democratic gap between government decision-making and the people, as well as a lack of accountability by state and non-state actors to the population as a whole. These could be exacerbated if conscious efforts are not made to deal with them in the post-tsunami period in a conflict sensitive manner.

9. Despite the Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) of February 2002, occupation by the armed forces of private lands and public places like schools as well as maintenance of High Security Zones (HSZ) in residential areas, farmlands and fishing grounds continues, excluding people from their traditional sources of livelihood. These are most often cited by the people of Jaffna as causes of tension and violence. This situation has led to displacement by civilians from their lands, leading to further cycles of displacement.

10. Clashes between civilians and the Sri Lanka Armed Forces (SLA) occur on a regular basis in the Jaffna Peninsula. These often follow traffic accidents involving military vehicles, accusations of sexual harassment by military personnel, intimidation and stringent security checks on people and vehicles. Under the CFA of February 2002, LTTE are permitted to carry out political activities in Government controlled areas of the District, but there have been conflicts between the LTTE and the Security Forces, for example, the hoisting of the Tamil Eelam flag in public buildings in Government controlled territories. These and other violations of CFA have so far been resolved with the mediation of the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM).

11. Even though the economic situation and employment opportunities have improved after the CFA, this has largely been led by international agencies and southern trading enterprises. The opening of the A9 road has been a boon to redevelopment, but there remains the issue of checkpoints between Government and LTTE territories, leading to spoilage, lost time and financial costs. A further issue is LTTE taxation of goods and vehicles. New investments on industries have been negligible and youth are faced with a lack of employment opportunities. Traditional social structures and normative practices have inevitably been affected by twenty years of war. There are reported to be over 20,000 households headed by widows or women whose husbands have disappeared.

12. Relief efforts addressing immediate needs are slowly giving way to longer-term recovery, but this cannot take place in a vacuum, ignoring inter-ethnic justice, economic disparity and the disempowerment of women. Maintaining a strategic balance between

meeting state security needs and human security needs will be one of the biggest challenges in the recovery of Jaffna District.

13. The current situation provides an opportunity for the establishment of structures and mechanisms through which the people may be empowered to fully participate in planning and implementing the rehabilitation. Sri Lanka's efforts need to be driven by local community and environmental priorities rather than by national or LTTE economic and political priorities. The government and political leaders need to give up their traditional patron-client and gifting attitudes towards their citizens.

Human Rights

14. The war in Sri Lanka has had an adverse effect on not only civil and political rights but also on the social and economic rights of the people. Co-operation on human rights issues is central to the quest for peace, development, and social justice. Respect for human rights can prevent conflicts, advance development and help promote poverty-reduction strategies that focus on the most needy. The post-tsunami recovery phase provides an opportunity to advance human rights norms in the District that saw some of the most serious violations. One starting point could be to provide maximum access to civilians to their properties in the HSZ and restricted areas adjoining them. The Human Rights Commission Jaffna Office is promoting adherence to the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as the basis for recovery initiatives for both tsunami-affected and conflict-affected IDPs.

15. The right to know about entitlements and how to gain access to these is a fundamental human right that is often unobserved in the eyes of the affected people, especially for those who are habitually marginalized, such as the disabled. The communication channels between the lowest level of governance (GS), the government and NGOs are haphazard in many parts of the district. Information and official circulars pertaining to benefits, entitlements and access mechanisms are slow in reaching the beneficiaries or in some cases are not provided at all. For instance, the affected people were not made directly aware that there were special payments available to those who had land and property even partially destroyed. Where the entitlements and rations were provided, people complained that the quality of the items was very poor.

"We have received only one 5000 rupee payment since the tsunami happened. That and the rations have been the extent of Government assistance to us."

"According to these ration cards 175 Rupees worth of produce such as lentils and sugar etc are given. However the real market value is only around 75 to 100 rupees, but what is worse is that the quality is so poor sometimes it's unpalatable! Look at these lentils - they are old and not the type we are used to eating!"

"According to the coupons we are also entitled to some cash payment, we have not received this for the last 3 weeks..."

Conflict and Military issues

"The GOSL security forces are inhibiting the tsunami recovery activities by various measures:

***Firstly**, they are now asking for MOD's authorization for essential supplies and reconstruction materials such as cement, timber, steel and generators over 2.5 Kw. All agencies are affected. We know about a UN agency who was stopped from bringing a large power generator to Jaffna. Please grant to us what is granted and claimed in the*

South...that's all we want. People there have no restrictions in bringing timber and cement - why are we subjected to these?"

"Secondly, the forces have prevented the rebuilding of the damaged coral reef in the affected sea bed, under the guise of security. The coral reef acts as a natural barrier for tsunamis and this has now left the coastal area vulnerable".

"Thirdly, the fisherman are prevented from deep sea fishing, multi-day fishing vessels are not permitted and tight regulations on the times and entry points of the harbor are enforced by the military offices at posts every 200m on the coastal belt...our rights as fisherman and people have been abused...."

"Fourthly, their (military) occupation means that civilians cannot have the freedom of movement. Not a single Tamil person agrees with the occupation and the military zone. The 'occupation' has doubly displaced many people and stunted our progress...the fertile lands in Valligamam for example lie in utter waste, underutilized. The vast majority of injuries after the wave struck were due to lacerations and cuts as a result of people washing up against the barbed wire placed at the coastal military posts. There are two things here: human security vs. land security. Both have been violated for us."

16. On the other hand, a UN agency reported that the armed forces have cooperated well in some parts of the HSZ, noting that they were supportive in the peaceful co-existence project near Chavakacheri and that more such models are needed.

Gender Issues

17. More than 20 years of conflict in both the north and the south of the country have created new forms of the family. In addition to the traditional extended family, other patterns of the family have emerged, such as female-headed families. Women have had to take on the role of primary income earners in addition to being the care-giver, both within female-headed households and within households where the male head of household is disabled. The post-tsunami situation will see numerous male heads of households having to take on the role of care-giver to their children and elderly relatives who have survived. However, there are greater possibilities and a greater likelihood for widowers to re-marry, as they do not face the social stigma that widows face in a patriarchal and conservative society. There are a large number of single women, as a result of over two decades of conflict. They face discrimination in terms of their civil status, family and community support, title to property, access to resources and will require state support for some time. The post-tsunami context of the destruction of family and community life may leave them with even less support and more vulnerable to social discrimination and poverty. Women and young girls face problems related to the lack of security and privacy in the confined spaces of welfare centres.

18. In addition to coping with conflict-related trauma, the tsunami-affected people now face another trauma. The psychological/mental health needs of individuals and communities must be addressed in terms of befriending, trauma counselling, bereavement counselling, play therapy for children, assisting women, disabled people and children who have been subjected to sexual harassment and assault, helping women and men to find ways to cope with issues of relocation and new social roles and responsibilities. There is a special need for more women counsellors.

19. Many of the tsunami affected have been relocated to land some distance away from the coastal area where they once lived. The women in fishing communities that were involved in cottage industries such as dried fish production, mending nets and scaling etc, had their 'workspaces' in their "front yards".

Voice Box: *“These temporary houses where we are living in now are far away from the coast. We will need to now travel many km’s from home to do our work activities, such as scaling fish. This means our houses are open, our children and elderly are alone, and we will not feel secure.*

“Please think of the kind of community life and social system that the people here lived in. The psychological needs of the community were looked after by the people themselves, mainly through extended family units...please take into account these local sensitivities when planning the ‘Psychosocial’ or ‘counseling’ programs...”

Governance

20. Most of those affected by the tsunami in the Jaffna District were previously marginalized communities that were fundamentally disenfranchised from decision-making. In the past their vulnerability has been exacerbated because civil society was excluded from democratic participation in planning processes; instead, planning has been captive to the territorial ambitions of those holding political office and military command. There is a need to recognize that the principal stakeholders in the recovery process in Jaffna District are the tsunami victims. Team members saw no dearth of locally inspired initiatives, nor of physical or human resources in the District since only the coastal areas were affected.

21. The Government Agent (GA) is officially in charge of tsunami recovery in Jaffna District. Unofficially the LTTE also has its own response mechanisms. It was observed that there is a time lag between central policy generation, district level activity and delivery on the ground. There are parallel LTTE and GOSL structures, which at worst create unhealthy competition but also afford an opportunity for co-operation and building trust. The GA and military commanders in Jaffna play a delicate balancing act between policy dictated by the centre, the pressures of the LTTE, local political actors and needs articulated by the affected communities.

22. Recommendations:

- The recovery effort must be decentralized; this requires supportive attitudinal, behavioural and cultural conditions that include the willingness of local officials to perform decentralized management functions;
- Enhance the capacity of key persons in government and local civil society organisations to efficiently take on decentralized planning, management and monitoring of the tsunami recovery;
- The primary focus of accountability of local government institutions should be their immediate communities, including vulnerable groups within those communities;
- There should be communications channels to facilitate citizens providing feedback on the success or failure of governance structures dealing with tsunami recovery;
- Women and disabled people should be included in the sectoral committees formed by the GA;
- The co-operative sector needs to be included in recovery plans so that its role in supporting local communities can be maximized.

Conflict Sensitivity

23. Tsunami Task Force offices have been established in Point Pedro and Maruthankerny to provide services for the affected communities. In both government and LTTE controlled areas, consultations also take place through NGOs and fisherman’s co-

operatives/unions who link with relevant line ministries. In Jaffna, there are major inequities between the entitlements of people displaced as a result of conflict vs. those displaced by the tsunami. A family of four displaced as a result of conflict, receives Rs. 1,260 per month; by comparison, a family of four displaced by the tsunami receives Rs. 6,000 per month + Rs. 5,000 monthly resettlement allowance for the next several months. In addition, there are problems of disparity regarding people affected by general poverty. In a meeting with the Jaffna Council of NGOs, participants noted that communities are facing delays in obtaining entitlements and other forms of support, engendering frustration, anger and grief, which make consultations very sensitive. The problem of High Security Zones (HSZ) continues to restrict people's access to housing and livelihoods.

"Both the Sri Lankan military and the LTTE are attempting, post- tsunami, to consolidate their hold on the coastal areas for their own security purposes".

24. Recommendations:

- A more participatory, "bottom-up" process needs to be instituted by Government and LTTE officials to prevent future conflicts in the District;
- New spaces for interaction that could lead to better understanding and building of mutual trust need to be explored by the government and the LTTE, who have both acknowledged that the crisis of coping with the process of reconstruction and resettlement must be confronted in a collaborative, flexible and creative manner;
- There needs to be a fair and equitable distribution of aid based on the real needs of affected communities and not on political considerations;
- Evidence of fragmentation and divisions within the NGO community is very visible and there is a need to establish sound mechanisms for co-ordination and monitoring to guarantee transparency and prevent misuse of funds;
- There should be a careful balance between the need for efficient co-ordination mechanisms and the need to empower local communities, local authorities and civil society organizations;
- Equal attention should be provided to victims of the tsunami, the civil war and those living below the poverty line in the affected communities;
- The recovery process should be implemented within a larger framework of sustainable development, inclusiveness and poverty reduction and should be independent of partisan politics.

D. IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

Housing needs

25. According to the GA's report of March 4, 2005, a total of 3,708 houses have been fully damaged and 1,700 partly damaged in Jaffna District. While the Government's allocation for a house measuring 500 Sq' is Rs. 250,000, civil society groups indicated that the amount is unrealistic, with the likely cost around Rs. 500,000 per unit. Other issues highlighted were:

- There is a lack of clarity regarding the extent of the setback, i.e. 100m, 200m, etc. People in some areas do not want to leave their property and homes and move beyond the set limit. In other areas, no state or private land is available, e.g. in Point Pedro. The availability of land as well as the communities' views should be taken into consideration;
- HSZ's and FDL's need to be taken into consideration when resettling people;

- It is important to ensure that there is equity between the housing costs available to conflict-affected people and those given to the tsunami-affected people;
- In the ADB-funded reconstruction projects in the north and east, people are expected to contribute to the rebuilding of their houses. However, there may be those who simply do not have the capacity to provide such required input. Therefore, the local NGO's should assess each individual family's capacity to make the required contribution;
- Women's privacy and security needs, as well as the special needs of disabled people, must be taken into consideration in the arrangements for temporary shelters/transit houses. Toilet facilities and water sources must be adequate, accessible and private for all, including women and disabled people;
- Some temporary shelters/transit houses do not have kitchens, using separate areas with sheds for cooking instead, while others have a very small kitchen, with very little space and ventilation. The kitchen designed by the TRO, which is to be part of the house, is better than the other type seen. However, women in the affected communities were not consulted with regard to the design, although the opinion of female members in the task force office was sought. It is the women and girl children who will be using these facilities, and they should be consulted;
- It is important that people are consulted with regard to temporary shelters and the permanent houses that are to be built later, in terms of the design, accessibility and water and sanitation facilities, to allow them to take into consideration cultural practices and preferences.

Education Needs

26. The education of youth in Jaffna, disrupted already by the conflict, has been affected, once again, by the tsunami. Although most schools, after being used as centres for tsunami-displaced persons, have begun to function again, many children and youth remain in camps and do not attend school, due to the trauma they have suffered and the loss of necessary school items and clothes. Steps should be taken by the local authorities and school officials to ensure that the students are able to re-start their education. The objective of the educational rehabilitation effort must be to provide every child with quality education in an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning.

"A legacy of the conflict in Point Pedro is the location of security forces camps close to two of the prestigious schools in the area. The presence of armed security guards and surrounding barbed wire fences are not conducive for the peace of mind of children. Their parents are not permitted entry to the school premises. A significant drop in educational achievements has been recorded in these schools. UNICEF needs to engage with government and security forces personnel to deal with this situation."

27. The Valvettithurai Division (VVT) at Point Pedro, and the Maruthankerny Division in the LTTE controlled area of Jaffna district, suffered the greatest damage in terms of schools destroyed and lives lost. There are a total of 6 fully damaged and 10 partly damaged schools in the Jaffna district. Eight of these will need to be relocated due to the 200m buffer zone regulation. The continuity of education for the students in these schools has been ensured however, through space-sharing arrangements, re-enrolment of students in nearby schools and construction of temporary classrooms. UNICEF has distributed 122 "school-in-a-box" kits. Each kit provides materials for 80 students plus two teachers. School uniforms (2 sets), bags, books materials were also provided to the children in the affected schools.

28. The single biggest issue facing the education sector in Jaffna is the need to find suitable land that is available for the re-construction of schools. The central Ministry of

Education has signed memorandums of understanding with INGO's, UN agencies and private donor groups for the rebuilding and reconstruction of tsunami-affected schools. The zonal education officers at the district level have not yet been consulted by these donor groups. The mechanism of how this is to be co-ordinated with the donor agencies seems unclear at both district and zonal levels.

29. The team also found only very limited and incomplete educational data pertaining to numbers of students, class sizes, teaching cadre, etc. at the district level, and poor information sharing and data collection mechanisms between the zonal and regional offices.

30. The 11 temporary schools being built by UNICEF in the Jaffna district are temporary sheds likely to function for at least a year. There seemed to be a lack of clarity among local educational authorities as to the agencies responsible for the water and sanitation issues pertaining to these temporary schools. Many schools used as temporary welfare centres in the immediate aftermath of the tsunami had temporary latrines dug on school grounds. The water-sanitation and hygiene conditions, as well as their accessibility for disabled children, need to be considered in these schools as well.

31. The teaching cadre has suffered as a result of the conflict, exacerbating existing systemic problems of teacher availability. A significant number of teachers and other school personnel were either displaced as a result of the damage to their schools, or were previously transferred to other parts of the country due to conflict. In the tsunami-affected divisions of Point Pedro, Karaveddy and Maruthankerny, there are 264 teaching vacancies out of 1376 agreed positions.

32. Extra classes are being provided by teachers and volunteers after school hours. Efforts should be made to ensure that school administrators and teachers are supported in such initiatives, in terms of material resources and incentives. For instance, teachers have been permitted to photocopy study notes from other non-tsunami affected schools due to loss of notes and textbooks. However, access to photocopying facilities is limited. As there has been no change to the timetable for national student examinations, students of tsunami-affected communities need to be provided with such resources/initiatives to assist their educational attainment.

33. WFP is providing a nutritionally rich breakfast and meals after school hours (during the extra classes) for students in the affected areas. School feeding programmes have the potential to increase enrolments, increase retention, improve the nutritional status of children, and alleviate the financial burdens of parents. There is an acute need for such programmes in the schools housed in temporary shelters.

34. **Recommendations:**

- A streamlined mechanism to strengthen the lines of communication and flow of information between national, provincial and zonal levels of the education bureaucracy is needed;
- Minimum standards in school reconstruction and design, including accessibility, will need to be provided by the Ministry of Education to the donor agencies responsible for reconstruction, to district education authorities and planning engineers. Parents, civil society committees and student body representatives should also be consulted;
- The GA's planning office, zonal educational officers and relevant NGO's need to look into the provision of safe and adequate water supply, as well as the construction of accessible toilet and latrine facilities in the temporary schools;
- A strategy to address the teacher supply issues should include clarification on the absorption of 'volunteer' teachers or teaching aid's after a training period of 9 months.

Health Needs

35. There are no reports of new health problems in the tsunami aftermath. However Jaffna district has reported the emergence of typhoid in epidemic proportions over the past year and a half, while the number of tuberculosis cases trebled in 2004. There is a potential for a major TB outbreak if the environmental and sanitary conditions (and behaviours) are not well maintained, or if there is overcrowding in dense housing areas.

36. There has been only minimal post-tsunami disruption in immunization or in maternal and childcare services. Although no hospitals suffered significant infrastructure damage in the tsunami, there were two Gramodaya health centres (where immunization and antenatal/prenatal clinics are conducted) that were severely damaged. As there are delays in the construction of temporary accommodation shelters, many people are living in small tents in areas with no latrines or regular water sources - conditions that are far worse than when they were housed in schools and temple buildings immediately after the tsunami and that are often enormously problematic for disabled people. In a health survey conducted by the DPDHS of the Tsunami affected population, it was found that 15 – 20% resort to open field defecation even when latrines are provided.

37. A multi-disciplinary health taskforce made up of representatives of the Jaffna DPDHS, University of Jaffna, Tamil Eelam health service, NGO's and foreign medical relief teams, undertook emergency health related activities for the affected population in the first two months. For the second phase of recovery, the health sector now has both a curative services committee and a health promotion committee under the auspices of the Jaffna DPDHS office. Regular planning and co-ordination meetings are also held.

38. The DPDHS office has prepared a short-term (6 to 12 months) plan to improve services in the district for primary, secondary and tertiary health care. In primary health care, each division will have a temporary unit, expected to be housed within a shelter or near the transit camp site, and will have the space to conduct health promotion, a mobile health clinic, psychosocial activities, disease surveillance and reporting, early childhood development activities, antenatal clinics, supply of nutritional supplements for specific groups, first aid service provision, vector control activities, and monitoring of rubbish collection and drainage clearing.

39. With regards to secondary and tertiary care, there are severe shortages of medical and paramedical personnel in the hospitals. For instance, the Valvettiturai district hospital is functioning with only one medical officer, and Point Pedro Base hospital with only 3, even though the existing total cadre allocation for medical officers is 75.

40. The health sector issues in Jaffna, like much of the North East are systemic rather than symptomatic of the tsunami. The effects of the 25-year civil war have severely inhibited health care service delivery. In Jaffna, 41% of health care posts and 90% of medical posts are vacant. A number of factors may contribute to the unwillingness of medical officers who qualify from Jaffna University to practice in Jaffna. The lack of local facilities for higher training and upgrading skills, social infrastructure, and a focus on enhancing their earning capacity are among the factors that contribute to the exodus of qualified medical staff.

41. **Recommendations:**

- Emerging communicable diseases such as typhoid and TB need to be dealt with in a multi-faceted manner, encompassing health education, public awareness campaigns, management and treatment;
- Community-driven preventative health services, particularly health promotion

- activities are essential in the IDP settlements;
- Measures should be taken to ensure that primary health activities in the non-tsunami zones are not adversely affected by tsunami needs;
 - Appoint at least 10 medical officers for Point Pedro, 5 each for VVT and Marathankuney;
 - Construction of appropriate doctors and nurses quarters;
 - Develop laboratory services to diagnose diseases with epidemic potential. This involves providing basic equipment, initial stocks of reagents and consumables, and support training by medical laboratory technicians or paramedics;
 - Workshop training of medical officers and field staff in outbreak management, operational emergency planning and monitoring;
 - Reconstruction of the psychiatric ward and construction of a blood bank at PP Base hospital;
 - Appoint an X-Ray technician in PP hospital to utilize the already existing X-ray unit;
 - Provide medical officers, basic specialists and some paramedical workers, including rehabilitation staff, to conduct basic health services; develop human resource development plans, including staffing strategies for a transitional period; enhance and regularise the role of auxiliary (volunteer) health workers in the formal health sector;
 - Establish an accident and emergency unit at the Jaffna Teaching Hospital with adequate equipment and supplies.

Needs of Fisher folk

42. The fisheries sector is the economic sector most affected as a result of the tsunami. According to available information, between 80-85 percent of the tsunami-affected population in Jaffna are dependent directly or indirectly on fishing while, out of the overall population of Jaffna, 40 percent are dependent on fishing. According to the North East Provincial Council, there are 109 Fishermen's Co-operative Societies with a membership of 15,294 persons in Jaffna District. Because of the conflict, civilians do not have access to the harbour or 80 percent of the coastal fishing areas. Tragically, post-tsunami reconstruction plans may deepen the social, political and economic deprivation of these communities. Fears have been raised about the possibility of the displaced being dispossessed of their land along the coast.

43. As a result of the tsunami, 1800 acres of agricultural land was contaminated by seawater. Hence, both men and women engaged in agricultural activities are affected. On the islands, while there was no loss of life, the rapid rise in water levels affected houses and damaged boats. These people have not received any support. Although there is a coral reef/bund parallel to the north coast, this was not repaired and maintained during the war years, as the fisher folk were not allowed by the security forces to do this.

44. Men and women in the fisheries and agriculture sectors are members of related sectoral organizations. In Jaffna, there are 109 Fisheries Co-operatives, which have formed 10 Unions, which form a Federation. Owing to the tsunami, a number of Fisheries Co-operatives were displaced. There is 30%-40% female membership in the federation. Women also have access to ownership of boats and can obtain financial assistance from the revolving fund operated by the Fisheries Co-operatives, UNDP and international NGOs. Women without male family members to go fishing continue to participate in the industry by helping to sort fish and repair nets. They are then entitled to a share of the catch, which they sell directly or in dried form.

45. While much attention is paid to fishermen and the restoration of their livelihood by providing boats, nets, other equipment, anchorages and rest areas, those in supporting occupations, who are an integral part of this sector, are receiving very little attention in post-tsunami assessments and recovery plans. These include women who help with sorting and cleaning the fish, selling fish in the market, making and selling dried fish and mending nets, the lorry and 3-wheeler drivers involved in transporting fish, vendors with stalls, etc. In Jaffna district, women are also members of the Fisheries Co-operatives and have access to ownership of boats. They can also obtain financial assistance from the Revolving Fund operated by the Fisheries Co-operatives. There are also fishermen who worked with owners of boats, who have been neglected to date in assistance programmes.

46. Recovery initiatives need to take the above factors into account and be made transparent and accountable to the coastal poor so that there can be ongoing monitoring and assessment of the distributive impact of reconstruction programmes. At its best, post-tsunami reconstruction could provide an opportunity to begin engaging with the structural causes of poverty. Economic planning should at least aim at enabling dignified sustainable livelihoods for the working poor with a secure safety net that can mitigate the impact of events such as the tsunami.

47. In some instances, individuals who did not own boats but were employed as fishery labourers have come forward with requests for boats, while others have claimed total loss of fishing boats, outboard motors and nets. There is thus significant potential for reconstruction efforts in this sector to contribute to resource depletion if not properly co-ordinated. Parallel attention needs to be paid to reinstate ancillary services and the processing of fish products, some of which can be done by women. The repair and maintenance of the coral bund is essential in long-term coastal resource and natural disaster management. International and local NGOs are already on the ground supporting the recovery of the fisheries sector in ways that include provision of fishing boats, motors, nets and other ancillary equipment, clearing of debris, construction of channels and deepening of anchorage points.

48. **Recommendations:**

- Ensure that local authorities and citizens groups are consulted about the task of rebuilding coastal infrastructure, such as fisheries harbours, ice plants, cold storage and water supply systems;
- Provide support via professionals, UN agencies and NGOs for social development of fisher folk organizations, to help victims re-establish their habitats and livelihoods;
- Establish a fisheries education and training centre, introduce fisheries education into the school curriculum and introduce a social change orientation to academic fisheries training;
- Women are an integral part of the fisheries industry and should thus be consistently considered when designing and implementing all fisheries assistance programmes, including livelihoods indirectly related to fishing.

Livelihood needs

49. According to the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies – Jaffna District, there are presently 80,000 unemployed persons in the District. Nearly 60% of the adult population of Jaffna are farmers while 35% are fishermen. As a result of the conflict, both categories were unable to sufficiently fulfil their livelihood needs. The tsunami has further exacerbated the situation of fishermen who are unable to resume their activities due to their inability to obtain fishing boats, engines, nets and other equipment and because of security restrictions placed on fishing activities. Owing to the salination of agricultural land because of the tsunami, the livelihoods of women and men in this sector have also been affected.

50. Industries affected by the tsunami are being provided with bank loans at 6% interest per annum with repayment over a ten-year period with a grace period of one year. Conflict-affected enterprises are currently provided loans at 13% per annum. Representatives of the Jaffna Chamber of Commerce are of opinion that provision of loans for both categories of affected industrialists at the rates proposed for tsunami-affected industries would be an incentive to start new industrial enterprises.

51. Women's Rural Development Societies (WRDSs), which are under the Divisional Secretariat, are functioning well in the Jaffna District and have the potential to turn into small bank societies, which can assist women in livelihood activities. However, they need continued support and strengthening. It is also important that livelihood support schemes be accessible to other marginal groups, such as the disabled.

"Why is it that all planning and consultative activities, from the peace process to the post-tsunami relief work only involve the GOSL and LTTE? What about the civil society representation?"

"The quantum of money that has come into the country, has it really trickled down to the grass roots?"

Water and sanitation needs

52. There is reported to be a looming freshwater crisis in the Jaffna peninsula, Jaffna District depends to a great extent on its underground water resources for household use and agriculture and reports indicate that this source of water has been consistently polluted due to a variety of reasons. Water is reported to have high nitrogen levels and the use of tube wells had contributed to the decline in ground water. Ground water contamination is also a major concern in densely populated coastal regions. The people have small wells, but because of the close proximity of the wells to the latrines, the water can easily become polluted. Valvettithurai and Point Pedro are coastal towns affected by the tsunami where the existing water supply system is both badly damaged and in need of expansion to adjacent areas. Following the tsunami, wells have been salinated and need to be cleaned. The burden is usually on women to provide water for household/domestic purposes.

53. **Recommendations:**

- Water and sanitation projects are needed to ensure access to adequate sanitary facilities as well as clean water for drinking and domestic use;
- Improved septic tank design and construction are needed;
- Community participation should be promoted to monitor the quality of water;
- Create public awareness about the conservation and sustainable use of water resources in the agriculture and domestic sectors;
- Construct a sewage scheme to protect existing water sources in the affected areas;
- Due to limited underground water resources, look for alternative sources such as rain water harvesting.

Coastal protection needs

54. The science of wave dynamics has not been given due consideration when rezoning, planning and in reconstruction activities in the tsunami-affected coastal belt. Monetary and social costs can be reduced if a scientific approach is applied. The government has demarcated the buffer zone with little thought to the actual wave anatomy and other key factors that determine susceptible areas. It was notable that some parts of the coastal belt were devastated and not others. Significant costs associated with elaborate building designs, high-grade materials and rezoning entire areas can be averted by

examining the scientific aspects that govern wave and shore interactions. The coral reefs and mangroves form a natural “defence” against strong waves, as they negate the velocity of the wave as it encroaches on the shore. Lying on a flatter and lower basin than that of Jaffna district, the nearby islands nevertheless sustained only minimal damage due to their extensive network of coral reefs. Coral reefs and mangroves are also ideal habitats for fish and marine life. Extensive coral mining in areas such as Hikkaduwa and Seenigama also resulted in the waves having a more direct passage to the shore. The palmyra tree is the most prominent flora in the Jaffna landscape and is considered highly sacred due to its many uses from inhibiting sand dune movement, housing reconstruction to making natural treacle. Many trees were devastated in the Tsunami and many were also used for the (temporary) reconstruction shelters. The Palmyra Board has initiated a palmyra planting campaign for Jaffna and the Wannu.

“We need to replace the devastated palmyra trees; its important for the identity of this place”

“We need community forestry type projects on the coast, such as Casuarinas and Thespians Indicas. These will ensure the sand banks are held firm.”

“We need tight monitoring of the sand mining at places like Manalkadu to ensure Jaffna’s natural resources are not exploited. The DS must act quickly to ensure this happens...already there is exploitation.”

55. **Recommendations:**

- Strengthen capacity of existing institutions dealing with environmental issues to address coastal protection tasks following the tsunami;
- Establish a sewage disposal scheme for Jaffna Municipality and in all hospitals in the district;
- Select sites for permanent housing which will not adversely affect the existing natural coastal resources of that area;
- When clearing land for relocation, conserve as much vegetation as possible;
- Introduce rainwater harvesting methods to conserve ground water resources;
- For resettlement schemes, provide water treatment plants;
- Establish coastal reforestation with community participation within the buffer zone;
- Design more resistant houses where only a 100m buffer zone is to be considered;
- Import building materials from outside of Jaffna peninsula;
- Construct/repair wave breakers and reefs;
- Encourage the contribution of local women and men in maintaining the coastal and marine resources.

E. OBSERVATIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

56. In order to respond to the new challenges and opportunities that have arisen from the tsunami, this report advances a vision for post-tsunami rebuilding and reconciliation. It is a vision founded on democratic participation, economic justice, subsidiarity, inclusion and peace- building. Accordingly, as a result of its consultations, the team recommends:

- While joint mechanisms between the Government and LTTE should spearhead rebuilding of hard infrastructure, local design solutions should be found to local problems, including that of providing safe shoreline setbacks and stronger structures

to accommodate the fishing communities, without arbitrarily severing them from their sea-based livelihood.

- The establishment of a District Planning Unit under the GA to focus on project planning and implementation, with representatives from existing sectoral committees and nominees from academic and professional organizations, NGO and CBO representatives from Jaffna District;
- Maintain a strategic balance between meeting state security needs and human security needs. Recovery initiatives to be designed in favour of both conflict-affected and tsunami-affected civilians;
- To provide training in conflict sensitive disaster management to government officials at all levels and civil society leaders, drawing on international best practices in disaster recovery and an agreed code of conduct;
- With regard to housing, there is a need for culturally appropriate, accessible designs; a house should not be considered as an engineering structure but become a home;
- A large number of children were affected by the tsunami. Issues of adoption, foster care, inheritance, access to property, education and health care, protection from abduction, child sexual exploitation and trafficking will need to be addressed in post-tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction plans;
- While rebuilding schools, there is a need to create child-friendly, physically accessible and participatory learning environments rather than continue with existing authoritarian teaching structures;
- Facilitate a co-ordinated response between the government, the financial sector and NGOs to accelerate recovery of the fisheries sector;
- Ensure adequate aquatic resource management by maintaining a balance between different types of fishing craft, namely, traditional craft (Kattumaran), FRP Boats, 3.5 ton boats and multi-day boats;
- Work towards lifting the ban on deep-sea fishing and consider providing funds in the form of soft loans to fisheries co-operative unions to purchase and operate multi-day boats. This will contribute to reducing over-fishing in the coastal waters and poaching in the north-eastern waters of Sri Lanka;
- Many representatives of the commercial sector expressed their frustration that investments of commercial banks in the district are not commensurate with funds collected by these institutions. There is a need for commercial banks in Jaffna to help local industries affected by the tsunami and the conflict, by providing loans at reduced rates of interest. This will in turn help employment generation and support livelihoods recovery;
- In the post-tsunami phase, it is important to introduce environmental governance (utilising natural resources and environment in a sustainable manner) that encourages participation, ownership, accountability, decision making at appropriate levels, access to information, empowerment, and integration of environmental concerns into all plans, decisions and actions;
- The National Human Rights Commission, its branch offices and human rights organizations should promote adherence to the UN Guiding Principles on Internally Displaced Persons as the basis for tsunami recovery initiatives, sensitising affected communities as well as service providers;
- Provide capacity building training for local governance structures to promote a bottom up, participatory approach to tsunami recovery;
- Prevent the use of asbestos in the construction industry and reduce the use of barbed wire for protective purposes.