

ASSESSMENT OF THE TSUNAMI RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION IN MATARA DISTRICT ¹

A. OVERVIEW OF DISTRICT

1. **Overall impact on social fabric, local economy.** Matara District in the Southern Province with a land area of 1,282.5 sq km and a coast line of 55km is one of the 12 coastal administrative districts severely affected by the Tsunami. Most of the physical damage was confined to 74 of the 263 Grama-Niladhari Divisions in Matara, Weligama, Devundara and Dikwella where the impact spread about 1km inland in some places.

2. The affected areas include the chain of urban and semi-urban nodes and clusters of human settlements along the Matara-Hambantota road. Matara, the main commercial and administrative center of the district had a pre-tsunami estimated population of 43,456 with a population density of approx. 600 persons per sq km.

3. **Main priorities for recovery.** The main priority is rebuilding housing together with basic amenities – water, sanitation and electricity. Simultaneous support needs to be given to restoring livelihoods, especially those associated with fishing and tourism. All four urban focal points in the four DS divisions within the tsunami zone are key fish landing centers. In this regard, the most important step would be to provide a wide range of financing schemes to support small, medium and large entrepreneurs. Recently introduced schemes such as the Susahanaya, should be accessible to a wide clientele, including men, women and disabled people who are currently outside the banking circles.

4. Recent socio-economic indicators reflect the strong presence of women in the family and the economy. Key areas where their contribution has been significant are the coir industry, food processing, lace, handloom, pottery and other handicraft industries, as well as retail trading in primary produce such as fish, agricultural products and consumer goods.

B. FINDINGS OF POST-TSUNAMI DAMAGE AND NEEDS ASSESSMENTS FOR MATARA

5. As of 10th March 2005, a total of 82,067 persons from 20,675 families are recorded as affected. The death toll for the district reported by the Government stands at 1,321. There were 6,652 injured and 601 persons reported missing. There were 9,491 displaced persons, with 3,086 in 22 camps, while 6,405 were with host families, mainly relatives and friends. Records show that a total of about 257 children have either lost one parent or both.

6. A total of 2,233 houses were completely destroyed and 6,075 partially damaged due to the tsunami. A further 366 other buildings were completely damaged whilst 1,022 were partially damaged². Several historic buildings including the old prison in the Dutch Fort are among the damaged structures in Matara.

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² The pre-tsunami and post tsunami census reports could be a useful and authentic source of information in future identification of damaged property and lost persons.

7. **Economy and Livelihoods.** The fisheries sector and its ancillary services suffered the most damage including severe damage to several fishing harbours, anchorages and landing places. It is estimated that 1,499 fishing vessels operated out of Matara of which 1,007 were registered. The value of the approximately 130 multi-day boats and 97 3 ½ ton vessels that were fully or partially destroyed is estimated at Rs. 469 Mn.

8. Tourist establishments, markets, banks and other enterprises, serving not only the populace in the four directly affected divisions but also in the hinterland, suffered extensive damage as well. However, an adequate assessment of the damage is still not available. The industrial sector of the economy, including the informal sector with a range of small household business units, was also severely affected. These include the coir industry, carpentry and other industrial workshops, handlooms, lace making and a range of food processing and catering enterprises. It is also significant that many of these enterprises were key to the livelihoods of women.

9. Tsunami-driven seawater considerably affected the soil and vegetation of the area. An assessment needs to be done on the nature and extent of the damage to soil, tree crops and other cultivations, as well as to livestock in the area, in order to identify the appropriate remedial action.

10. **Education.** Five schools in the district were totally damaged and 10 partially damaged directly by the tsunami, while 17 were heavily damaged when serving as shelter for the displaced. Three of these schools have a student population of over 2000 in each, and two of them are national schools. The estimated cost of repair to these buildings is around Rs.985Mn, with 8 needing to be relocated. Even though several donors have pledged support to rebuild these schools, many of the MOUs are not yet signed due mainly to delays in identifying appropriate land outside the 100 m buffer zone.

11. **Health.** Destroyed health facilities include the Regional Drug Store and the DPDHS office at Matara, which were fully damaged, plus three Gramodaya Health Clinics and the Matara General hospital which were partly damaged. The general health services in all affected areas functioned adequately, thus averting the spread of possible epidemics. The DPDHS reported that the speedy and extensive support of both local and foreign governments, NGOs and INGOs contributed to this. Weekly psychosocial clinics are being conducted in all four affected divisions under the supervision of the DPDHS. Given the importance of indigenous systems of medicine in the district, notably Ayurveda, it is important that this aspect also be taken account when restoring health services.

12. **Sectoral Financing Needs in Matara District (\$Million)³:**

Education	3.76
Health	3.24
Housing	36.44
Power	5.83
Water & Sanitation	8.66
Fisheries	15.92
Tourism	8.00
Roads	11.14
Railways	10.5
Total	103.49
% of Country total	7.8

³ ADB, JBIC and World Bank, Sri Lanka 2005 Preliminary Joint Tsunami Damage Assessment

C. KEY CONTEXTUAL ISSUES

13. **Socio-political tensions.** The lack of a clear understanding of government policies regarding compensation and housing programmes by the administrators and the affected communities is a root cause of socio-political tension. The prolonged stay of displaced persons in camps is also seen as a cause of tension/conflict between camp residents, camp managers, neighbourhood residents and local administrators. Class, caste, gender and stigma regarding disabled people too seem to play a subtle role in this context of dissent among traumatized tsunami survivors.

14. The absence of clear guidelines and procedures to identify affected persons as opposed to opportunists also causes tension and dissent within communities. In some instances this is also fuelled by political groups seeking opportunities to cause discord or gain popularity. Unequal and/or delayed distribution of resources, sometimes fuelled by corrupt practices or inefficient delivery systems, seem to be interpreted as expressions of favouritism or discrimination. In some instances, evangelism is also a cause of dissent.

15. **Local governance capacity.** District level officials need clear guidance from TAFREN on eligibility criteria to identify eligible affected people. The criteria should be transparent and beneficiary identification should be done through a participatory process of all parties concerned, including women. This issue has arisen as a result of international non governmental organizations (INGOs) and other donors requesting the District Secretary and Divisional Secretaries to identify suitable beneficiaries to receive houses. In order to prioritise, they request a list of the most deserving beneficiaries. At present, these officials are unable to provide such a list since they have no clear, transparent criteria.

16. Secondly, although the Government has accepted the principle of subsidiarity in implementing the reconstruction programme, it is clear that local authorities and Provincial Councils are not fully involved and often are not even been consulted by the Centre. The approach adopted by TAFREN is to work with the District Secretary, Divisional Secretary and the Grama Niladharis to reach the grass roots. This is a decentralized approach rather than a devolved, power sharing approach. As a result, the Provincial Councils and local authorities are largely un-represented in reconstruction decision-making and implementation. However, once the resettled villages are established, it will be the local authorities who will be responsible for their well-being.

17. **Gender.** Gender specific data on the impact of the tsunami is not available for Matara. The National Committee on Women advises that the Department of Census and Statistics is engaged in this exercise, but the progress is often hampered by other priorities. Gender disaggregated data is an essential requisite for gender responsive planning, especially in a post disaster reconstruction situation where gender concerns could easily be overlooked. This is particularly important where gender mainstreaming is often not a priority of government procedures or policy.

18. Gaps in relief measures available to women, lack of security and privacy for women and children, denial, in some cases, of access to compensation, especially financial, often due to reasons such as alcohol abuse by male family members and vulnerability to abuse and violence are all realities faced by women. The importance of community consultation, including women, in planning and implementing relief and reconstruction programs cannot be over emphasized, especially in situations involving housing components. Unlike in some other parts of the country, there is no organized coalition of women's organizations to assess and follow up women's concerns in Matara District.

19. **Environment.** The National Environmental Act (NEA) requires environmental impact assessments (EIAs) to be conducted for all resettlements of over 100 families. There appears no willingness to conform to these requirements under the NEA, thus no environmental assessments are being conducted. While it may be considered by the Government that EIAs are time consuming and that in an emergency situation expediency is paramount, EIAs require an assessment of natural resources to support the housing programme and mandates consultation with local communities that may be helpful in defusing socio-cultural tensions that may arise, thus ensuring the long-term sustainability of the resettlement villages. In addition, the reconstruction programme focuses very little on restoring coastal resources and building coastal resilience to future natural hazards. This is discussed further in the next section.

20. **Access to land.** Based on discussions with officials and on statements appearing in the press, land tenure is recognized as another potentially explosive issue in the district. Those directly affected include people with: (i) clear deeds of ownership; (ii) ancestral property with an original deed that has been transferred down through the generations, but without formal deed registration in the name of the current occupant; and (iii) people illegally settled on state land. According to current GOSL guidelines, it appears that all residents within the proposed buffer zone will receive a house in a resettlement village, regardless of their previous land ownership or lack thereof. But it appears that outside the 100 m buffer zone, ownership has to be proven to access the housing grants. This seriously affects people in categories (ii) and (iii) above. This is an issue that needs immediate attention. These people are presently unable to access either GOSL housing grants or any commercial loans. Given that they were not removed from their land for “illegal” occupation but because they were affected by a natural disaster, they should not, under the circumstances, be subject to discrimination.

21. **Natural Disaster Preparedness.** Approximately 28% of Sri Lanka’s population live within one kilometre of the sea, making the coastal population chronically vulnerable to tidal and tropical storm activity. Yet, the most contentious issue plaguing the reconstruction effort is the “no development” buffer zone proposed by the Government. While it is recognized that measures need to be taken to reduce risks associated with future natural disasters, a rational and pragmatic approach is needed. No scientific basis can be found for the standard 100 m setback proposed for Matara District. However, the Coastal Zone Management Plan ⁴ has recommended coastal setbacks throughout the country based on a multiple coastal risk analysis. This analysis has not been considered in formulating the new policy. Furthermore, by building local capacity through a decentralized implementation strategy and by improving technical standards for social and economic infrastructure, it will improve preparedness and reduce the vulnerability of coastal communities to future disasters, such as cyclones and tsunamis.

⁴ In 1997, the Coast Conservation Department (CCD) developed a Coastal Zone Management Plan for Sri Lanka. During the preparation of this plan, which was undertaken by a team of national and international experts with extensive consultation of stakeholders, based on a multiple coastal risk assessment, setbacks were recommended for the entire coast line of Sri Lanka. These setbacks, which are “no development” zones, took topography and local conditions into account. Setbacks ranging from 35 m to 125 m have been prescribed for the coastal zone of the country with the exception of the coastal areas bordering protected areas where the setback is 300 meters. The multiple risk analysis did not consider a tsunami, but cyclones and storm surges resulting in high waves were considered. Based on the available literature on the Asian tsunami, it appears that the probability of a tsunami of the same or similar magnitude is about a 1000-year occurrence. Furthermore, it was observed that certain areas on beach level in the Matara District and elsewhere have been largely unaffected with little or no impact from the tsunami due to it being protected by mangroves, sand dunes and reefs. Early information from a rapid environmental impact assessment carried out by specialists recruited by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MENR) and sponsored by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), shows that areas that were devastated, particularly in the south, were areas where mangroves, sand dunes and reefs had been willfully damaged over the years.

22. **Human rights.** Since the tsunami, efforts have been made by aid actors to provide for basic human needs on the basis of fundamental rights. Nevertheless there are some instances where basic human rights, including the right to security and disabled persons' right to physically accessible shelter, have been violated. Women have been especially subject to such violations. These can be attributed to corruption, irregularities in the interpretation of regulations, incompetence and/or discriminatory attitudes. A rights-based approach to equity in reconstruction and rehabilitation is advocated.

23. **HIV/AIDS.** There has been no change in the pattern of HIV/AIDS manifestations reported in the clinics in Matara. The promotion of safe sexual behaviour and reproductive health does not seem to have been a priority in the provision of relief services, at least at the height of the emergency relief situation. Besides HIV/AIDS risks, women in particular were concerned about unplanned pregnancies. A women's organization providing counselling services reported instances of risk behaviour and prostitution reported by women seeking their advice. Gender-based violence is not always reported, and therefore additional health risks cannot be ruled out.

D. IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

24. As stated earlier, the critical implementation issue in the Matara District is related to housing. It is unclear at this stage whether the Urban Development Authority (UDA) or the National Housing Development Authority (NHDA) or TAFREN will be responsible for implementing the programme. The team noted that a Housing Resettlement and Reconstruction Unit have been established in TAFREN, and that the UDA is planning resettlement villages. It is nevertheless clear that the entire housing programme is being managed by institutions directly responsible to the centre. However, according to the 13th Amendment to the Constitution of Sri Lanka, housing is listed as a Provincial responsibility and is an activity on the Provincial List, which means that housing resettlement and reconstruction should be implemented by provincial authorities.

25. Nevertheless, the Southern Provincial Council is not playing a role in the post-tsunami housing program, unlike their lead role during and after the 2003 floods. However, the Team noted that if the guiding principles adopted by the Government are adhered to, particularly the principle of subsidiarity, it is absolutely necessary for the Southern Provincial Council (SPC) to be responsible for this programme.

26. On the other hand, the implementation mechanisms for sectors such as education, health, transport, power, water/sanitation and coastal protection are clear and the existing mechanisms within the Government can be followed. For example, reconstruction of hospitals under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health will be implemented through that Ministry. In case of other hospitals, medical centres and health care facilities, the Provincial Ministry of Health will be responsible for implementation.

27. **Housing needs.** The most difficult issue at this stage is locating suitable land for resettlement villages. Even though 80 percent of the land requirements in the Matara District are said to be identified, the suitability needs to be re-evaluated. Site identification should be combined with consultations with affected communities as well as a cost benefit analysis carried out to ensure the long-term sustainability of the relocation sites.

28. The housing resettlement program is structured so that new houses will be constructed by the donors under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed with TAFREN. It appears that the donors will not know who the beneficiaries will be at the time of

construction. Therefore the construction will be undertaken by contractors and the beneficiaries will be assigned houses, once completed. Global experience, including in Sri Lanka, with housing construction programs in such resettlement schemes have shown that homeowner participation is essential for beneficiary satisfaction with the final product, even with mass scale construction. Local NGO representatives as well as a majority of the affected families that were consulted wanted to play a role in the construction of their houses. Moreover, there are cultural aspects such as traditional design features and auspicious times for construction of houses (auspicious for the home owner and not for the donor or politician laying the foundation stones!) that should be taken into consideration.

29. Environment and natural resource issues are an integral part of site identification for sustainable housing programs. It was noted that little attention is being paid to natural resource issues such as the availability of water, topography and terrain in selecting potential sites. In addition, it was noted that virtually no attention was paid to the need for consultations, not only with the families to be relocated, but also with the neighbouring communities where the families are to be relocated. There is thus significant potential for socio-cultural tensions arising between those to be relocated and the neighbouring communities.

30. **Education needs.** Education being a devolved subject except in the case of national schools, it is the responsibility of the provincial authorities to rebuild about 17 schools. Care needs to be taken to ensure that the educational facilities are accessible to disabled children. A list of proposed donors to support this reconstruction is available at the GA's office but MOUs need yet to be signed to carry these out. At least eight schools need to be relocated. At present there is a team of six national level counsellors who conduct a mobile counselling service within the Matara Education Zone, but this facility needs to be strengthened. The Education Zone has identified the need to train about 125 counsellors to meet the current needs in the tsunami-affected schools for both students and teachers. The adult education programme needs to expand its support for evening vocational training for both male and female school leavers, where skills training in carpentry, masonry, electrical and electronic work etc are already being provided. The Education Zone has launched a Community Support Program to assist parents with livelihoods, which in turn would help them to provide their children with the basic needs and, where possible, with educational supplies. The Community Tailoring Centre at the Tudawe School is an example where six tsunami-affected mothers have been provided resources to sew school uniforms. Introducing Disaster Management Awareness to the school curriculum has been discussed. There is also a need to incorporate gender sensitivity education.

31. **Health Needs.** Immediate needs in Matara District are related to the disposal of sewage from existing camps, ensuring sanitation facilities for temporary shelters constructed on beach areas (often without approval from government authorities) and the reconstruction of appropriate buildings for the Regional Drug Store and DPDHS office.

32. **Livelihood needs.** The fishing sector, as the most affected livelihood, is treated separately. The tourism and hospitality sector operated at different scales, with large hotels at the upper end and the smaller hoteliers at the other. The tourism and hospitality trade was supported by a host of entrepreneurs. Owners with adequate insurance cover will be able to recover faster than others. Financing and support systems to these investors needs to be decided as part of a wider business restoration programme. As most sectors of the local economy are inter-connected, the recuperation of the total local economy must take into account the recovery of supporting sectors as well as primary ones.

33. Agriculture should not be a forgotten sector in the post-tsunami reconstruction effort. Adequate attention must be paid to soil testing and reclaiming salt-affected agricultural land,

including providing appropriate guidance to farmers on reclaiming tree crops such as coconut and cinnamon. The coir industry, which operates both as a cottage industry and as a medium scale organized industry, has the potential to recuperate, provided entrepreneurs have the necessary access to tools and raw materials. Already some INGOs and donors have provided this support, encouraging even some workers living in camps and temporary shelters to start earning an income. Similar support is also being given to previous home-based workers engaged in leather crafts, sewing and lace making. The construction industry represents further opportunities for employment as well as for the production of construction materials such as cement blocks. Recognizing that women represent significant numbers in the informal labour force, their contribution must also be recognized, especially given the incidence of poverty among female-headed households.

34. **Needs of fisher folk.** About 8,500 fisher folk are estimated to be operating from 2 fisheries harbours, 2 anchorages and 28 fish landing sites in Matara District. About one third of the affected industries in the district are related to fishing. Livelihood support must thus include assistance for the re-establishment of all aspects of the fisheries sector. The immediate rehabilitation needs include psychological rehabilitation for traumatized fishing families, provision of fishing craft and equipment, plus the reconstruction of related physical infrastructure such as harbours, anchorages, ice plants and other public utilities. Grant and loan programmes could be administered through the fisheries organisations.

35. **Social protection needs.** A full picture of the social protection needs of the district cannot be captured without gender and disability disaggregated data. At the time of this visit there were discrepancies in the figures collected by different agencies (both government and non-governmental) on children who had lost one or both parents. In the case of children and youth, the activities of the Child Protection Committee comprising several International and local NGOs is coordinated through the Government Agent and Matara Divisional Secretariat. Even though the modalities to follow up on protection needs seemed satisfactory, there are several unresolved challenges and constraints. These include clarification of the conditions and modalities for signing MOUs in this sector with the government. The District Psychosocial Committee under the Health Ministry monitors all such programmes supported by both government and NGOs. This therefore provides an effective channel to identify and address the needs in this sector. Further, social protection needs should necessarily also cover the personal security and privacy needs of women, children and disabled people, including trafficking and other forms of commercial exploitation. At the request of the GA, a Protection Master Plan for the District is under preparation with input from support groups and service providers.

36. **Coastal Protection Needs.** Natural disaster threats place a premium on the value of coastal defences, but the cost of creating engineering structures to do the job range up to US\$ 25 million per kilometre at current prices, making the whole coastline effectively indefensible by such means. Mangroves and coral reefs, on the other hand, are natural, effective and relatively low cost, while sea grass beds also stabilize submerged sandbanks and transport carbonate sand to beach systems. Hence, there are clear economic benefits to be obtained by working with natural systems. There is a need to restore the resilience of Sri Lanka's coastal zone. To ensure the sustainability of the measures adopted, local authorities and communities need to be closely involved in planning, installing and maintaining the natural barriers.

37. Intact coastal ecosystems such as coral reefs and mangroves are known to protect coastal lands from the destructive effects of large waves. This was re-confirmed in Sri Lanka and elsewhere in the wake of the 2004 tsunami. Other ecosystems such as vegetated sand dunes and Casuarina forests and Pandanus hedges and mangroves were also found to effectively mitigate wave impacts. Over the past 30 years or so, Sri Lankan

coral reefs have been extensively mined for limestone, and coastal dunes exploited for sand, while mangroves and other forest systems have been reduced in extent and density by site conversion or over-harvesting. It is believed that the loss of these ecosystems rendered the coastal zone of Sri Lanka much more vulnerable to the tsunami than would otherwise have been the case.

38. **Transport needs.** Matara is the terminus of the southern railway, which was affected by the tsunami. The quick repair of the railway has contributed to restoring the public transport services of the area to near normalcy. Recognizing the socio-economic importance of transport networks, notably in the tourist sector, it is strongly recommended that the network of feeder roads linking with the interior be upgraded and repaired urgently. It is also recommended that architectural accessibility in the form of safe crossings for disabled persons be taken into consideration, as well as accessible modes of transport. Improved access to the adjacent areas could also ease the pressure for buildable land in the tsunami-affected areas. The immediate result will be that local transport will become more viable, without damage to privately owned and public vehicles. Producers of a multitude of goods and services will be closer to consumers, school children will have more time for rest and recreation, the sick will be taken for medical attention more easily, and even the dead will be given better burials.

39. **Power needs.** The Ceylon Electricity Board has prepared a long-term plan that appears to accommodate the post tsunami rehabilitation needs of the district.

40. **Water supply and sanitation.** With regard to water supply, it has been demonstrated that water is available in the vicinity, even near the beach, and the Collector Well System or CWS will be the best solution. This is based on extensive research done by the former British Overseas Development Administration (ODA) in the 1990s, and has been used in Sri Lanka in many projects, including water supply at the University of Moratuwa. In addition to being effective, the CWS approach costs significantly less than conventional water supply technology and is favoured by the Department of Water Supply and Drainage.

41. With regard to sanitation, properly designed and built septic tanks are recommended. In the camps visited and confirmed by the Government Agent, the team observed that existing septic tanks need to be emptied frequently using what are called gully suckers. A properly designed septic tank, servicing an appropriate number of toilets, will not need this type of attention, if the correct temperatures for anaerobic degradation are maintained. The end product will then be a type of organic fertilizer.

E. OBSERVATIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

42. **General overview.** It is clear from documents such as TAFREN's "Housing & Township Development Assistance Policy and Implementation Guidelines" that a number of solutions to issues brought up in this report are available. However, these solutions have not been effectively disseminated at the district level. The Government needs to issue clear circulars to improve communication between all levels.

43. **Access to land/housing.** Since the active participation of residents in the reconstruction process leads to greater satisfaction, the Government should explore all options for involving homeowners in the housing reconstruction process. The housing and resettlement programme undertaken by Lodestar, a well known local organization, and Jinasena & Co., together with a Belgian individual, appears to have effectively involved the beneficiaries from the initial stages, and should be studied for emulation. A housing and resettlement programme proposed for the Kalutara district by Buddhist Fellowship,

Singapore, together with a local company, was also brought to our attention. The plan for a cluster-housing complex is available. There are many economies that are achieved with this design while ensuring individual privacy. In this case, a water supply system based on the Collector Well System, and sewerage based on the Horizontal digester concept, are included. These concepts are worth exploring further.

44. The GA and his officers suggested that a practical solution to the need to offer decent accommodation options to IDP families before the rains begin is to offer them a sum of Rs 3,000 per family per month, for ten months to find alternative accommodation for themselves. This amounts to Rs 30,000 per family, which the GA and his officers assured us would be not more than the costs in the temporary camps for supply of facilities for water, sewerage, electricity, and security, for the same period. In addition, this would reduce the pressures on over-worked government staff.

A number of specific housing questions need to be urgently addressed:

- i) Since there were residences that housed more than one family in the buffer zone, is each family entitled to a house or is it one house for all families in the destroyed residence?
- ii) Will new constructions take into account physical access needs of the elderly and disabled?
- iii) GOSL agencies are reconstructing their damaged offices and buildings within the buffer zone; what impact will this have on the legitimacy of prohibiting ordinary citizens from doing so?
- iv) Are homeowners who receive support from other donors for reconstruction of their houses outside the buffer zone eligible for the government housing reconstruction grants as well?
- v) Is the payment for a damaged house outside the buffer zone Rs. 100,000 regardless to the extent of the damage or is it up to Rs. 100,000 based on a damage assessment?
- vi) Can the District Secretaries sign MOUs with donors for the reconstruction of houses outside the buffer zone? What is their role with respect to bank loans?
- vii) The affected people have been required to fill in questionnaires from several agencies on the extent of their loss/damage. Is it possible for this process to be streamlined so that a single questionnaires on the issue is sufficient?
- viii) There is a serious problem of finding suitable land to build transient housing, while the displaced families have to be moved out of their tents as soon as possible. Can the option of paying these families a monthly allowance to enable them to look for alternative housing be considered? This would have the extra advantage of reducing the burden on the Government to build transient accommodation.
- ix) How will people with deeded ancestral property, where that property has been transferred to family members down through the generations, but without formal deed registration (i.e. the current occupier has a deed, but it is not registered in his/her name) be treated in the context of the post-tsunami housing programme?

45. **Health.** Recognizing the intensity of the post-tsunami trauma of affected persons of all ages, it is imperative that the resources to provide counselling be strengthened. Special attention must be paid to needs of children and women, notably widows, female-headed households and single women. Widowed men in the role of family care-givers too need special attention.

46. **Socio Political Tensions.** In order to ensure transparency in the selection of housing beneficiaries, it is recommended that lists of recipients indicating names and addresses should be made accessible to the public. An appropriate grievance mechanism for representation to the Grievance Committee set up by the District Secretary should be agreed, as per the “Housing and Township Development Assistance Policy and Implementation Guidelines”.

47. **Local governance capacity.** In order to ensure access to vital information about the recovery, it is recommended that Government Circulars on the tsunami reconstruction policy decisions be issued systematically in the public domain. Furthermore, a mechanism should be developed to integrate local governments and Provincial Councils into all aspects of the reconstruction process. Early involvement will ensure ownership and commitment by all parties. The Government should follow the existing institutional arrangements for implementation of recovery activities in the relevant sectors.

48. The GA and his staff should be congratulated for their splendid achievement in bringing Matara district back to near normalcy in a very short period of time. The post-tsunami recovery has now been launched and will no doubt achieve success as planned.

49. **Gender.** There is an urgent need to ensure the collection and compilation of gender-disaggregated data with regards to the post-tsunami recovery phase. Women should be included in decision-making bodies at all levels and consulted not only about relocation plans and designs but also about the related services. They should be provided equitable access to cash for work and similar opportunities. Existing and new laws and regulations relevant to post-tsunami issues should be reviewed for gender sensitivity.

50. District level staff implementing and monitoring the recovery programmes should benefit from training on gender sensitivity and gender mainstreaming. Finally, the capacity of women’s organizations to strengthen gender understanding and sensitivity within NGOs and CBOs and to jointly monitor gender issues in the post-tsunami recovery process should be enhanced.

51. **Environment.** Considering the preliminary findings of the environmental study conducted by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (M/ENR), it is imperative that the overall reconstruction programme be considered within the context of a Strategic Environmental Assessment. A multi-disciplinary team, including environmental specialists, should oversee the reconstruction planning process at the working level.

52. There is adequate evidence that an extensive programme of mangrove establishment and restoration being undertaken by coastal communities in Vietnam is proving effective in preventing sea incursions due to storm surges as well as providing an alternative fuel source for coastal communities. We recommend exploring methods of using natural coastal barriers as risk reduction mechanisms for coastal communities. In consequence, it is recommended that the Government reconsider the proposed 100 m buffer zone (200 in the North East) policy and provide full backing for the implementation of the 1997 Cabinet-approved Coastal Zone Management Plan, with more stringent codes for building construction within the coastal zone, including elevation of building sites.

53. Distance alone is not meaningful; the height of the housing site above mean sea level should also be specified, for example 10 m. above mean sea level. With regards to housing design, it seems that in some locations, housing on circular columns would be economically feasible (although accessibility for the elderly and the disabled would need to be considered). Boats and fishing gear could be stored under the house.

54. **Education.** The Central and Provincial governments should strengthen psychosocial support programs for students and teachers, as well as vocational training for female and male school leavers. Disaster response training should be added to the curriculum, including access to swimming classes for both boys and girls.

55. **Livelihoods.** Support farmers with appropriate soil testing studies and advise them on crop management. Seek the support of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna for these programmes. In the rehabilitation of local industries, use the recovery phase as an opportunity to upgrade production technologies to increase the productivity of the workers as well as to enhance product quality. Support capacity development of organizations that support micro-level producers with financial management and marketing advice.

56. **Needs of fisher folk.** Rehabilitate fishing harbours, landings, anchorages, ice plants and other infrastructure, rather than just concentrate on boats and gear. Grants and loans for reconstruction and/or purchase of boats can be administered through fisheries organizations.

57. **Water supply/sanitation.** The Collector Well System should be introduced in the new settlements. The technology is available for inspection in many locations, including the University of Moratuwa. A gully sucker should be provided to the Matara DPDHS and clear standards for the design and installation of high quality septic tank systems should be agreed and implemented. A possibility for sewerage disposal that has been proposed for a project in Kalutara District is based on the horizontal digestion concept, and should be investigated for Matara district also.