



After the Tsunami

Rebuilding Asia

The day after Christmas, one of the world's most destructive earthquakes shook the western coast of northern Indonesia. Within hours, over 100,000 men, women and children had been killed by the massive tidal waves that consumed coastal areas. Families were separated, livelihoods were destroyed and infrastructure was debilitated. In the days that followed, international organizations, aid agencies and thousands of well-intentioned individuals rushed to provide relief to those affected. American donors gave almost \$1 billion in private contributions to relief efforts in the months following the tsunami.

Emergency relief operations are by and large finished. Now, the countries affected by the disaster are facing an even greater need. Aid organizations and national governments are turning their attention to structural and economic needs. It will be possible to rebuild homes, repair infrastructure and eventually restore the way of life; but at a price. The Asian Development Bank estimates that the reconstruction effort will cost upwards of \$7 billion.

As we feared, with widespread publicity of the tsunami, almost all of the initial funds were earmarked for relief. As a result, the larger, more expensive task of redevelopment lacks funding. For donors who took our advice and waited, there are many opportunities to support the rebuilding efforts. Excellence in Giving recommends that donors evaluate gifts in the following areas over the next few months. We have identified organizations with longstanding experience in the region and expertise in development.

1) Permanent housing. Five million survivors were displaced by the tidal wave. Temporary camps and shelters were quickly established but more permanent housing will be necessary to resettle those affected by the tsunami, particularly as the rainy season approaches.

2) Community services. While many agencies are focused on the housing crisis, the greater need is to rebuild entire communities. Communal infrastructure, water sys-

tems, schools and psycho-social rehabilitation are specialized areas needing attention.

3) Water and sanitation. Relief teams deserve credit for preventing a major epidemic of water-borne disease. Moving forward, existing wells will need to be rehabilitated to prevent further contamination. New water sources will need to be developed and supply systems for communities will need to be installed.

4) Fishing industry. Most international agencies agree that the fishermen have borne the brunt of the negative impacts. Seventy-five percent of Indonesia's boat fleet was damaged or destroyed by the tidal waves. Several organizations are delivering new boats and fishing supplies to help families regain their source of income.

5) Agriculture. Rice fields, fruit plantations, shrimp ponds, and vegetable gardens have also been irreparably destroyed by salt water. Similarly, much of the region's livestock has been killed.

6) Orphans & child well-being. An unfortunate outcome of the tsunami are the thousands of orphaned children. Local governments and agencies are acting to protect orphans from trafficking and to rehabilitate them back into their local communities.

7) Skills training & micro-enterprise. With the rebuilding needs of the region, people will be trained as carpenters, masons and shopkeepers. Many unskilled laborers were affected and businesses will need to have productive assets replaced and working capital to restart their businesses.

8) Post-trauma counseling. Both children and adults need psychological help to deal with the trauma of the disaster. The onset of fear, depression and anxiety among the victims are of grave concerns to development workers in the region.

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