

ANNEX I - SOCIAL IMPACT

A. INTRODUCTION

1. This annex addresses the social impact of the tsunami disaster and the recovery needs of the affected population. These social dimensions have an important bearing on reconstruction in specific sectors, which are covered in more detail the sectoral annexes. This annex gives an overall presentation, differentiating the immediate impacts and more longer term impact and concerns.

B. DAMAGE OVERVIEW

2. The social fabric of the tsunami-hit areas has been seriously affected by the number of human deaths (over 31,000 people in 13 district of 5 provinces) and injuries (exceeding 15,000), thousands missing and over 440,000 displaced. The main victims were already vulnerable groups, such as poor fishermen living close to the shore in simple houses and shelters. The share of women and children victims seems to be disproportionately high, probably because a higher proportion of women and girls were caught unaware in the houses on the Sunday morning when the tsunami struck. The very high death toll in relation to both number of injured and to material damage will have long-term consequences on the well-being of other family members, particularly widows, single-parent children, orphans, and the elderly.

3. *The North East.* Apart from the coastal communities already being comparatively poor in the Sri Lankan context, the tsunami has also in other ways compounded already existing vulnerabilities. The North East is the region worst affected by the tsunami. The percentage of the coastal population affected ranges from an estimated 35 percent in Kilinochi to 80 percent in Mullativu and 78 percent in Ampara compared to the southern districts of Galle, Matara and Hambantota with less than 20 percent of the coastal population affected, albeit with scattered pockets of severe damage.

4. Twenty years of civil conflict has caused disruption of social structures, high levels of vulnerability, wide-spread displacements of persons belonging to all ethnic groups and the destruction of infrastructure and housing. Its replacement and rehabilitation was already underway prior to the tsunami, and is essential for economic life to resume and livelihoods to be re-established. Around 58 percent of the total housing stock needed rebuilding or construction. The unemployment rate is estimated to be more than double the national average. The tsunami caused further losses of lives, destruction of livelihoods and much of the remaining physical infrastructure and means of production have been damaged or destroyed.

5. The conflict has created deep fractures in the social fabric and ethnic tensions have been accentuated. Women and children have particularly suffered from the break-up of social structures and the abusive compartments induced by war. The school drop-out

rate is four times the national average, and twice as many infants are underweight as in the rest of the country. Around 180,000 (start of 2002) Internally Displaced People (IDPs), residing in and outside the North East, with more than 40,000 families residing in welfare centers and others with relatives and friends. As of yet, there are no clear indication of the tsunamis impact on the existing IDPs in the North East, nor on the separate ethnic communities.

6. **Orphans.** According to UNICEF (January 13, 2005) based on information from 364 camps, about 900 children are left without parents. Of these, 44 are unaccompanied children (i.e., without parents and residing in an institution or with non-family care givers), and 858 children are residing with relatives but without parents. More than 3,000 children have lost one parent. When a social assessment of all affected households has been conducted, these figures can be expected to increase substantially. Orphans constitute a group which will require special protection immediately and continuing in the medium and long term. In the North East pre-tsunami, there were already at least 2,500 children in 41 registered children's homes, and the exact number in over 50 non-registered institutional care facilities is not available. As of yet, there is no information available on whether any of these children's homes have been affected by the tsunami.

7. Priority must be given to family reunification in the case of separated children and for orphans culturally-sensitive interim and alternative care options sensitive need to be provided. Unnecessary institutionalization of children must be avoided. Psycho-social support and legal protection may also be required, and needs to be provided through local capacities. Awareness raising and training on child rights and child protection should be carried out targeting all concerned actors. Special attention should be paid to children's inheritance right to land and property, and administration hereof by legal guardian until the child reaches maturity.

8. **Single-headed households.** Widows and single-headed households present a particular vulnerability as they have to deal with their psycho-social distress as well as caring for children on their own. The loss of a mother has particularly negative physical and psychological impact on small children and infants, while the loss of the male head of family constitutes a serious blow to the economic livelihood of the household, significantly reducing its coping ability. Female-headed households are as a result of the twenty years of civil conflict more common in the North East than in the rest of the country. The many orphans, widows, single-headed households, old and disabled are especially vulnerable groups in terms of psycho-social distress, restoration of livelihood, and the legal and protection rights – on such issues as property and inheritance rights, and custody of children – will need to be addressed.

9. **Shelter.** During the first days of the disaster, it was reported that approximately 193,000 housing units were fully or partially damaged and around 160,000 families were displaced by the tsunami. They sought refuge with families and friends or in the approximately 800 welfare centers established in religious and public places and schools over the following days. Considering the scale of the disaster, relatively few families remain in the welfare centers. Affected families have benefited from the traditionally

strong family ties and social networks to find host families willing to provide them shelter. While this provides better protection for females and other vulnerable household members, it can only be a temporary solution unless formalized and backed up by regular compensation to the host family. Some three weeks after the disaster, many people have started moving out of the temporary shelters. Some have started repairing their damaged houses or are beginning to erect temporary shelter near their ruined the houses.

10. Families who are likely to remain in camps for an extended period need to be identified, their needs assessed and responsibilities for their continued support clearly assigned. Welfare camps currently occupying school buildings and other public buildings will need to be relocated to allow for the resumption of public services. The relocation should facilitate people's resumption of pre-tsunami daily routines, and reintegration into their home communities.

11. Several reports suggest a lack of security for women and children in camps, referring to cases of sexual harassment, rape, violence and kidnapping of children. It is not possible to establish the number of actual incidents, as there exists a strong social/cultural reluctance to address these issues. Local women's groups stress the urgency of the issue, and confirm that it is seriously under-reported. International experience also shows that protection of women and children is frequently violated under disaster and conflict conditions. Reports from camps further indicated that lack of privacy for women and girls in connection with washing and changing clothes, breast feeding children and shortage of sanitation facilities adds to the exposure of the displaced women and girls. In certain camps, recognition of these security problems have led to arrangements to keep women and men separate (which has the drawback that it splits families), but the level of domestic violence reportedly has also gone up in the aftermath of the disaster. Pregnant women in the camps lack sufficient access to reproductive health care in view of the potential effects which the psychological and physical strains will put on their maternal health. There is also a need to raise awareness in camps of the risks of sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV/AIDS.

12. **Legal Aspects.** An unspecified number of affected people had been living in squatter houses or other forms of informal settlements, which may complicate inclusion in housing recovery schemes. The situation is particularly pronounced in the North East where a substantial proportion of the population live on unauthorized land. Furthermore, the tsunami has in many cases resulted in owners' loss of property documents, which together with the simultaneous destruction of the Land Registry Office could pose problems in recognition of property rights, not least in cases of transfer of rights to legal heirs. With the large-scale destruction of housing, the physical demarcation of individual land plots may also have been lost in many cases.

13. Restoring lost records of property rights to housing, commercial property, and lands should be launched as soon as possible, with special assistance given to the poor, squatters and widows and orphans in demonstrating legitimate property rights. To deal with the issue of protection of land and inheritance rights as well as land dispute resolution, it is recommended that a multi-disciplinary Land Task Force be established in

each district for a limited period of time in order to facilitate and speed up recovery work (as is the case in the North East Housing Reconstruction Program; NEHRP).

14. Two World Bank operational directives (Indigenous Peoples, OD 4.20 and Involuntary Resettlement, PO 4.12) may have direct relevance to the future rehabilitation program. Indigenous people live in several districts, but they are located in interior areas rather than in the coastal regions. However, as of yet, there is no decisive information as to the impact of the tsunami on these groups. If the Social Assessment indicates that any of these communities will be included in the recovery efforts, specific consultations will be undertaken with them. Based on the consultation report, the program would decide what specific modalities to implement vis-à-vis these communities and would prepare a brief written plan describing the consultative steps taken, the action agreed upon and the supporting arguments.

15. A more pertinent point will be to ensure that planned recovery program will ensure maintenance of equity in access to recovery efforts and assistance among disaster-affected people, irrespective of ethnic, regional or religious affiliation. This should be closely monitored during the implementation process through consultations with the affected communities and through a well-designed communication strategy and district-level grievance redressal mechanism (reflecting both female and minority group inclusion).

16. ***Involuntary resettlement.*** Relocation of households and whole communities may take place where specific, severely affected locations are declared by authorities as too high-risk to allow further settlement. A measure of voluntary resettlement may also be expected, where affected people have either been squatting or tenants in damaged/destroyed houses.

17. Apart from these situations, relocation should be avoided where possible, and assistance should, to the extent possible, be given to enable people to rebuild their homes to better standards in their old location. This would minimize the need for new land acquisition, which may hardship for those affected by losing land or livelihood opportunities. If land acquisition or displacement of people for new housing or infrastructure is unavoidable, a social assessment process involving all stakeholders should be undertaken. Whether there will be involuntary resettlement (OP 4.12) under the planned recovery operation depends upon the decision of the government regarding future settlement policies in the coastal belt. In 2001, Sri Lanka introduced a National Involuntary Resettlement Policy which will constitute the framework for any land acquisition and resettlement and compensation plan.

18. The approach recommended could be summarized in the following principles:

- To the extent possible, relocation should be avoided. Decisions about relocation should be taken only after full consultation with all affected people, and full disclosure of information and entitlements.

- Where temporary relocation is unavoidable, for example in urban areas, such shelters should be built on government land wherever possible.
- If permanent housing is to be constructed in new areas to improve housing standard and safety, the principle of self-relocation should be followed. The affected population should be given financial and technical support to choose locations and housing based on their own preferences.
- If acquisition of private property is unavoidable, the Government should assist in purchasing the necessary land through the principle of willing seller – willing buyer, rather than to land acquisition under law.
- If land acquisition is unavoidable, the affected people are entitled to full compensation and assistance in regaining livelihoods, as described above. In such cases, an agency experienced in planning and implemented resettlement action plans should be contracted to ensure proper consultation, compensation, and relocation assistance to those displaced by secondary land acquisition.
- In case of land acquisition and resettlement, special efforts should be put in place to ensure equal consultation (and documentation hereof) with the female members of the affected communities and of local religious or ethnic minority groups to ensure equity in interventions.

C. RECONSTRUCTION AND RECOVERY NEEDS

19. **Short Term Requirements.** Efforts to address immediate needs should be prepared with extensive community input to determine solutions to shelter, possible relocations and reconstruction of housing and recovery of livelihoods and assets.

- **Protection of Vulnerable Groups.** Immediate initiatives should be taken to improve the physical security of women and children in the temporary camps and shelters. In case of separated children, family reunification efforts have highest priority and for orphans, culturally-sensitive interim and alternative care options need to be provided. Psycho-social support and legal protection should be provided through local capacities. Awareness raising and training on child rights and child protection should be carried out targeting all concerned actors.
- **Restoration of Livelihoods.** As employment and income are urgent needs of the affected people, employment opportunities need to be provided. Efforts to utilize local resources and employ local people in the rebuilding activities, including public works programs related to local recovery activities, should to the extent feasible provide local employment opportunities to the most needy. Careful targeting of the most vulnerable groups should be undertaken.
- **Provision of Shelter.** Provision of temporary shelter for displaced people need to be addressed urgently through a flexible approach: (i) *Formalizing stay with host families*, backed up by regular compensation to the host family; (ii) *Extended stay in welfare camps*, relocated to facilitate people's resumption of pre-tsunami daily routines, and reintegration into their home communities. Proper protection of women and children should be in place in the camps; and (iii) *Individual construction temporary shelter*. Material support and guidance (technical,

location) should be given to individual households with the ability to erect temporary shelter for themselves.

- **Community participation** will be essential in most sectors for the success of the reconstruction efforts. Local communities will need to be actively involved in the decision-making for and implementation of reconstruction activities, including decisions about rebuilding *in-situ*/relocation, housing, location of and types of services and so on. The model for Village Rehabilitation Committees (VRC) used in the NEHRP could be expanded to cover all tsunami-affected areas.
- The communities are clear in their desire to have a say in the utilization of resources and to regain control over their own lives. The frequently heard formulation was '*We are not beggars*', underlines this as well as people's wish that their dignity and self respect be acknowledged during this time of distress. Community participation would accomplish several objectives in the reconstruction phase.
- A more culturally and socially appropriate solution needs to result. Many externally planned housing schemes have become deserted by the intended inhabitants who have rejected the idea of living in homes which do not meet their social, cultural and economic needs. In addressing housing recovery, the affected people should be consulted at the community level, as it is essential to preserve existing social networks which form the basis of support and mutual aid among the affected households. It was these social networks and mutual aid which helped the affected communities through the first days of the disaster before government or agency assistance reached them.
- Transparency and accountability must be increased. Communities should be involved in listing beneficiaries and in reviewing damage assessment reports. The continuous social impact assessment (CSIA) followed in NEHRP may be a model to be followed in the emergency recovery program.
- Dependency needs to be reduced. While relief and charity are important in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, they should be replaced as soon as possible with assistance to people in regaining their livelihoods and control over their lives. It would also help to reduce potential conflicts between affected people (receiving assistance) and unaffected people (not receiving assistance) at local level.
- Increase access to, utilization of and effectiveness of services. Community participation in type and location of infrastructure facilities would ensure better access to these, increase their utilization and thus make them more effective in meeting people's needs.
- To save time over the medium term, consultation and participation is required. A lack of consultation and participation in planning could cause more delays in subsequent implementation than participatory processes.

20. **Priorities for Medium- and Long-Term Recovery**

- A **Social Assessment** should be undertaken to provide sufficiently detailed information about affected population to design recovery efforts in accordance with the specific needs and requirements.

- **Livelihood.** A comprehensive package (grants/loans/microfinance) should be developed to assist affected households in recovering their lost assets and means of livelihood. Single-headed households will need extra support in re-establishing livelihoods, and a certain proportion of households may need support in creating new livelihoods. Community-based approaches may be used to reach the largest number of beneficiaries as soon as possible to reduce dependency effects.
- **Legal Rights.** Action to restore lost records of property rights to housing, commercial property, and lands should be launched, with special assistance given to the poor, squatters and widows and orphans in demonstrating legitimate property and inheritance rights. Special attention should be paid to children's inheritance right to land and property, and administration hereof by legal guardian until the child reaches maturity. To deal with the issue of protection of land and inheritance rights as well as land dispute resolution, a multi-disciplinary Land Task Force may be established in each district for a limited period of time in order to facilitate and speed up recovery work.
- **Housing.** Housing assistance packages should be developed based on principles of community consultations and household-driven reconstruction. Community Based Organizations (CBOs) may facilitate the reconstruction process and the interface between households, local governments and locally-based building contractors and suppliers.