

Calang farmers make post-tsunami history

For many of the farmers in Calang's Krueng Sabee sub-district, farming is all they know. In the words of one farmer: "Farming is in my blood." So when the tsunami crashed through their paddy fields in 2004, their fertile soil became a sodden wasteland, and their livelihood and passion came to an abrupt halt.

But through a UNDP project implemented by Islamic Relief, these farmers have seen their paddy fields come to life once again. So much so, they are now preparing for a historic moment: their first harvest since the tsunami.

The long-term project, which started in June 2006, is assisting tsunami-affected and post-conflict affected farmers return to their paddy fields. It is helping 575 farmers cultivate and plant rice in 125 hectares in Krueng Sabee sub district.

The project is also focusing on food security through the provision of tools, fertilizers, herbicides, land cultivation costs, and a particular seed that harvests quicker than normal seed.



Pre-harvest: a local farmer watches over his paddy fields in Krueng Sabee

Islamic Relief field staff identified the 575 beneficiary farmers based on focus group discussions with village leaders, and on each farmer's participatory abilities. All of the farmers are part of a farming group in their individual locations. These groups were in place before the tsunami, and they helped farmers tackle issues together, such as pest control.

As one village leader said to local farmers: "If you want to continue your lives then start now. Otherwise you will starve, because aid agencies will not always be here." The farmers who took that advice now find themselves preparing for their first harvest since December 2004.

One of those farmers is Pak Safarrudin. He is part of a farming group comprising 42 members. He owns 0.5 hectares of paddy fields in the scenic Datar Luas village, and they are thriving once again.

He explains: "The tsunami waste covered all of my land. It was a mess, and all that grew afterwards were weeds. We felt absolute despair. But farming is all we know, so we were prepared to clear all of the land ourselves."

But Safarrudin and his fellow farmers felt inspired when they heard about assistance available from UNDP and Islamic Relief. With the farmers' consent, UNDP helped clear the waste through a local contractor, using three bulldozers and an excavator. The work began in June 2006 and was completed in October 2006, leaving the way clear for Islamic Relief to begin its Livelihoods project in the paddy fields.

Following UNDP's initial waste clearance, Safarrudin and his fellow farmers received 40kg of seed per hectare (on average, each farmer owns 0.5 hectares).

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NEW NAME, NEW LOOK...

Welcome to *UNDP Aceh & Nias News*, formerly titled *ERTR News*.

The name has been changed to more accurately reflect the scope of work being carried out by UNDP in Aceh and Nias. UNDP's ERTR (Emergency Response and Transitional Recovery Programme) projects will still continue throughout 2007, but UNDP is now looking ahead. For example, it is implementing a long-term development programme to help the Governor achieve his vision for Aceh, and a programme is now underway to improve access to justice for people across Aceh.

UNDP is also working closely with the provincial Government to improve governance and reduce the risks of future disasters. And building on ERTR's successful livelihoods recovery programme, projects are now being implemented to facilitate the long-term economic development of Aceh and Nias.

Over the coming months, *UNDP Aceh & Nias News* will continue to give you a full round-up of how these projects are helping communities throughout Aceh and Nias.

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First the farmers prepared a nursery/seed bed close to the paddy field. This gives the seeds a chance to start growth. Then, after approximately 20 days, the farmers transplant the seedlings to the soil in the paddy fields using traditional tools.

Prior to the tsunami, the farmers used a type of seed that needed six months to harvest. But following discussions with the farmers and village leaders, Islamic Relief provided a type of seed that takes only 3.5 months to harvest. The seeds are procured from west Java, and certified by the Government of Indonesia's agricultural department. The speed of the seed growth is particularly significant, as the farmers in this area no longer receive post-tsunami rice aid from World Food Programme (WFP).

Added Safarrudin: "I'm currently still buying rice to feed myself, my wife and two children. But I'm looking forward to my first harvest, which I hope will yield around 3.5 tons. This is more than enough to feed us, so I'm hoping to sell what remains."

Throughout the entire growing process, the farmers receive support and motivation from Islamic Relief. Explains Pak Harsono, Islamic Relief Field Coordinator: "We're delighted to see the farmers' interest in being a part of this project. They receive a contract from Islamic Relief, which helps boost their motivation. Once they plant rice, we give them land cultivation costs for work such as bush clearing. After the work has been done, the farmers receive approximately Rp1.5million per hectare. They also receive herbicides, hand sprayers and fertilizers, most of which is distributed via the head of each farmer group.

"But we don't just stop at seed and equipment – we also give farmers monitoring and guidance through technical advice, and advice on how to mobilize themselves.



Reaping the benefits: a local farmer enjoys the results of his harvest

We will also be there to help motivate the farmers for their second harvest. Overall it's an encouraging process."

UNDP's overall livelihood recovery strategy focuses on the poor and vulnerable who need to quickly return to their pre-tsunami income levels in order to sustain themselves. Livelihood recovery activities include providing support for the recovery of small enterprises and trade; rural livelihoods; vocational and skills training; civil society capacity building; women's group support; rehabilitation of economic infrastructure; and strengthening local government capacity for livelihoods recovery.

News from UNDP Meulaboh...

- A consultant carrying out an Environmental Impact Assessment for UNDP's Tsunami Recovery Port Redevelopment Programme (TRPRP) visited Meulaboh during April (*see the story on page 11 for more details*). He surveyed the sea water, surface water, quality of air, noise, and vibration. The consultant will also assess the social economic impact by interviewing local villagers.
- Dr. Inga Balcere, the UN Volunteers (UNV) doctor from Latvia, has left Meulaboh after finishing her six-month posting. Her replacement, Dr. M. Ali from Nigeria, will arrive in Meulaboh soon.
- An exciting milestone has been reached in UNDP's Livelihood Programme Round III: farmers in Krueng Sabee sub district, Aceh Jaya, conducted their first post-tsunami harvest in April. See the front cover story for more details.
- One of UNDP's successful Livelihoods projects, titled Supporting Recovery of Small Industries and Trades in Aceh, has now been completed. With a budget of IDR 5.367 million, the project helped replace equipment lost in the earthquake and tsunami. The project has benefited 918 beneficiaries in 37 types of livelihoods.
- And finally... Faisal Rizal, UNDP West Coast Area Manager in Meulaboh, ended his bachelor days recently. He married Sukma Anda Yani at the end of March. Sukma works with IOM in Banda Aceh. UNDP wishes Faisal and Sukma all the best!

On the long, winding road to recovery

Dave Murphy is no stranger to the phrase 'life on the road'. For three days of every week, he travels one of Aceh's most tsunami-damaged roads: the 103-kilometre West Coast stretch from Lamno to Calang.

As UNDP's Roads Programme Manager, working under the direction of BRR, Dave is now extremely familiar with the long, winding road. So much so, he now sees it as representative of the post-tsunami situation in Aceh and Nias. He explains:

"This road is symbolic of all the different rehabilitation challenges in Aceh. It has all the analogies: the high mountain passes, the flash floods, the low rivers, the unexpected landslides and the road blocks. It's all representative of the highs and lows experienced in the development work taking place here in Aceh."

It's a well-known fact that the 2004 tsunami damaged and destroyed Aceh's roads – approximately 454 kilometres in total. In amongst that was the 187km road between Banda Aceh and Calang. Multiple sections eroded and some were washed out to sea.

USAID has taken on the task of rebuilding this road, and their main contractor will start work in August. But until then, the road must remain open and maintained. As a result, BRR approached UNDP to repair and rehabilitate damaged sections of the Lamno to Calang portion of that road until August. And that's where Dave comes in.

A Civil Engineer, Dave joined UNDP in March this year. His sole duty is to manage UNDP's maintenance of the road. But it's not a job he tackles alone. Dave oversees 10 construction crews responsible for bridge maintenance; road grading; ditch repair; quarry work; shoreline protection; and asphalt and patching work. He also trains leading engineer Mustafa, and assistant engineers Ali and Sayuti, as well as community checkers.

"I travel down the road each week, and stop at priority locations to see how the work is going," explains Dave. "I meet with key people including staff from BRR, the Public Works department, and the Bupati. I also have informal chats with locals, and I've had many positive comments. For example, the steep mountain pass near Ligan is a big issue, and the villagers express incredible gratitude for our work in keeping this critical mountain pass open."

For Dave and his team, their work is continuous. The graders travel back and forth over an allocated stretch of road, eliminating hazards such as potholes and washouts. For the ditch crews, their task is to ensure drainage is functioning, and not hampered by the continuous landslides. The shoreline protection team ensures large boulders are quarried then placed at sections where the sea is eroding the road with each new storm. And the bridge crews have the constant task of maintaining the road's 42 existing bridges, some of which are old Baily Bridges from 1942. To carry out this work, UNDP directly contracts heavy equipment from PT Alhas Jaya, and has just negotiated an agreement with the Aceh Jaya Public Works Department for aspects of work such as material supply and bridge maintenance.



Man at work: Dave takes notes at one of the road's 42 existing bridges

Dave's past experience means he is well able to handle this type of work. At the time of the 2004 tsunami, Dave was president of an engineering company in Boston, USA. But several days after the tsunami, he telephoned a friend at Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and offered to help with their tsunami emergency work. His offer was accepted, and he arrived in Banda Aceh in February 2005 to ultimately manage CRS's engineering and construction work in Banda Aceh, part of which included the Lamno-Calang road. And so began Dave's involvement with the tsunami effort in Indonesia.

But he didn't arrive here alone. He was accompanied by his wife, three of his children, and his 79-year-old mother in law. Together they live in Banda Aceh. They're coping well, despite the occasional glitch. Dave explains: "During Christmas last year, all five of us had dengue fever at the same time. It wasn't easy with the entire household being ill - it certainly made things very interesting!"

The remaining three months of this project will be busy ones for Dave and his team. As part of their ongoing maintenance work, more attention will be focused on the road's notorious Gunung Panteu mountain pass, and on the shoreline protection. And Dave will continue his weekly drives along the road. He explains:

"Keeping the road passable is indeed a big challenge. But we want to make sure people on that stretch of road can still do essential tasks; they can still have access to their livelihoods; and they can still get to a doctor or hospital. Overall, we want to assure local people that we'll do everything we can to ensure this portion of the road stays open."

For more information on UNDP's Lamno-Calang Road Maintenance Project, contact david.murphy@undp.org

Putting the wheels in motion for Banda's becaks

Becak driver Pak Ali Akbar looks fondly at his old, unusable becak that sits outside his home in Lamreung village, Banda Aceh. It was thanks to this becak that Pak Ali managed to escape and survive the giant tsunami waves that crashed through Banda Aceh in December 2004.

But Pak Ali is now back on the road and back in business with a brand new becak. He is one of hundreds of tsunami-affected becak drivers benefiting from a UNDP Livelihoods project.

As part of its commitment to recover the livelihoods of tsunami-affected communities, UNDP joined forces with four becak associations in Banda Aceh to initiate a revolving fund becak scheme in 2005. To get the programme started, UNDP donated 150 becaks to the four associations.

Pak Ali is a member of one of those becak associations benefiting from the revolving fund scheme. The 40-year-old father of three explained: "I had no idea what to do when the tsunami demolished my property. All I could do was thank God I could escape from the giant waves using my old becak! It was unusable afterwards so I temporarily rented my friend's becak, but now I'm so happy having this new one. I can earn up to Rp50,000 per day, which is enough for my family's expenses, and to save for my children's education."

Before beginning the revolving fund programme, UNDP carried out an assessment in November 2005 for beneficiaries in the most affected areas. It then communicated and coordinated the donation with four becak associations, namely PERTIBA, PERTINAD, PERTISA and PERTIBA-R.

UNDP ERTR Livelihood Officer, Said Fauzan Baabud, explained that this monetary assistance is donated to becak associations to help becak drivers restart their previous occupations. "These becaks are managed through a revolving fund scheme as requested by the associations and their members," he said. The beneficiaries agreed to revolve the fund by paying Rp.10.000 to Rp.15.000 per day, or Rp300.000 per month for approximately three years. On average, after three years the beneficiaries have full ownership of the becak.

The becak donation and funds are managed by the associations for the purpose of purchasing new becaks for other members, and to support social activities. Through this scheme, becak associations can strengthen their capacity and role among their members. More importantly, they can plan livelihoods programmes among themselves, since the fund is managed by the associations and their members.

One of the four becak associations benefiting from this programme is PERTIBA-R, located in Lampulo, Banda Aceh. It received 37 becaks from UNDP in 2005. PERTIBA-R is now seeing the fruits of the revolving fund scheme, as it recently purchased five new becaks from the money revolved by the members.



Old and new: Pak Ali and family with their current and former becaks

Pak Muchtar Ali, PERTIBA-R coordinator, explained that the association was established in 2003, and has 60 becak drivers as members. Pak Muchtar has managed the loans and revolving funds to buy the five new becaks for other association members. He also saves some of this money to conduct social activities, such as vocational training for becak drivers' wives, and scholarships for orphans.

He said: "It's so painful for me realizing that many becak drivers cannot restart their business as their becaks were lost. But I'm also really pleased since UNDP originally donated 37 new becaks for the association members. It's truly like a fresh water source in the middle of the desert. The only challenge we face is preserving the commitment of our members to gradually return their credit so we can rehabilitate becaks faster. If we can solve that challenge, we can raise our income and make our lives better than before."

As well as the becak donation programme, the UNDP Livelihoods programme continues to implement medium-term recovery programmes with several partners through various activities. These include providing support for the recovery of small enterprises and trade; rural livelihoods; vocational and skills training; civil society capacity building; rehabilitation of economic infrastructure; and strengthening local government capacity for livelihoods recovery.

More than 44,347 Livelihoods beneficiaries across five tsunami-affected districts have also been assisted in restoring fisheries; aquaculture; agriculture; animal husbandry; small enterprises; and home industries.

For more information on UNDP's Livelihoods programme, contact: said.baabud@undp.org

Creating a three-way forum for feedback



Meeting time: TRWMP team members with workshop participants

Gathering feedback on any project is essential. And understanding the needs of partners working in the field is just as important. With this in mind, the UNDP Tsunami Recovery Waste Management Programme (TRWMP) created a simple but effective way of exchanging knowledge, and updating government partners old and new.

The TRWMP has been working closely with the sanitation departments of seven local governments across Aceh since 2005. However, following the recent good news that TRWMP has secured USD10 million in funding from the Multi Donor Fund (MDF), the programme can now assist local governments in five additional areas in Aceh and Nias during the next two years.

But how can TRWMP learn from its current government partners? And how can it ensure that the five new government partners better understand how TRWMP can assist them? The answer was simple: a roving workshop that brings all three parties together, and allows them to share ideas, plans and hopes for the future.

TRWMP's work with the existing seven local governments is based on Letters of Agreement (LoAs) created in 2005. The work has covered areas such as capacity building; training on municipal solid waste disposal; and public awareness programmes. These LoAs have now been extended, and new LoAs have also been created for the five new districts. This created the perfect opportunity for TRWMP to bring the old and new government partners together; allow them to give updates on their work to date; and outline their future hopes and plans. It also gave the TRWMP staff a chance to update all attendees on the newly-extended TRWMP programme.

The idea for the workshop came from Nigel Landon, UNDP TRWMP Waste Management Advisor. He explained: "We've never had a gathering like this, and it turned out extremely well. We needed updates on what the government partners were doing, they needed to understand what we are doing, and the new partners needed an introduction to everything.

Holding a workshop seemed the ideal solution. It's vital that we have our partners' perceptions on work done so far and their needs for the future. And it's just as vital that the new government counterparts understand exactly what an LoA is and what it's designed to do.

"Now that we've secured additional MDF funding, TRWMP will continue, but with a new focus. The new phase will concentrate on safeguarding investments; building sustainability; and creating a realistic exit strategy so that we leave behind fully operational systems in 2009."

The workshops were held in three locations: Banda Aceh, Meulaboh and Nias. Bireun is one of TRWMP's new district partners. Pak Edward Jufri, Head of Dinas Kebersihan, Pertamanan dan Ketertiban (DKPK) in Bireun, attended the workshop in Banda Aceh. According to his presentation, DKPK has a 2007 budget of Rp4.5 billion for waste management activities, such as city cleaning, waste collection, transportation and administration.

Pak Edward anticipates TRWMP support on the construction of a proper sanitary landfill; rehabilitation of waste water treatment plant; hygiene promotion; and capacity building for staff.

He explained: "The workshop was very constructive and productive, and it's motivated me to prepare a comprehensive work plan on activities and budgeting. We'll submit these to UNDP to support DKPK in filling the gaps in our district budget."

At each workshop, Antun Hidayat, TRWMP Programme Coordinator, gave a presentation on behalf of UNDP TRWMP, and outlined the programme extension, and what the programme needs from the government counterparts.

"These workshops are all about monitoring and getting constructive feedback," explained Antun. "We focused a lot on partners' budget planning, and we were able to help partners assess what items on their budgets were realistic, and what items needed more planning.

"For example, if a piece of heavy equipment was requested, can the government partner realistically maintain and service this piece of equipment with the funds available? We have to ensure that our government partners don't rely solely on UNDP, and that they understand and are capable of planning for the future.

"Overall it was a great way to sit down with the partners, and help emphasize the importance of good planning, good budgeting, and the benefits of working together."

For more information on UNDP's Tsunami Waste Recovery Programme, contact nigel.landon@undp.org

Supporting Aceh's Governor through dedicated workshops

"This is a great time for all Walikota and Bupati in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam to learn to implement a clean government."

Those were the words from Irwandi Yusuf, the new Governor of Aceh, during his opening speech at the executive workshop for Bupati and Walikota (District Heads and Mayors) in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, held in Banda Aceh on 4 and 5 April, 2007.

Collaborating with the Aceh Provincial Government and the Local Government Support Programme (funded by USAID), UNDP facilitated the workshop, which aimed to improve the capacities of the new Walikota and Bupati on organizational skills, including financial management, public administration and good public service delivery.

The workshop comes in a time of broad political change across Aceh. The Free Aceh Movement (GAM) gubernatorial candidates Irwandi Yusuf and Muhammad Nazar carried fifteen out of nineteen districts in the December 2006 election, winning 38.2 per cent of the vote. Aceh has entered into a new and largely unprecedented period of reforms under the former rebel leaders. Support to the GAM candidates reportedly benefited from the organization's extensive support network on the ground, including a large number of volunteers and a door-to-door campaign to get out the vote.

It remains to be seen how the new government will handle critical early issues, including the challenge of self-rule, the further consolidation of Aceh's political development, and how the new government will answer key challenges in the ongoing period of conflict and tsunami recovery. UNDP played a key role in Aceh's December 2006 first local elections, helping to ensure a free and fair electoral process. UNDP will now support the newly-elected local government in promoting long-term peace and democracy by establishing a stronger good governance paradigm. This workshop was one of several initiatives securing the way for a more peaceful and prosperous Aceh.

Muhammad Zaki Jamal, UNDP Programme Associate for the UNDP Aceh Governance Programme, explained: "UNDP is committed in promoting and advancing good governance practices in developing countries within their democratic framework. Aceh's Governor initiated this workshop to address how all Bupati and Walikota could play better leading roles in their areas of influence and authority. We hope the workshop will contribute to a more transparent and accountable system of government for the people of Aceh."



Greetings: UNDP's Simon Field (left) with Governor Irwandi

A total of 34 Bupati, Walikota, as well as their deputies, attended the workshop. One of the newly-appointed Bupati, Pak Tagore Abubakar of Aceh Bener Meriah, said: "This workshop really allowed us to deliberate on the needs of a good government system. I am inspired! The sessions were informative and increased my understanding on good governance procedures, how to establish valuable relationships within provincial institutions and organizing feasible work plans. The workshop also provided a great opportunity for me to meet and network with other heads of districts and exchange ideas."

The wives of the Bupati and Walikota were also invited to the workshop and were coached on their specific roles as 'first ladies' (see photo below left). This included training on effective communication, public speaking and cultural awareness. "I was so excited to participate in the training on public speaking, as it is an important part of self grooming," said Maslaila, wife of the Bupati of Aceh Besar. "The workshop was extremely helpful in increasing my awareness on the new state of affairs, hence I am now better prepared to support my husband in his new role."

UNDP has been asked to support the new government with implementation of the Law on Governing Aceh, and the creation of an integrity-based governance environment that is free from corruption and nepotism. UNDP has also started a programme to improve access to justice for people in Aceh, and is working closely with the provincial government to improve governance and reduce the risks of future disasters.



For more information on UNDP's Aceh Governance Programme, contact: muhammad.jamal@undp.org

Reaching a milestone in Disaster Risk Reduction

A historic milestone was reached in Indonesia recently – one that brings a new sense of urgency to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), and which gives UNDP’s DRR team more backing to promote DRR activities across the country.

On 29 March, the House of Representatives finally passed the Disaster Management Bill as the legal basis for disaster management activities in Indonesia. This Bill establishes a new Disaster Management authority at ministerial level in Indonesia to oversee all activities, from risk reduction to mitigation, to response and recovery. Accompanying this is an Action Plan on implementing the Bill in all departments, which must be finalized in six months.

At the Provincial level, a good opportunity for putting DRR into practice came in early April, when the Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Government held a *Musrenbang, Musyawarah Rencana Pembangunan* – a provincial development planning meeting to discuss their five-year development plan for 2007 – 2012.

UNDP’s DRR team approached the Provincial government to introduce the significance of integrating the Disaster Management Bill into its development plan. The results were positive. The DRR team met with members of the Provincial Legal and Public Relations Bureau, who agreed that the Government would announce Aceh as the first province in Indonesia to integrate elements of the Disaster Management Bill into its development plan. A press release was prepared, and the Deputy Governor announced this commitment to the media.

Novel Abdul Gofur, Acting UNDP DRR Programme Officer, said: “This is a significant and inspiring milestone. A commitment from the Government is a major strategic step to highlight DRR concepts as a significant part of sustainable development.”

The DRR team also recently approached Pak Lubis, the Head of Bappeda (Provincial Development Planning Bureau). He recognized DRR concepts and their correlation to development. He invited the DRR team to participate in the provincial development planning meeting, thus giving the team more opportunities to communicate DRR concepts to groups working on politics and governance; economy; health; education; and infrastructure, social, cultural and religious issues in the five-year plan.

UNDP’s DRR Advisors, Robin Willison, David Hollister and Puji Pujiono, also provided DRR pointers to integrate into different parts of the five-year development plan. These pointers included making disaster risk management coursework part of the curriculum in local university programmes.

Asri Wijayanti, DRR’s Public Information Associate, added: “We’ve been working with the Government in a preliminary process that will paint a brighter future for Aceh’s development. It will take some time to see the commitment, but we remain optimistic and confident.”



UNDP’s Asri Wijayanti (left) and Puji Pujiono arrive at the Aceh House of Representatives building ahead of the *Musrenbang*

Ya’ahowu! (Greetings!) from UNDP Nias...

- A fond farewell was bid to Juanita Mandagi, Deputy Programme Coordinator for UNDP’s Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Programme, during April. Fondly known as ‘Mbak Nita’, she spent the last six months in Nias running the CSO programme. UNDP wishes Mbak Nita the best of luck.
- UNDP Nias has welcomed Muslim Nur Widodo back to the team. Mas Widodo worked as a Programme Assistant from November 2005 to December 2006. He’s returned to the island as a Field Assistant for UNDP’s CSO Programme in Nias.
- As this newsletter went to print, UNDP Nias’ ICT Assistant, Daniel Purba, was eagerly awaiting the arrival of his first child. UNDP wishes Daniel and his family all the best!
- News from UNDP’s Livelihood Recovery Programme Round II, with implementing partner Halcrow: training and the establishment of Tenaga Pendamping Petani (Farmers’ Facilitator) was conducted in 24 villages in Nias District, followed by a Demonstration Plot and Farmers’ Field School for farmers.
- UNDP’s Tsunami Recovery Waste Management Programme (TRWMP) held a workshop in late April regarding the Letter of Agreement extension with local government partners (see the story on page 5). TRWMP staff consulted with local government partners and other stakeholders to gain an up-to-date understanding of waste management needs across Nias.
- UNDP’s Governance Programme has finished constructing a water tower and toilet at the Bupati Nias office, Gunung Sitoli, and a water tower at the Bappeda office. In Nias Selatan, the construction of six government offices is on going.

For more information on UNDP’s DRR work, contact robin.willison@undp.org

Judging new ways to deliver a better legal system



Reporting: Pak Amiruddin with UNDP's Fithri Saifa

Driving for hours on muddy roads; being bitten by insects; navigating rivers by raft; and getting drenched in pouring rain. For Pak Amiruddin, these are just some of the challenges he regularly experiences as a Judge for the Mahkamah Syariah (MS) Court (the formal Islamic court in Indonesia).

UNDP helped the MS Court to initiate a mobile court that could speed up the process of resolving post-tsunami inheritance and custodian cases. Thousands of children lost their parents in the disaster, many people lost supporting documents for land and ownership, and there are still many cases to be resolved.

Pak Amiruddin is a Judge for the Calang-based MS Court. He was assigned to the post in May 2006 – a role he's happy to have, as he can directly assist those affected by the tsunami. He is assigned to work on cases in the Lamno district, but often finds himself being called to other regions due to his expertise.

Creating a mobile version of the MS Court gives people better access to the judicial system. The judges establish a court in a particular tsunami-affected region for one day. People then travel to the court's location to have their cases heard. UNDP informs the public via local newspaper advertisements.

But notifying individuals of the date of their case brings its challenges. When a person requests their case to be heard in court, a member of the MS Court must personally hand deliver a *Surat Pangilan* (letter of invitation) to that person. However, as most of these individuals live in remote villages, delivering those letters can be a huge challenge for Pak Amiruddin's team.

He explains: "Often the roads to our destinations are filled with holes, and sometimes my colleagues have to walk part of the journey, or even travel by raft. One of my colleagues once slipped off his bike and fell into a river. He wasn't hurt, but the *Surat Pangilan* was ruined, so he had to return to the office to create a new one!"

Since 2006, the MS Court in Calang has held four mobile courts in three sub-districts. Even reaching these locations can be challenging. Pak Amiruddin explains: "The furthest journey I've made took four hours. Every trip has its challenge, and this is certainly the case when it's raining. But I do enjoy the job. My most recent mobile court sitting was in Setia Bukti. There were three legal teams, and we had to resolve 79 cases from 8am – 6pm. There are still a lot of orphan cases that we are resolving in this region, but every case I've dealt with so far has had a positive outcome."

The MS Court project was developed to accelerate and support the BPN (Land Agency) land titling programme, which aims to help guarantee people's legal property rights, particular orphans and those with inheritance cases. But to produce these land certificates, BPN has to know who the land legally belongs to.

Fithri Saifa, UNDP Programme Coordinator, explains: "It was estimated there would be 6,000 guardian cases post tsunami. To accelerate the completion of these cases, UNDP supported Mahkamah Syariah through a mobile court, to produce quick and legal verdicts on ownership and guardianship. We hope these cases can be resolved within the next one to two years, which then increases the ability to process land certificates."

UNDP has supported the MS Court with the supply of data-processing equipment, and by facilitating bi-weekly discussions between Mahkamah Syariah and BPN in resolving disputes in the field. To date, the Mahkamah Syariah Court has facilitated 796 inheritance and custodian cases in Banda Aceh, Aceh Besar and Aceh Jaya.

For more information on UNDP's Mahkamah Syariah Mobile Court programme, contact : fithri.saifa@undp.org

Rebuilding homes for the people of Simeulue



Fresh start: a family spend time together outside their new home in Simeulue.

For many families living in Western Simeulue, this year will bring something they've longed for since the tsunami – a new home.

In partnership with UN-Habitat, UNDP's Aceh-Nias Settlements Support Programme (ANSSP) is now beginning the second phase of its post-tsunami construction work in Simeulue. A total of 119 houses will be built in three villages in Western Simeulue: Desa Luan Balu, Kuala Baru and Tanjung Raya. This work follows UNDP/UN-Habitat's successful completion of 627 houses in Eastern Simeulue in November 2006.

Simeulue experienced colossal destruction in the 2004 earthquake and tsunami, and the 2005 earthquake. Thousands lost their homes and livelihoods. One of the most heavily-affected areas was Luan Balu village, some 40 kilometres from Simeulue's capital, Sinabang.

Ridha Ansari, UN-Habitat Deputy Project Manager in Simeulue, explained: "We have the names of housing beneficiaries, and we're now going through the final approval phase. The process has been inspiring, as recently one beneficiary passed on the opportunity of a new house to his neighbour, as he felt the neighbour needed the house more. This strong sense of solidarity here is touching."

As part of the housing construction process, UNDP/UN-Habitat are implementing Community Action Planning (CAP). This approach means that beneficiaries are involved thoroughly in the entire building process – from choosing a design, choosing a supplier, taking responsibility for managing finances, and managing all phases of the construction. And every step of the system involves following a standard building code to increase earthquake resistance.

Community meetings were held for two weeks in each of the villages to provide CAP training; develop models and plans for prototype housing; and provide technical support for community land mapping and spatial planning.

One beneficiary from Luan Balu, Pak Usman, said: "I didn't know what to do when the earthquake destroyed my home. I just thank God, as my family and I are still alive until now. I'm so glad that UN-Habitat will rebuild my home, as my own money is just sufficient for my daily expenses.

"Now, I can be directly involved in the entire building process of my own house, especially in choosing a design, supplier, managing finances, and all phases of construction. I hope to be living in my new house within the next three months."

As scheduled, construction work commences in early May, and is expected to be complete in September 2007. UNDP/UN-Habitat also helped the Luan Balu community to facilitate the recovery of village infrastructure, such as sanitary and drainage facilities, and land rehabilitation.

UNDP/UN-Habitat has already completed 3,450 houses in 22 villages in Aceh and Nias. As well as housing construction, UNDP's ANSSP continues work in Aceh Province with the Mahkamah Syariah Court. This assists with clarification on inheritance and custodian decisions in villages for land and other valuable assets (see page 8).

For more information on UNDP's Aceh-Nias Settlements Support Programme, contact: fithri.saifa@undp.org

Taking the initiative for sustainable livelihoods

Restoring and recovering the livelihoods of tsunami-affected people in Aceh remains a key goal for UNDP. But to help local governments ensure the sustainability of livelihood programme implementation, UNDP recently took the initiative to help train government staff directly.

The first Sustainable Livelihood Framework Training Strategy was held in Langsa, Northern Aceh, during early April. A total of 20 participants from various government agencies attended, eager to learn more about how to develop a sustainable livelihood framework in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

UNDP worked in partnership with Badan Diklat (the Aceh Education and Training Board) to deliver the training. Its main focus was to encourage livelihood planners in various government agencies to create effective sustainable livelihood programmes for the local community over the next five years. This includes setting sustainable business opportunities for small and medium industries, and focusing on ways to ensure this is implemented on a routine basis, and in training courses.

Six professional trainers experienced in livelihood programmes delivered the training in two selected pilot districts: Aceh Timur and Lhokseumawe. Following the in-class training, all participants follow field training for three weeks. They identify villagers' daily business activities, and create a feasibility study for business improvements. Their assessment results are then presented to other participants, and also used as a recommendation to the government when drafting annual plans for the livelihood sector.

Hadiansyah, the programme coordinator from Badan Diklat, explained: "I'm inspired that the participants are showing an interest in drafting livelihoods programme planning through this training. It shows they have the initiative to make creative plans for the future of sustainable livelihoods."



Results: beneficiaries are seeing the fruits of their labour.



Opening ceremony: UNDP Livelihoods Programme Officer Said Fauzan Baabud (far right), with provincial Government representatives.

He added: "There are some minor challenges we face, such as encouraging wider government counterparts to join the programme. But we'll maintain our commitment to encourage the continued development of Aceh's livelihoods."

Workshop participant Yenny Amilda currently works in the Government's agriculture department in Langsa, East Aceh. She explained: "There were several areas covered during the workshop, such as livelihood assets and strategies, principles, goals, and the advantages of a sustainable livelihoods framework."

"I now have lots of ideas on how to create a strategic plan for livelihoods sustainability. For example, I learned that a community-based livelihood approach is more appropriate than the current approach we have in my institution. I also learnt how to deal with different people's characteristics. Overall this is useful for me, and I can share this knowledge with my colleagues to help implement sustainable livelihoods projects in the local community."

UNDP Livelihoods Programme Officer Said Fauzan Baabud also attended the training. He said: "It was great to see the participants' enthusiasm throughout the training. I'm confident they'll become good promoters in training more people, and providing a positive impact for the community to reduce poverty through a sustainable livelihood framework."

UNDP's Livelihoods Recovery and Cash for Work programme has supported more than 98,000 households with the revival of fishery, aquaculture, agriculture, small business and trade activities. Due to the significant success of the programme, UNDP is currently developing a post-Emergency Response and Transitional Recovery economic recovery and development programme for Aceh and Nias, to bolster their reviving economies.

For more information on UNDP's Livelihoods programme, contact: said.baabud@undp.org

Considering the environment in port reconstruction

There's no doubt that rebuilding Aceh's ports will positively impact the community. But what impact will this have on the environment? In order to ensure these impacts are positive, UNDP is carrying out a series of Environmental Impact Analysis (EIA) on its port designs throughout Aceh and Nias.

Ports are a critical component of the economic infrastructure of Aceh and Nias. Unfortunately most of the ports on Sumatra's north and west coasts were badly damaged or destroyed as a result of the earthquake and tsunami.

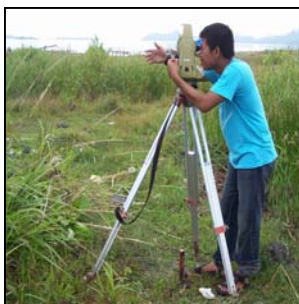
As a result, UNDP is working with Dinas Perhubungan (Transportation Agency) and the ministry of communications on investigations and designs for ports in Calang, Meulaboh, Sinabang (Simeuleu), and Nias through its Tsunami Recovery Port Redevelopment Programme (TRPRP). These new ports will allow isolated districts to obtain materials to rebuild communities and livelihoods, and boost commercial activities. UNDP completed the construction of temporary wharves in Calang and Sinabang, which allow landing craft to supply materials until permanent wharves are constructed by BRR.

But before construction work begins on these ports, UNDP is carrying out detailed EIAs on the proposed developments at each location, all under the guidelines of BAPPENAS (National Development Planning Agency). The aim of the EIAs is simple: to assess how the proposed work will affect the environment and what can be done to prevent these effects.

There are several components of the new ports that could have an impact on the environment. These include the construction of piers and other shoreline structures; the construction of decks that could disturb coral and under-water life forms; ship discharges; accidental oil and chemical spills; run-offs from open storage areas; airborne emissions; traffic burdens; and hazardous cargos.

UNDP sought the expertise of two consultants to carry out EIAs in four areas. The analysis on Calang and Sinabang ports were awarded to Bogor Agriculture University, while the Meulaboh and Nias EIAs were awarded to Mitra Lingkungan Dutaconsult (MLD).

MLD Consultant Edy Priatna explained: "The EIAs will reflect the extent to which the community's natural resources, human health, environmental health, and aesthetics are protected by existing environmental regulations and guidelines. Our assessments at Meulaboh and Nias ports began by identifying, predicting and evaluating the positive and negative aspects of the port construction. For example, how waste disposal by incineration or chemical means affects the environment.



Measuring the impact: carrying out EIAs on sea and land (below)

"We also assess socio-cultural aspects to understand the advantages or disadvantages for the local community. For example, a commercial port cannot be recommended in an area if it has more potential as a fishing port. That's why we need to ensure the EIAs cover all needs of the environment and community."

Scot Humphreys, UNDP Port Team Leader for MDF-funded projects, explained: "These assessments will be completed by the end of June, and the result will support construction work at the ports. We don't want any of these projects to disturb the environment's natural balance, but when constructing ports it has a lasting effect in that place forever. The main idea is to minimize the effects during construction and once the project is complete. We simply want to provide the community with an environmentally-friendly transportation facility."

Scot added: "Without fully operational ports, Aceh cannot achieve its potential in opening access to the global market. Rebuilding ports will have a major influence on the long-term economic development of the province, as well as speed up the reconstruction and recovery process. Through this analysis, TRPRP can contribute to a thriving future for Aceh and Nias."

Guided by BRR's Master Plan for Aceh's port redevelopment, UNDP is supporting the rehabilitation of ports and other economic infrastructure. This work will help facilitate the long-term economic recovery and development of the province, and help speed up the reconstruction and recovery process. BRR is currently tendering the construction of three ports: Gunung Sitoli, Calang and Sinabang, with Meulaboh not far behind. It is the intention to have all four ports completed before the end of 2008.

For more information on UNDP's Tsunami Recovery Port Redevelopment Programme, contact: scot.humphreys@undp.org

60 SECONDS WITH...

SAID FAUZAN BAABUD, UNDP Livelihoods Programme Officer, Banda Aceh



What does your current job involve?

Well, I'm a Programme Officer for the Livelihoods component under the UNDP Emergency Response and Transitional Recovery (ERTR) programme in Aceh and Nias. I'm responsible for managing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating all Livelihoods projects for tsunami-affected people in Aceh under ETRT's mandate. The budget for those projects is USD59 million, until the end of 2007. I work closely with livelihoods programme stakeholders in Aceh, such as the Government, BRR, NGOs and donors.

What do you most enjoy about the job?

It's given me a lot of opportunities to help the people of Aceh after the disaster. As an Acehese person, I'm so happy that my work benefits my people. The results of our assistance are there. I'm also lucky because I'm supported by a great team. In other words, the working environment is very comfortable.

What do you find most challenging?

The challenge is always there. Working with these types of disaster recovery projects needs strong motivation and a non-stop commitment. Managing multi-million dollar livelihoods projects, and speeding up the deliverables to the affected people is definitely very challenging. We all know that no-one has experience of managing a disaster on this scale, so I always try to improve the project results to get better achievements and avoid headaches. But I love challenging jobs.

In your opinion, what has been the biggest achievement of the UNDP Livelihoods programme to date?

Overall, I'm happy with most of UNDP's livelihood achievements. One of the biggest achievements is on our Livelihood Recovery Round I projects. Through this, we've restored affected livelihoods through a sustainable approach from our implementing partners. We hope households can return to pre-tsunami income generation levels.

What are your hopes for the remainder of the UNDP Livelihoods programme?

I hope that beneficiaries can stand on their own feet to support their family. I also expect that our implementing partners can execute projects based on agreed schedules. This is important because we try to avoid delays in providing assistance to the community.

What are your thoughts about the vast changes taking place within Aceh since the tsunami?

Aceh was a conflict zone for around 30 years, which created many disadvantages. The tsunami only made it worse. I'm so glad to see a lot of humanitarian assistance coming through to Aceh from national and international people and organizations. I hope the ongoing rehabilitation and reconstruction can build a better Aceh, and bring better welfare for Aceh's people.



UNDP Aceh & Nias News is created by the UNDP Communications Unit in Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

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