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TSUNAMI

24 MONTHS AFTER

Tsunami 24 Months After

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CONTENTS

Foreword	2
A message from the Regional Director	3
Looking back	4
Looking at the short-term impact of Plan's programs	6
Reflections on the past 24 months	18
Thoughts on sustainability	20
Thoughts on impact	22
Thoughts on linking macro frameworks and individual needs	24
Fact sheet	26
Our projects	28
Financial Analysis	34
Geographical and population coverage	37
Human resources	37
A thank you from a young beneficiary	38
Acknowledgements	39

FOREWORD

It's now two years since the Indian Ocean Tsunami struck. The relief phase has since moved on and given way to reconstruction and rehabilitation. Everywhere you look, the sights and sounds of people rebuilding their lives, livelihoods, and communities abound.

And it's around this time that many agencies publish reports reflecting on their work and impact, and looking to the future. In that respect our "Tsunami 24 months After" report is no different.

While we have provided the necessary information on what we have done and what we have achieved, this report goes a lot further.

We wanted to find out just how effective our programs had been from the perspective of the people that matter to us most – children, but children as part of the larger community. So to get an objective assessment of our performance and effectiveness, Plan invited an outside consultant to review and catalogue our programs and their impact on the ground.

To achieve this, he travelled to the four worst affected countries – India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand – and asked three straightforward questions:

What aspects of children's life have improved as a result of Plan's work?

Did Plan's programs have any adverse affect on children's lives?

What external factors affected children's lives after the Tsunami?

His findings stirred an internal debate amongst all of us involved in the tsunami response, forcing us to re-evaluate and reflect on our programs from a different perspective.

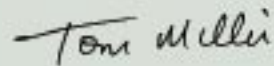
This report is the outcome of that debate and the result of those reflections. It is an honest, open, and introspective look at our work by our staff, and has proved revealing, rewarding, and enlightening for all of us.

As a responsible international organisation, Plan is accountable to many individual donors, governments, and international organisations, but we're also responsible to the communities and children we support.

This report reflects that accountability, and hence begins with the answers to those three questions.

While we have clearly made mistakes, overall we are proud of our work to date. As Plan is primarily a development organisation working in disaster situations – our commitment to these areas and communities so badly hit by the tsunami, will be measured in years – not days, or months.

Thank you for your past, and continuing support, and taking the time to read this report.



Thomas J. Miller
Chief Executive Officer

A MESSAGE FROM THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

My involvement in the post tsunami efforts started within hours, as country director of Plan Sri Lanka. For a year and a half my focus was on that country, and the needs and priorities of the Sri Lankan communities. Now as Asia Regional Director, I cast a different eye across all 4 countries, a slightly less detailed view, yet equally involved.

We conducted this report because we wanted to know how effective our programs had been to the children and the families we had assisted and to give the donors an impression of our impact.

But two years of living, sleeping, working, and playing with the children and communities, devastated by the largest freak of nature in living memory, meant it was difficult for us to objectively assess our effectiveness because we were just too close.

So, we left it to an independent consultant to provide that objectivity, and the children and communities to provide the answers – with some interesting results.

If the standard for effectiveness is "how fast we spent donated funds", then we didn't score high. But that was a deliberate choice. We wanted to ensure our funds were well spent, and not as a result of some artificial time pressure.

If the standard for efficiency was the speed at which our construction program progressed, then again we would not fare too well. However, it was a conscious decision of ours to consult the children before proceeding with either the construction of schools or housing, and that inevitably took time.

Therefore, this report is not intended as a measurement guide or comparison against other organisations, agencies, or criteria. It is a measurement of the real impact we had on the people we came to, and continue to, support.

Overall, I am extremely proud of our work. In unprecedented circumstances, and under unimaginable conditions and pressure, Plan undoubtedly increased the survivability of thousands of children, and improved the quality of life for countless more.



Mingming Evora
Regional Director
Plan Asia

“I have forgotten the tsunami.
Even if you talk about it,
I will not be afraid.”

T. Pragash, 14 years old, India



LOOKING BACK

There have been many words used to describe the response to the tsunami: accountability, coordination, development, human rights, LRRD (Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development), local capacity, professionalism to name but a few. These words speak of the fundamental principles of humanitarian assistance, however they continue to represent the biggest challenges facing the international community.

Yet, despite these challenges, it is evident there has been a positive impact, not to mention significant improvements, as children and communities continue to recover. One of the

most striking is the emotional resilience and healing of survivors like 14-year-old T. Pragash who told us, “I have forgotten the tsunami. Even if you talk about it, I will not be afraid.”

We celebrate the small, yet significant, signs of renewed confidence we see among the children and their families, but what part did our programs and activities play in this, and were we as efficient and effective as we could have been?

Looking back, the tsunami was a challenge for everyone involved. The scale of the destruction meant children and their

families were not only forced to rebuild their lives, but also their communities. For us, the international community, the sheer magnitude and geographical area covered meant we were conducting emergency relief operations across multiple countries, cultures, and religions.

Like everyone involved in the disaster we too learned, improved, and evolved. As a responsible humanitarian organisation, part of that evolution is to continually examine our role and activities in bringing about the recovery and improvement to the lives of the 650,000 affected people we reached.

So now two years on, as Plan’s commitment to the communities and children in India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka, reaches the halfway stage (our Thailand program is currently phasing out and will close in June 2007), it seems only prudent that we scrutinise those improvements, and the factors responsible for them: the psychosocial activities, the physical and economic recovery, the rebuilding of the social infrastructure, the return to school, and the transitional and permanent housing. This report reflects that scrutiny.



“Children welcomed the positive changes in their parents’ attitudes towards their education and well-being.”

LOOKING AT THE SHORT-TERM EFFECT OF PLAN'S PROGRAMS



For this review, we enlisted the help of a consultant. His task was to help us critically assess our work and specifically the impact on the lives of children and families in the four countries where we had established post-tsunami recovery and rehabilitation programs. We surveyed parents, interviewed various officials and local staff members, and most important of all, we talked with children.

In addition to his primary role, he was also asked to gauge our child-centred interventions in the larger humanitarian context. His objective input was of particular importance to us.

The consultant's findings made us reflect on our programs from different perspectives. This report is the result of those reflections.

The review focuses on a single sector per country:

Shelter in Sri Lanka (*Hambantota District*),
Livelihood in India (*Nagapattinam and Karaikal Districts*),
Health in Indonesia (*Aceh Besar District*), and
Early childhood care and development in Thailand
(*Phuket and Phang-Nga Provinces*).

The choice of sector reflects the most challenging area for us in that country, with the exception of Thailand, where our sole activity was an education program. Because of our commitment to learning from the challenges, we chose to evaluate only the most difficult program in each country, believing it would provide greater insight.

For Plan, it was also important to look at the sectors that were not readily associated with children. Our work in those sectors was based on the principle that to fully provide for children we needed to help families and communities recover. Thus, the interventions we made in these sectors did have a direct impact on the lives of children.

The assessment involved a literature review, consultations, interviews, and surveys all designed to investigate three primary questions:

What aspects of children's lives have improved as a result of our programs?

Has any aspect of children's lives been adversely affected as a result of our programs?

What external factors affected the lives of children after the tsunami?

Summary of the projects reviewed

Permanent housing in Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, Plan adopted two different approaches to post-tsunami settlement building: the Yayawatta housing settlement, where we built 200 homes for residents, and an individual housing scheme where 125 families were helped to each build a house on land they previously owned.

In Yayawatta, the homes have three bedrooms, kitchen, living room, bathroom, running water, electricity, and sanitation facilities. The settlement has an internal infrastructure of roads, green belt areas, and child-friendly spaces and will eventually house a multipurpose zone (accommodating a cultural centre, health centre, post office and village office), an early childhood care and development (ECCD) centre, playground, and a children's park.

For the individual homes, Plan provided a lump sum grant to allow previous homeowners to rebuild their badly damaged or destroyed property.

In comparing the two approaches, we looked at the complex operational environment that all agencies had to face. Following



Residents of Yayawatta being presented with the keys to their new homes (October 2006)

the tsunami, the government imposed a moratorium on the building of houses within 100m of the coast in nine districts, and 200m in another five. In May 2005, after considerable controversy, the restrictions were removed. By this time, however, NGOs, including Plan, were too heavily committed to projects to significantly alter our plans. These late changes did however, force us to reassess, and subsequently remove assistance for two settlements in late 2005 as a result of insufficient demand for the properties. The Government's involvement in settlement housing, and the ever-changing numbers of beneficiaries, undoubtedly added to the complications. Furthermore, the unparalleled sudden spike in housing construction led to increased demand for building materials (sand, cement, and timber etc) and other services, creating inflationary pressures on the economy and a budgetary nightmare for NGOs.



Plan, with our local partner, REAL, introduced joint ownership of mechanised boats and nets in Nagapattinam

Livelihood recovery in India

In India, the report looked at the support provided to a fishing community in the Nagapattinam District of Tamil Nadu State, and an agricultural community in Karaikal District of Puducherry State.

Plan, in partnership with the Rural Education and Action for Liberation (REAL), distributed 115 mechanised boats with nets to five villages in Nagapattinam. The boats were provided to groups of four men as joint owners. In addition, REAL-Plan promoted the use of solar dryers, iceboxes, and other fish storage units.

We were especially keen to see if criticism surrounding "unprofessional support" to fishing communities by some agencies also applied to Plan programs.

The agricultural villages where the Centre for Environment and Development Alternatives (CEDA) and Plan helped farmers reclaim their land and water resources provided the other area of scrutiny for the study. This program involved manually removing seawater salt from fields, pumping out saline water from ponds, and constructing drainage channels to increase the natural flushing of salt by the rains. At the same time CEDA-Plan distributed salt-tolerant rice seeds and organic fertilisers to encourage farmers to adopt organic planting methods.



ECCD in Thailand

In Thailand we looked at the early childhood care and development centres we had supported through the Education Service Area Office. The intervention entailed making government and local officials, families, and daycare centre staff aware of good ECCD practices in an effort to improve both the demand for the practices and the quality of teaching. All the centres existed prior to the tsunami using land and buildings provided by the Government. After the disaster, Plan improved the centres by equipping them and training the caregivers.

Health in Indonesia

In Indonesia, Plan's overall health program provided the focus for the assessment. Throughout the emergency phase we distributed hygiene kits (soap, shampoo, toothpaste, underwear, sanitary commodities, etc) to people in temporary camps. Separate kits were provided for adolescents and distributed to boys and girls between 12 and 18 years of age. In addition, Plan supported two NGOs, Yayasan Ekowisata Aceh and Atjeh Human Health Foundation, to establish 24-hour temporary clinics in Lampuuk, Peukan Bada, and Leupung Sub-Districts.

A supplementary feeding for children under-5 and to pregnant, or lactating, mothers with two NGOs, Yayasan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Insani and Atjeh Student of Health as well as a vitamin and mineral supplements program for 400,000 people in Aceh Jaya and Aceh Besar with Helen Keller International added to our activities. The vitamin and mineral formulations were designed to reduce anaemia levels among adolescents, adults, and children aged between 6 months and 5 years.

At the same time as distributing kits and supplements, Plan focused on revitalising Aceh's public health system. Here we targeted the rebuilding of destroyed Posyandu (community health posts) and Polindes (birth-delivery systems) as well as supporting secondary clinical training centres and four rounds of a national immunisation day.

Early Childhood Care provides a strong foundation for primary education



Families involved in constructing their own homes were more satisfied than those in settlements

What aspects of children's lives have improved as a result of our programs?

In Sri Lanka, consultations with children and family members, combined with a household satisfaction survey, showed that overall the residents of both the Yayawatta housing settlement and individual house rebuilding projects were happy to be settled after the long period of uncertainty. Plan Sri Lanka's initial survey at the onset of the rehabilitation phase, as well as discussions from consultations from the first-year review (see the report, *Children and the Tsunami*), indicated that families regarded moving to a permanent house as paramount to restoring a 'sense of normalcy', and so it proved to be. When asked to compare overall, the situation of life today with that before the tsunami, children and their families expressed comfort about their health, housing, and community. Their one remaining concern was livelihood recovery.

In Yayawatta, 93 percent of the respondents to the survey thought their new homes were equally as good (50 percent) or better (43 percent) than their previous ones. Children especially commented on how much they enjoyed the beautiful environment with fresh air and colourful houses. For the families that built individual homes the satisfaction level was even higher (Plan provided a US\$7,000 construction grant for these properties). As they had already invested time, effort, labour, and additional

money in the construction of the property, they felt much more attached to their new homes. When asked to put a monetary value on their new property, responses ranged from US\$25,000 to US\$50,000.

Of course the satisfaction levels of the different occupants varied as a result of many factors. The residents of Yayawatta had no involvement in the construction process and having just recently moved in, they are only now beginning to personalise and familiarise themselves with the new houses provided to them. As a result their satisfaction level remains moderate.

Individual owners have also been faster in accepting full responsibility for their properties whereas settlement residents continue to expect donors and NGOs to provide basic upkeep and repair services.

However, the study found that level of satisfaction could be improved substantially in Yayawatta. Discussions, particularly among children, identified that although much of the physical construction of the individual houses is complete, building the social fabric and social capital of the new communities would enhance their popularity with their new residents.

In India, children expressed satisfaction with their current family and community situation in both the fishing and agricultural communities where Plan supported projects. While household economic recovery remains below pre-tsunami levels, Plan's livelihood projects have affected children in positive ways and it was especially refreshing to hear overwhelmingly positive reactions.

Children in the fishing community noted two major improvements in their lives. First, the boat co-ownership program has broken down previous social barriers and relationship hierarchies. The obvious economic divide between former boat owners and labourers, which was in turn reflected in the relationships between the children of these two groups, no longer exists.

Second, while it was difficult to determine a sustainable change in household expenditure patterns, children welcomed the positive changes in their parents' attitudes towards their education and well-being. They thought that their parents were now investing more in their children's development.

The gratitude that the agricultural community expressed towards Plan's intervention was even greater. The contamination caused by seawater from the tsunami was so extensive that experts warned the land would remain barren for at least two to three years, meaning no crops for food or income. The situation for the agricultural communities was made worse, because much of the government and NGO assistance was directed towards the fishing communities. The introduction of saline-resilient rice and organic fertilisers by CEDA-Plan, and the subsequent harvest within a year (although half of the pre-tsunami yield) was seen as a lifesaver.

For children, additional livelihood-related activities, such as the introduction of equal wages for women, informed decision-making to stop planting genetically modified eggplant, and sharing the harvest with old people in the villages was also seen as positive social change.



Children said the boat co-ownership program has broken down former social barriers and relationship hierarchies



In Thailand, preschool mothers and caregivers cited multiple examples of positive changes in their children's behaviours as a result of attending the centres: their children are noticeably more talkative; they role-play as teachers at home; they repeat the games, plays, and songs they learn; and they show much more interest in books than before.

Plan's early childhood care and development (ECCD) programs generated better responses from minority and more vulnerable populations than from the Thai communities. While the Thai population had access to various childcare and educational options after the tsunami, minority groups such as the Moken (sea gypsies), had to make the best of what was already there. Thus, making existing centres more accessible and improving the quality of the teaching and care meant a great deal to them.

One local government education official highlighting the "far superior" quality of teaching and care at the Plan-supported centres admitted that ECCD had not been a budgetary priority before the Plan intervention. Having now seen how quality ECCD improves the development of young children, the local education department intends to replicate the Plan model in all its centres.



Plan provides opportunities for minority groups like the sea gypsies

In Indonesia, the vitamin, mineral, and micronutrient supplement programs fulfilled a life-saving need during the recovery phase when food security was unreliable. Plan and partner NGOs have monitored the prevalence of malnutrition, anaemia, and diarrhoea amongst children and pregnant women over the past two years, finding a satisfactory level of improvement. For example, where Plan implemented a supplementary feeding program, severe malnutrition was eliminated and moderate malnutrition rates decreased from 15.4 percent to 2.7 percent.

The responses from a consultation with children indicated a fair knowledge and awareness of good health practices, personal hygiene, and environmental sanitation. Yet despite clearly knowing what they should or should not do to be healthy, in practice, their daily reality was a different matter. For example, the children were aware they should have three healthy meals a day, yet many would skip breakfast and buy non-nutritious snacks on their way to school. Older children (13–18) also indicated that younger siblings (6–9 years old) often skipped their baths. However, the children were able to offer solutions to bridging the theory to practice gap by using religious study groups, community learning, and sports.

One evident success of Plan's health program in Aceh was the standardisation of a training module for the village health posts (Posyandu), and the development of minimum standards for all

Aceh's districts. The influx of many organisations after the tsunami, each with a different approach to improving the health system, created considerable confusion among communities and health professionals. Plan took on the challenge of standardisation by conducting a needs assessment and a series of consultations with village representatives, religious and women leaders, and Ministry of Health officials. The minimum standards are now used in all of Aceh's districts. If successful, the Government will consider applying these standards throughout the country. This offers the potential for a significant impact on children's health in Aceh and beyond.



Children learn how to stay healthy in Indonesia

Have any aspects of children's lives been adversely affected as a result of our programs?

There was nothing to indicate any adverse effects on individual children as a result of our programs so we expanded the question to look for other possible effects from a comparative perspective. In our response to the tsunami, did we adhere to our commitment to reach as many children as possible and to work with the most vulnerable children (targeting)? Did our response build on the resilience of affected children and families by supporting indigenous groups and structures (building on local capacity)?

Targeting

To reach the most vulnerable groups of children and families, clear thinking on targeted populations is crucial. Many factors influenced where and how Plan was involved in the tsunami recovery and rehabilitation process: our knowledge of the geographic area, government regulations, the presence of other agencies, the timing of our interventions, and the urgent need for assistance among others. Revisiting the targeted populations two years on when the situation is clearer, revealed many useful insights.



In Thailand, the impact of our ECCD work would have been greater if we had exclusively targeted minority and vulnerable communities, such as the Moken and ethnic Burmese migrants. However, because these groups, especially ethnic Burmese children, were more difficult to reach and did not come to the government run education centres, targeting them was extremely difficult, especially in the emergency phase. For us, mobilising government resources to reach these groups would have required a different approach. Home-based ECCD (in which a trained mother-caregiver takes care of several children from the neighbourhood) would have been a good option to pursue, as this would have taken the program to the marginalised groups rather than expect them to come to us. Incorporating the idea of local curriculum development, would also have allowed us to tailor daily activities to enhance the value of the native language and traditions of different groups as well as help them better assimilate into Thai society.

“And most importantly, the children advised us.”

In Sri Lanka, the noticeably good quality of construction and the assets of some of the individually built houses suggested that those families may not have needed Plan's support. These families owned land, could prove it, and thus could smoothly set about rebuilding. While they received financial assistance from Plan, they also had access to other resources that provided more flexibility and choice. On the other hand, those unable to prove any land ownership had no choice but to move to the government assigned settlements and the houses provided to them. Comparatively, those families in individually built houses were without doubt better off and less in need. Yet, as the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition observed in its report on the links between relief, rehabilitation, and development, the tsunami left those who had been moderately well off destitute. Helping those who are falling into poverty recover quickly and with minimum input is an important strategy for keeping the population requiring long-term support manageable and the local economy running.

The number of families choosing to build their own houses has subsequently increased since the lifting of restrictions on rebuilding near the coast (buffer zone). Yet even here, there are noticeable economic differences, not to mention access to support from agencies and NGOs. For instance, the Tamil populations on the Northeast coast have received much less support than the Sinhalese in the South. Initially, Plan's housing intervention focused on the southern Sinhalese-majority of Hambantota District because of our previous presence there. In the early months of the rehabilitation phase, when there was a multitude of agencies offering support, expanding our intervention to other districts was not an easy option. Two years on, and with the change in the operational environment, perhaps we should be looking to expand, even more consciously and strategically, into areas that are economically poorer and where minorities maintain a more significant presence.



Plan produced minimum standards and guidelines for managing village health posts (Posyandu)

Building on local capacity

According to the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition a fundamental measure of progress is whether the international community can 'hand back' to local and national authorities responsibility for pursuing human rights protection and the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals. Our community health post revitalisation program in Aceh has the best chance of achieving this 'handing back' more than any other of our activities. Here, we have succeeded in not only harmonising our program with the policies, capacities, and actions of national and local actors, but also strengthening them.

In India, prior to the tsunami, the scheduled caste (Dalits) - the most marginalised social group - were regularly excluded from social economic development and remain so today. In the fishing communities, Dalits typically find work as labourers for small boat owners or on trawlers. In the agriculture communities, they are either landless labourers or small and marginal farmers.

After the tsunami, the fishing community as a whole received far greater support from the government and the international community than the agricultural communities because they were the most obvious and visibly affected population. However, there were issues regarding poor coordination, over-supply of boats,

and lack of professional knowledge within agencies surrounding the coastal resource management in those communities, and Plan was not immune to these criticisms.

Given our partners' competitive strength in sustainable agriculture, we could have focused much more – or even exclusively – on agricultural communities.

At the same time, children **in Indonesia** pointed out the importance of mobilising groups at the community level. For instance, when analysing ways to reduce the gap between knowledge and practice in personal hygiene and nutrition; they identified certain groups as a good resource for helping bring about positive behavioural change. They cited community-based learning, religious study, and sports groups - all influential associations formed long before the tsunami and that had remained active. Children who do not attend formal schooling are often members of these groups, and as such can be reached. Because of the importance of these groups in the community, parents are supportive of their children's involvement. And most

importantly, the children advised us that crucial messages are more likely to be received through these groups because the members respect the adult leaders and the advice they give.

These groups are the most natural path to children. The social bond created in them provides a valuable coping mechanism. To some extent, Plan tapped into these groups, but we could have made more effort to identify them and their value at the onset of the recovery process, revitalise those that required it, and effectively used them to convey vital information that the affected children needed.



Photo by Amm- a student from Bangyai School, Thailand after joining the Plan supported workshop



Children play on the new boats in India

“That decision should always be based on the voices of the children and families.”

What external factors affected the lives of children after the tsunami?

To look at the impact of external factors, we first had to consider what really was external and ultimately beyond our control.

In examining our interventions in the controversial areas of housing and livelihood, one 'external' factor repeatedly cropped up as having substantially influenced our decisions— government policy. The initial housing restriction (later dropped) was by far the most significant factor, but there were other examples such as land allocation, designation of the government office in charge for particular issues, and the uniform scrutiny and control of NGO activities in some countries in the early days of the response.

In light of our linking aid efforts to the overall development of the country, it is crucial for us to design our efforts within the framework set by the governments. Yet that sometimes prevents us from providing effective and timely support to affected people. Government policy decisions are external to us, but our choice of intervention is entirely internal, and should always be based on the voices of children and families. It is this balance and the ability to respect both the macro-level framework and the individual rights that will ultimately create viable, acceptable, and sustainable solutions to peoples affected by disasters.

However, not all external factors are a hindrance to development and relief operations. The peace agreement ending the 30-year conflict between the Indonesian Government and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) has allowed investment, rehabilitation, and development to flow across tsunami-hit Aceh, and unleashed community entrepreneurship.

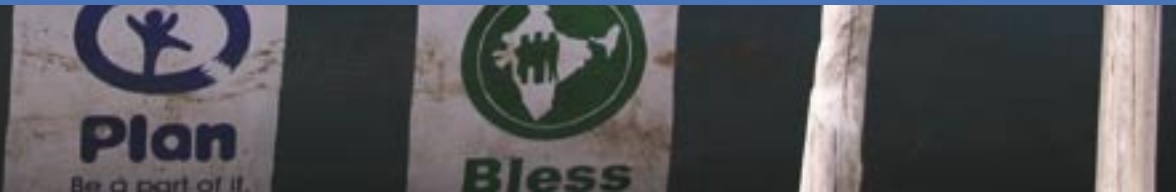
The strategies aimed at eradicating malnutrition, anaemia, and stunting should therefore take into account these external factors more rigorously because, in the end, sustainable solutions to these problems lie in increased livelihood opportunities and household income, which in turn can increase food consumption. These new socio-economic and political changes highlight how vital it is to always revisit our projects.



“Did we listen to children?
Yes, but not enough.”

*Daniel Rogers
Tsunami Program Manager, Sri Lanka*

REFLECTION ON
THE PAST 24 MONTHS



Thoughts on sustainability

Richard Sandison, Tsunami Program Manager, Aceh



A moment for thought. A girl reflects on her community

Over the past 12 months, the pace of reconstruction in tsunami-affected areas has increased dramatically. Schools, houses, hospitals, village health posts, and government offices have sprung up. Programs have focused on increasing the capacity of new secondary and primary school teachers, health workers, government administrators, while others still centre on restoring livelihoods for tsunami-affected families. "What is clear is that a sustainable analysis and strategy needs to be incorporated into all of these programs, and especially in those where we expect significant community and government responsibility for future management. If not, we will have raised community expectations for better education, protection, and health services for their children without establishing the necessary foundations to support such a vision.

What is important in any analysis and strategy is to distinguish between the sustainability of activities and the sustainability of benefits. Some of Plan's activities will finish at some stage.

For example, Plan, and its local partners in Aceh have been providing an integrated package of vocational training that includes replacement of assets such as carpentry tools, links to employment and marketing opportunities, and training to increase productivity and quality. These activities will not continue indefinitely. But this does not mean that there is no sustainability. Families will be in a better position to support their children's education and health requirements because the benefits of this program will be sustained after Plan transitions out.

What concerns us now is that some activities that we, the international community, have undertaken may not have sustainable benefit. A number of newly constructed buildings, for example, seem under-utilised or unoccupied. One has to wonder whether these buildings were constructed with the full participation, planning, and approval of the authority or department that will be responsible for meeting the future recurrent costs. Do these new buildings also take into account

the capacity of local administrative systems to support staff and service delivery? Was full participation actually possible at the time these buildings were designed and constructed? In the pressure to move quickly, organisations, including Plan, may not have used the same rigour in developing community and government ownership of proposed programs as they do in non-crisis times. The lack of participation, and subsequent ownership, will certainly undermine the long-term sustainability of some programs.

There is a significant segment of the tsunami-affected population that is still continually sidelined by recovery and reconstruction programs – children. There is a considerable body of evidence that indicates that children have a lot to offer in ensuring that programs benefit the community and that they are properly designed and implemented. Their views are often very similar to those found in numerous international evaluations.

In the next three years, Plan will be placing added emphasis on maximising the sustainability of the benefits in activities it has supported over the previous two years by listening more to children, families, local society and the Government on how they think these activities should be sustained.



Drawing in memory of those killed in the tsunami by a child in Sri Lanka

Thoughts on impact

Daniel Rogers, Tsunami Program Manager, Sri Lanka

When we are asked what we have done in the two years since the tsunami struck, we, the international community, usually reply by reeling off lists of achievements and how much money we have spent, as if in some way this gives an indication of the 'success' of our programs. However, we know not to be deceived by this apparent success or to fall into lazily thinking that by producing a number of 'outputs' (houses, schools, loans, etc.) we are making a lasting and positive impact on the lives of children and their families.

In Sri Lanka, Plan constructed one settlement with 200 houses. It has excellent transport links, is 10 minutes from a large town, has relatively good coastal access, and other attractive features. It is green and shady with many established trees having been retained during the construction process. On the face of it, the project has been a success. We have built houses and now many families have a permanent home with water and electricity, whereas before Plan's intervention they were living in temporary shelters. But we have to look beyond the 'number of houses built' to understand the real impact of the project and to see where we have done well, where we have gone wrong, and what lessons we must learn to improve the lives of children affected by the tsunami and to improve our response to future disasters.

At the planning stage of settlement houses, when the Government insisted that no one could rebuild their house by the coast, many questions were raised. But many were not that maybe should have been:

- Was this strategy in the best interests of the affected families?
- Did they really want to move?
- Were they consulted in this process?
- Were they traumatised by the tsunami?
- Were they happy to accept an offer of a new house wherever that house may be?
- Were they ever given a choice?
- Were the effects of moving thousands of families from the source of their livelihood (the sea) really considered?
- There were not enough answers to these important questions.

Further developments followed, and further questions were raised. The restriction on housing in the coastal zone was gradually relaxed and eventually removed. Finally given the choice, many thousands opted to return to their land by the sea. Who would support them financially? In the meantime, many 'settlement' houses had already been built. Who would live there now?

The answers are not always clear, and they do not always make nice reading for those who had hoped for a simple solution to the housing problem caused by the tsunami. It was never going to be easy. The difficult situation became even more complex when combined with the complicating factors of government regulations, competition among NGOs, and the pressures from well-meaning donors.

- Did we make mistakes? Yes.
- Did we listen to children? Yes, but not enough.
- Were we influenced by outside factors? Yes, but this is always the case.
- Is it too late to ensure that the long-term impact of our work will be a positive one? No.
- Constructing the houses – delivering the output – is not the end of the story. And in a way, it is the easy part. The challenge now is to listen again to children, to involve children, families and communities in the process of making a house a home and to work alongside people to help them achieve a level of satisfaction with their new homes that we can all be proud of.

Thoughts on linking macro frameworks and individual needs

Mohanamma Chittoor, Tsunami Program Manager, India



Back to the sea

The past 24 months have been filled with good and bitter memories. As affected people struggled to recover from the tsunami, we, the aid workers, were challenged by two often-contradictory demands: The macro-level framework and theoretical debate on one side and the wishes of individual survivors on the other.

For example, we introduced organic pest control to farmers. We explained that it would take time to see the results, but it would be good in the long run. But for farmers pushed to the edge, 'waiting' was unacceptable. Some wanted to resort to the chemical pest control they had used prior to the tsunami. Others tried to stop them from doing so. The discussion among farmers even created a new, additional tension and frustration.

The introduction of a saline-resistant rice variety (Co 43) was also difficult to appreciate in the short-term. This variety produces lower yields than the traditional variety (Ponni), but it can be sustained in saline conditions. We had to try the idea

very patiently with farmers. For us, it was the only way out of the post-tsunami devastation. But for them it was a big risk. Ultimately we won over many farmers who have recently harvested their first crop, while reluctant farmers continue waiting for their Ponni rice to produce. Those who took the risk are now happy with that leap of faith – although their income is now only half of what they previously cultivated. We have much more work to do to help them all recover their livelihood to pre-tsunami income levels.

In the fishing communities, we introduced the idea of co-ownership of boats – but only after a long debate between partners, communities, children. We decided rather than giving boats to individuals, we would give one to groups of four men. Many people accepted the scheme, but there are still some who refuse the idea of 'equal status' which previous boat owners and labourers now share. Two years after the tsunami, the debate continues.

As for the many positive memories, I think of how our partners and communities successfully lobbied the Government to compensate crop losses for farmers of leased land that was otherwise going to the land owners. A devastated widow, with old parents and two children, started a small business with Plan assistance and told me that she could now give her children money for the bus to take them to school. Women, who had sold the fishing trawlers' by-catch (unwanted smaller fish) before the tsunami, a livelihood they lost in the disaster, formed a self-help group, sought support for alternative income generation, and thus forged a new path for themselves. Fishing husbands who had survived, encouraged their wives to join the self-help groups – quite a change in attitude compared to the pre-disaster norm.

We have been conscious that our livelihood interventions may not be sustainable. But we hold to the principle that humanitarian imperatives come first. What we have done so far has focused on the recovery of livelihood options. We now need to fill the

gap between 'people's perceived needs and preference' and 'sustainable livelihood alternatives.' The reflection of the two-year impact has helped us identify the gaps more clearly and pointed out ways to better link livelihood interventions with longer-term development.

“We saw severe malnutrition eliminated and moderate malnutrition rates decrease from 15.4 percent to 2.7 percent.”

FACT SHEET



Our projects

Here is a glimpse of how Plan has supported children and their families over the past 24 months:



A health worker in a Posyandu

“In the future, all children throughout Aceh will receive the same standard of health services.”

Health

Indonesia: Plan produced minimum standards and guidelines for managing village health posts (Posyandu), in collaboration with the Government of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province and the District Health Office. In the future, all children throughout Aceh will receive the same standard of health services.

We introduced a supplementary feeding program in 6 villages of Mesjid Raya Sub-district that saw severe malnutrition eliminated and moderate malnutrition rates decrease from 15.4 percent to 2.7 percent.

India: Plan provided 2,495 children in child care centres with supplementary nutrition. No case of malnutrition has been found among children attending Plan-supported care centres.

We focused on anaemia among breastfeeding mothers and adolescents immediately after the disaster. Medication and awareness have reduced its prevalence.

We addressed the health needs of some 1,500 people (350 of them children) in the tsunami-affected areas by establishing mobile medical teams and assisting with specialised medical care. In addition, more than 550 pregnant women received antenatal and post-natal care.

Sri Lanka: Plan supported the quick recovery of health services immediately after the tsunami by providing medicines and essential equipment, such as ECG and X-ray machines to hospitals and health centres.

We developed a joint plan of action with the Ministry of Health to improve childcare and nutrition. Particular emphasis was given to identifying and addressing the causes of child malnutrition.



Supplementary nutrition for Indian children in the child care centre

Childcare and education

In India: Plan established 91 child care centres in the tsunami-affected areas. The centres have helped more than 2495 under 5s, receive a good start on their physical, mental, and cognitive development. Primary school teachers report that children from these centres have performed better than others who did not attend.

We provided school supplies and after-school tutorial classes to 3,361 children so that they could continue their education.

Thailand: Plan introduced local curriculum development for primary schools in the tsunami-affected areas. The Government selected Plan-supported income generating project (the weaving of traditional Muslim fabric (Hiyap) by women) as the topic for the locally adapted curriculum in Bangyai School.

We continue to support the integration of Burmese children into Thai society through the local Burmese-run NGO Grassroots Humanitarian Recovery and Education. Three Thai teachers were hired as part of the activity to provide Thai language lessons.

We support six early childhood care and development centres.

Sri Lanka: Plan launched a Sinhalese and Tamil language radio school program covering 80 percent of the country to provide classes for students affected by the tsunami. The radio program provides formal education instruction and also promotes a culture of understanding, human values, and disaster preparedness. The messages are also written in a children's diary that some 12,000 children now use.

We provided education materials to 75,000 children and school uniforms to 8,000 children.

We rehabilitated 14 schools in tsunami-affected areas.

We began the construction of a new primary and a secondary school complex that will provide high-quality educational opportunities to tsunami-affected children and the rural poor.

Indonesia: Plan's 19 primary schools, kindergartens, and early childhood care and development centres, enrolled 59 percent of children aged between 3 and 5 years in 24 villages in Aceh Besar District. The enrolment rate for primary schools in Plan-supported areas stands at 66 percent.

Our School-Improvement Program throughout 15 schools focuses on improving school governance, child-friendly teaching practices, child-friendly school environments, and community participation.



Thai language lessons for Burmese children

“The house design reflects input from children.”

Housing and community development

Sri Lanka: Plan completed a 200-home settlement in Yayawatta and residents have already begun moving into their newly constructed homes. In addition to family homes, the settlement includes an early childhood care and development centre, community centre, playground and other public amenities. The house design reflects input from children.

We worked with 185 families in Hambantota District and another 100 in Galle District (which will rise to 250 by the end of the project period) to rebuild their homes.

We continue to play a critical role in introducing a disaster preparedness system in Hambantota at the district, divisional, and school levels.

India: Plan is building 760 permanent houses and has built 24 childcare centres with input on the designs coming from children.



Children in Indonesia enjoy bath time - the water tank was provided by Plan



Yayawatta residents with the keys to their new homes

Water and sanitation

Indonesia: Plan distributed emergency water supplies to 81 camps for 8,000 internally displaced people.

We rehabilitated a major gravity-fed water supply system and 6,213 people in eight villages now receive safe clean water. Community members are being trained on maintenance and management.

We supported the construction or rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities in 50 villages. Ninety percent of the villages are proactively involved in the management and maintenance of the facilities.

India: Plan is improving the sanitation situation in 64 schools through hygiene education and building child-friendly toilets in 28 of them.

We decontaminated the drinking water sources in 51 villages. These villages now have Water and Sanitation Committees that maintain and manage the facilities.

We trained children's club members in 65 villages on how to test water quality and how to analyse the hardness and the levels of pH and total dissolved solids. The children send their results to the Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board for necessary action.

Sri Lanka: Plan provided 100 water tanks for temporary shelters and house construction sites.

Psychosocial support

Sri Lanka: Plan produced an educational video, "After the Big Wave", and produced and distributed 1 million copies of a children's book on coping called "Searching for Punchi."

We installed 'Happy-Sad Letterboxes' in 75 schools in Hambantota. We continue to provide training to counsellors and teachers and have produced a user's guide to make the project replicable by others.

We supported an international and national tour of the play "Children of the Sea", performed by children and young people affected by the tsunami.

India: Plan provided 174 villages with immediate and long-term psychological support. Nineteen trained professional counsellors and 120 barefoot counsellors, are currently reaching some 17,730 children and helping to reduce fear among children.

Livelihood

India: Plan delivered boats, nets, and fish storage iceboxes to 720 families in a fishing community. The co-ownership approach of the boats was designed to provide equality between villagers.

We helped farmers reclaim 682 acres of salinated land and taught them how to use organic technology and a saline-resilient rice variety.

We assisted women, especially widows, in forming self-help groups to generate income for themselves. A total of 209 self-help groups now involve some 1,600 women.

We provided alternative livelihood skills training to 106 young people; 70 percent of them have found employment.

Sri Lanka: Plan supplied 1,000 carpenters and masons with tool kits to help their quick return to work. We also provided 1,000 young people with masonry, carpentry, electrical wiring, and plumbing training and tools.

We provided US\$250,000 in loans and grants to microfinance partners to help defer old loans and extend new ones to women affected by the tsunami.

We established a revolving loan fund and technical training for 20 fishery cooperatives to provide members with loans. This has helped improve the capacity of those cooperatives and the umbrella organisation at the district level.

We established a popular livelihoods development centre with a local partner to provide market-driven vocational training for tsunami-affected youth.

Indonesia: Plan's vocational training school provided tools, training, and market/employment links to 256 trainees. Their average income has subsequently risen by 33%.

We provided management and technical assistance to three microfinance institutions whose capital increased beyond their capacity as a result of the international aid after the tsunami. Now the institutions provide microfinance services to 1,414 households.



Boats and nets helped fishermen return to sea



The Saidek Caravan provided psychosocial support for students at 14 schools

Child rights, protection, and participation

India: Plan trained children on how to voice their opinions regarding their human rights using news reporting, photography, cartoons, radio programming, and video filming, etc.

We helped more than 1500 children aged 6-18 discover hidden talents by establishing children's clubs in 116 villages. They now produce their own magazines and TV programs that focus on children's rights, such as the Neithilees' Times, Neithilees' TV and Children Voice, Poonchittu, and Sirakugal.

We helped establish child protection committees and village watchdog committees in targeted villages. We also developed child-protection guidelines for disaster response and trained Plan and partner staff immediately after the tsunami.

We helped children produce a 20-minute film called "Tsunami Before and After" that triggered children's interest in a variety of other child media projects.

We trained 30 young people with social auditing skills, enabling them to use photography to monitor and evaluate the tsunami rehabilitation process.

Sri Lanka: Plan trained a group of young people on film production who then made a documentary film that was aired nationally on the 12-month anniversary of the tsunami.

We worked with Child Helpline International to establish a pilot telephone helpline in the western province.

We continue working with district child protection committees and with schools to raise awareness on child-protection issues.

We helped replace more than 20,000 birth certificates that were lost or destroyed.

Indonesia: Plan established a child helpline (call service centre) for children, called TeSA (Telepon Sahabat Anak).

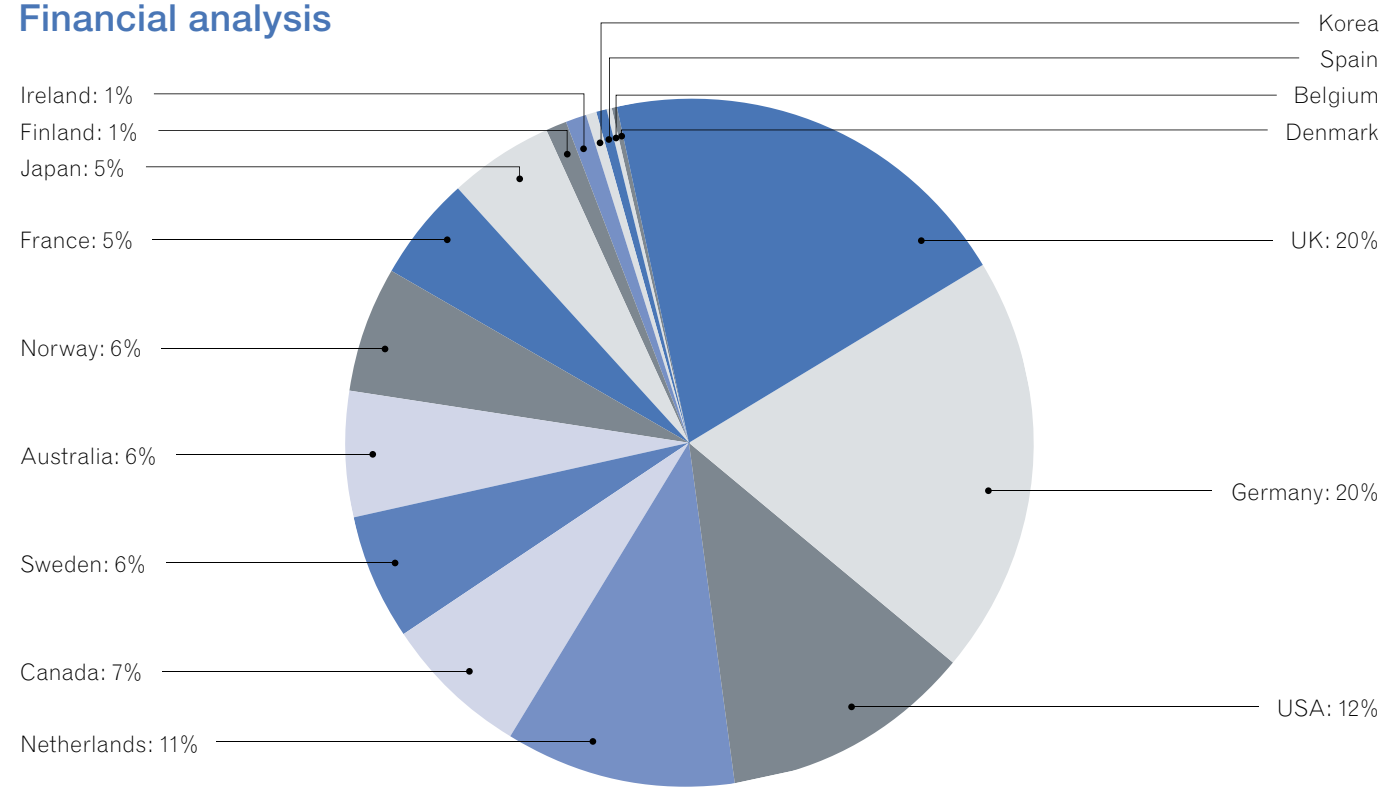
We established an integrated services centre that provides support to women and children victims of violence. Services include medical treatment, legal assistance, trauma counselling, and shelter.

We conducted a birth registration campaign that resulted in the registering of some 5,000 children in Aceh Besar District.

Thailand: Plan provided mobile psychosocial support for school children with the Puenkaew Child-Friendly Association. The Saidek Caravan (Childline 1387) visited 14 schools, reaching 1,361 students.

We trained 80 children in photography, short-film script writing and filming to help them voice their opinions on their human rights. Similar activity was also conducted in two schools during the first year after the tsunami for 40 children, who have since formed photography clubs to expand the opportunity to more children.

Financial analysis



Donation by Country

Funding sources

Plan's activities in the four tsunami-affected countries are funded by donations. By December 2006, Plan had received donations and firm pledges totalling US\$47.3 million. Some 72 percent of that has come from individual donors, private companies, groups, and foundations. The remaining 28 percent is from bilateral and multilateral government funding.

The following chart provides a source-breakdown of the donations. In addition to these figures, Plan in India raised US\$870,000 through its local sister organisation. This fund is used exclusively for Plan's program in India, and is therefore not calculated in Plan International's income.



"I love this picture because I can feel the delight of my friends and how we love each other."
Gift, a Moken boy from Phang Nga Province, Thailand, who took this picture

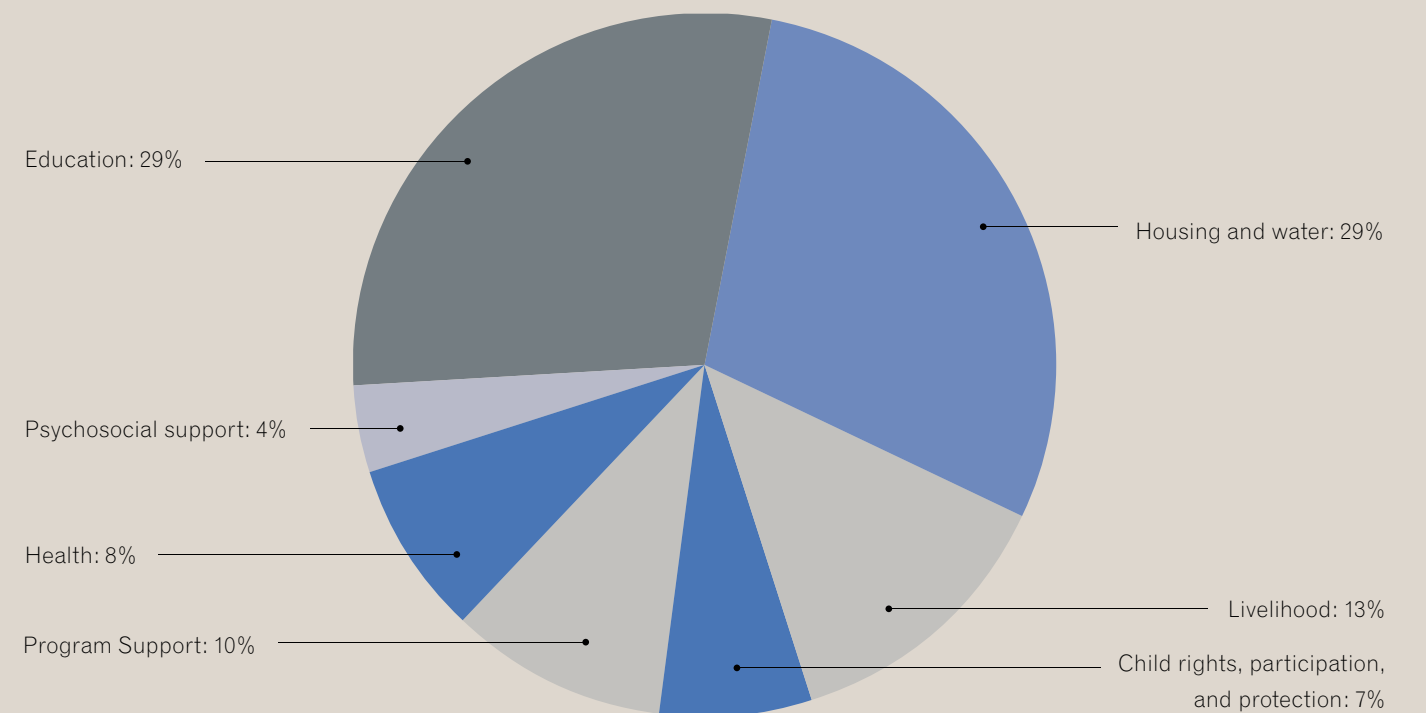


Livelihood training for girls in Sri Lanka

Expenditure

As of December 2006, Plan had spent US\$30.3 million of the US\$47.3 million raised. Of the total expenditure, 90 percent covered direct project costs: the purchase of materials, trainings, payments to communities and partner organisations, etc. Housing, water and sanitation, and education comprise 60

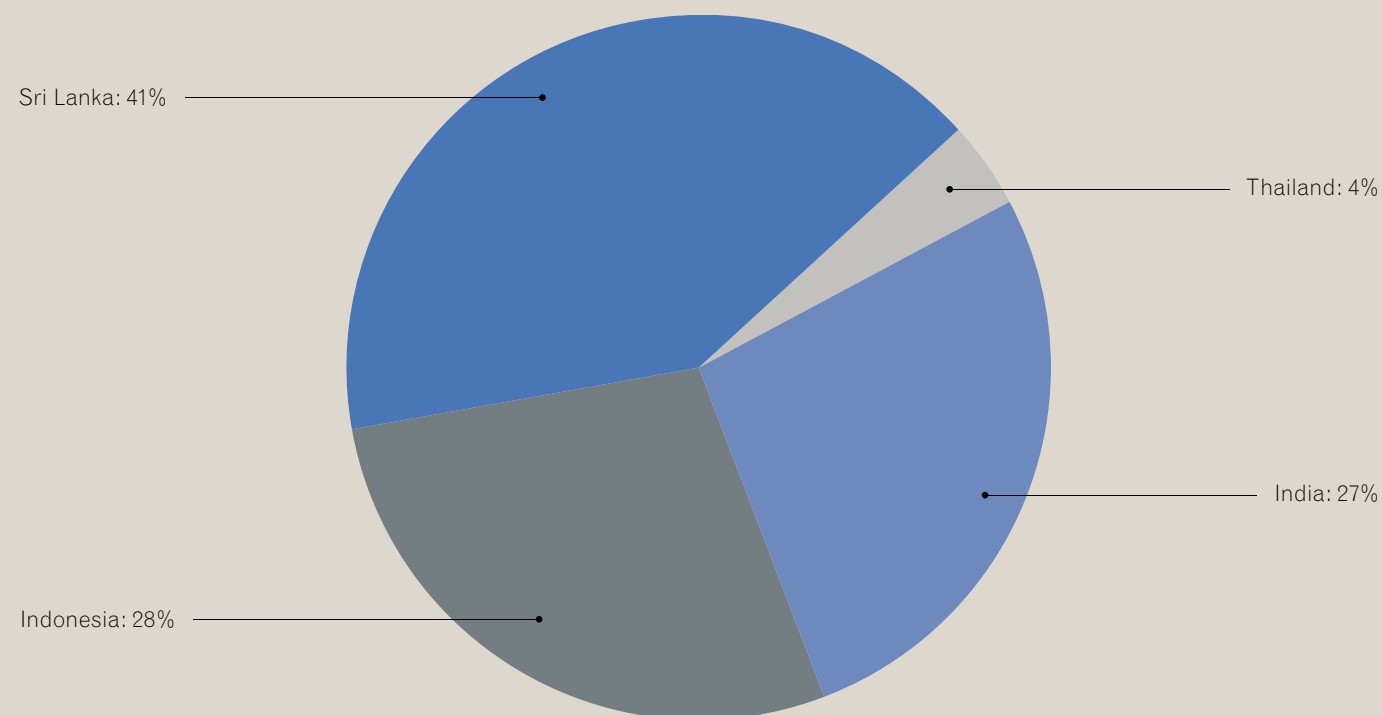
percent of our total expenditure, as these three sectors involve considerable construction activities. For a review of the activities implemented by sector in each country, please refer to the previous section on how we supported children and their families. The remaining 10 percent covered program support costs



Expenditure by program domain

Each country implements projects based on an approved program outline and the annual budget allocation. Of the US\$ 30.3 million spent so far, Sri Lanka accounts for 41 percent followed by Indonesia (28 percent), India (27 percent), and Thailand (4 percent). The proportion of the total expenditure to date, by country (shown below) is in line with the total approved budget (right).

Country	Total approved budget (US\$ million)
India	13.7
Indonesia	12.7
Sri Lanka	19.4
Thailand	1.1
Cross-country activities	0.4
Total	47.3

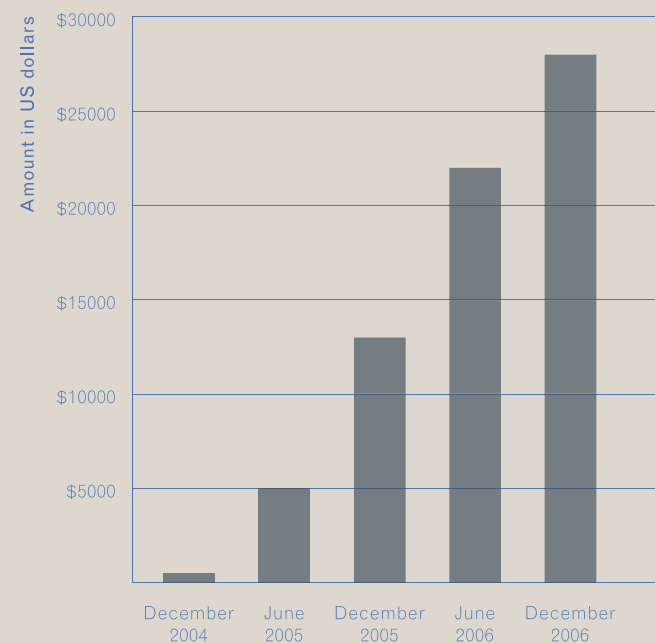


Expenditure per country of operation

Plan's activities since the tsunami have never ceased. It was only after June 2005 that expenditure picked up, as the construction of permanent houses and schools began in earnest. However, low-cost, labour-intensive activities immediately after the tsunami such as psychosocial support, children's clubs, caregiver training, permanent housing planning, and personal hygiene message distribution were as equally important in supporting children and families.

By the end of December 2006, we had spent approximately 65 percent of funds raised. The expenditure is expected to reduce in 2007 as major construction projects end.

As we continue our programs, we regularly find areas that we could support if additional funds were available. We are therefore, always receptive to further donations.



Expenditure trend

Geographical and population coverage

Plan works in eight tsunami-affected areas in four countries. In these locations, Plan directly reaches more than 176,000 households. Population coverage is greater than the household coverage due to interventions that go beyond the geographical areas of our program activity, such as the nationwide radio tuition classes in Sri Lanka. Hence, we estimate our programs reach nearly 650,000 people.

	India	Indonesia	Sri Lanka	Thailand
No. of districts (Sri Lanka), provinces (Indonesia, Thailand) and states (India)	3	1	2	2
No. of subdistricts (Sri Lanka) and districts (Indonesia, India and Thailand)	13	13	6	5
No. of villages	373	298	41	60
No. of families	104,137	38,992	30,000	3,012
No. of people	210,331	184,257	180,000	72,295

Human resources

Plan's tsunami operation is currently implemented by 111 staff exclusively working on tsunami-related programs.

The number of payroll staff in each office varies and does not reflect the size of the operation or the budget. For example, Sri Lanka employs only 26 staff, while Indonesia employs 72. This reflects the fact that Aceh, which is far from the country office in Jakarta, has a 'full set-up' with its own finance, human resource and administrative functions, while Hambantota, which is considerably closer to our Sri Lanka country office in Colombo, does not. The type of projects and the availability of local partners are other factors that influence our staffing levels. In India, for example, Plan works through local NGO partners. Thus our staff number remains very small.

Of the 111 staff, only two senior managers are international officers. Nationals of the countries of operation comprise more than 98 percent of the staff.

Females make up 31 percent of the entire team. However, among the four tsunami program managers, two (India and Thailand) are female.

	India			Indonesia			Sri Lanka			Thailand		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
National employees	6	3	9	59	21	70	16	8	24	1	3	4
International employees	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Consultants	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Total number of people working with / for Plan	9			72			26			4		

A THANK YOU FROM A YOUNG BENEFICIARY

I remember 26 December 2004 started like any other day – I sat in front of the television early morning watching my favourite cartoons. I could not know that in the next two to three hours one of earth's biggest disasters would strike, killing many thousands of people.

Many people died instantly, many people lost their valuables and property. Two days after the waves, there were still dead bodies around. I still remember the sight. It was the first time that I ever heard of the word 'tsunami'.

Many organisations came to help us during the first five days. But we were in a state of shock, making us numb to feel anything. It was very difficult to gain back the sense of self. It further stressed us to realise that there were bad people who sneaked into our houses and stole our valuables.

Two years have passed now. We feel thankful to those who came to help. Today we feel much better, though it does not really mean that we forgot what happened. It is difficult to forget, I believe that people who lived along the Andaman Sea and faced the 'giant waves' all feel the same. The earthquakes and the tsunami can happen again anytime without an early warning. But with the experience of the tsunami, I am sure that we are now more alert and cautious.

I am lucky to have received help from various organisations, including Plan. On behalf of my friends and the people in the Andaman communities, I would like to express our sincere thanks for all the kind assistance we received. Thank you very much!!

Aran Wanyao, 15 years old, Thailand

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you:

Plan would like to thank our external consultant, Rajan Alexander, for his objective and frank assessment of our work. The debate he began has set the tone for our future programming.

A special thanks:

Plan would like also to extend its warmest and sincerest thanks to all those people throughout India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand who gave their time to talk to us and tell us how we did.

We'd especially like to thank the children for their candour and often insightful experiences and advice.



Plan
Be a part of it.