

# "Community led Disaster to Development Programme: A Year After Tsunami"

"January to December 2005"



## Foreword

### They walk by themselves

We have walked the difficult path of reconstruction with people from a wide spectrum of cultural differences, with unique cultural identities and with exceptional courage. All the way, the same truth surfaced SSP and the NGOs, other institutions and individuals with all their assistance, walked only alongside these people. The ultimate triumph is of these untiring souls who have to trudge along, keeping up their spirits and hoping for a safer tomorrow. Resilience, hope against all odds and the courage to see a light at the end of this long dreary passage marks these communities. Whatever has been listed in the pages below is not a statement of what difference we have made in the lives of the affected communities, but the bare minimum we could have done in the given circumstances to set them on their feet on the long walk to recovery and development.

Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP), Mumbai

In partnership with  
Covenant Centre for Development (CCD), Madurai  
Peoples Science Institute (PSI), Dehra Doon



## Introduction

For the first time in half a century, India experienced the devastating effects of a tsunami, caused by a series of earthquakes in the Bay of Bengal. The first and strongest earthquake occurred off the west coast of northern Sumatra, Indonesia at 6.29 am Indian standard time (IST) on December 26, 2004 (magnitude and intensity was 9.0 USGS), followed by another quake at 81 kilometers (km) west of Pulo Kunji Great Nicobar, India (7.3 USGS) around three hours later. Altogether 115 aftershocks were reported, of which the magnitude of 103 tremors was between 5.0 and 6.0 USGS and 12 were over 6.0 on the Richter scale.

The earthquakes set off giant tsunami tidal waves of 3 to 10 meters in height. These hit the southern and eastern coastal areas of India and penetrated inland up to 3 km, causing extensive damage in the Union Territory (UT) of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu and the Union Territory of Pondicherry. Around 2,260 km of the coastal area besides the Andaman and Nicobar Islands were affected.

According to Government reports 10,881 people in India lost their lives, 6,913 were injured and 5,7924 persons were reported missing. In Tamil Nadu, over 7,983 deaths were reported. Of the 13 coastal districts affected in Tamil Nadu, Nagapattinam, where 6,051 people died, was the worst affected. Over 824 died in Kanyakumari and 612 were reported dead in Cuddalore district.

The disaster left behind a trail of devastated communities; it took a high toll of human lives, uprooted families, wrecked homes and livelihoods, disabled men, women and children and rent through family networks. There are long-term consequences for families torn by death or disability of members, and for widows, single parents and their children, orphans, children separated from their families, the elderly and the disabled. In all the tsunami-affected states and union territories, more women and children have died than men. The majority of those affected on the coast were fisherfolk who suffered the most damage in terms of housing and livelihoods with loss of dwelling units, household assets, and productive assets like boats and nets.

## Relief Situation Appraisal

As a preliminary initiative, CCD-SSP set up a task team to conduct an in-depth appraisal of the relief situation in Tarangambadi and Sirkali talukas. In a single village, consisting of two hamlets, the loss estimated by the team was INR 280 Million (boats, country boats, nets etc alone). Even if the loss in livelihood tools and material in each village is placed at 25%, an approximate loss of 900 million occurred in that single block.



## The objectives of the study were

- To have greater insight into the local relief initiatives and NGO involvement
- To understand the Government relief mechanism and their areas of focus
- To identify the gaps, short falls in the ongoing relief and rehabilitation where CCD-SSP can compliment through its activities and plans.
- To design a master plan for the long-term involvement of CCD-SSP and select the most suitable location and sector for commencing these activities of CCD-SSP.
- To build an amicable relationship with local bodies, the government, CBOs and NGOs for creating a working environment for CCD-SSP's long-term relief efforts.

## Learning Exchanges

Women's participation in local-to-local exchanges in disaster areas assisted communities to move from disaster to development. In the aftermath of the tsunami, SSP facilitated grassroots women to transfer innovations to strengthen community response for preparedness by undertaking risk reduction measures that address vulnerabilities disaster safe shelter, sustainable and alternate livelihoods, and access to basic services and strengthen social networks.

To facilitate peer-to-peer learning and to provide much needed counselling support to the tsunami affected community, exchange programmes were organised from the field areas of SSP in Maharashtra and Gujarat. The team comprised a group of women, the survivors of the earthquakes from both the states. They went around the tsunami affected villages, spoke to women and other groups in the villages, shared their experiences, filled the survivors with confidence, and encouraged them to move on with their lives. They by narrating their experiences, they shared the risks and problems in the relief and rehabilitation programme and encouraged women to take the center stage of the actions.



## Through the eyes of the Survivors

The first team of five women survivors -leaders- with previous experience of dealing with disasters in Latur [1993] and Gujarat [2001] reached on January 17<sup>th</sup> 2005 to express their solidarity with women like themselves. The ten-member team, including the SSP staff, visited 13 villages in the worst affected areas in Nagapattinam and Cuddalore districts on the Tamil Nadu coast from January 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> 2005.

The team conducted group meetings and interacted with the affected people from various walks of life such as women's self-help groups, youth groups, destitute, widows, the aged, children, and members of fishermen's cooperatives.

Some objectives of the exchange visits are

- To understand the problems faced by Tsunami affected communities with a focus on women and children and socially disadvantaged groups (women-headed house holds, widows and the aged).
- To conduct participatory assessment in relation to immediate rehabilitation needs - housing, livelihood, health care, counselling, childcare, skills/vocational training, drinking water and sanitation.
- To identify the potential role of women's self-help groups in relief and recovery phase and long-term community driven rehabilitation
- To draw up action plans with self-help groups
- To support activities in livelihoods, health and reconstruction of houses and community assets.



The experiences of the first team were compiled into a report, "Lull after the Storm". The report looked at the situation through the perspective of communities who have seen and experienced the disaster and walked their ways in rebuilding their lives.

After the initial assessment, different teams came in at regular intervals to assist the communities in different scenarios, observed the different stages of the unfolding of the relief and rehabilitation programmes, and gave their valuable suggestions. Since it was a peer-to-peer learning programme, the teams always felt that they also learnt what they had given to the communities.

Apart from sharing experiences and motivating women, the exchange team did some specific activities to support the programmes. It included the participatory design of the model house design, motivating women to take an active role in the construction of temporary shelters in Savadikuppam, initiating the thought of community centers in Naikarkuppam, conducting safe housing awareness programme in Naikarkuppam, ensuring the active participation of women in the Improvement of Temporary shelters Programme in Poompuhar.

Table1. Summary of Exchange Visits

Month	Number Of Team Members	State	No. of Villages Visited	Approximate Number of People outreached	Remarks or Specific Outcome
January	10	Maharashtra Gujarat	13	2000	Lull after the Storm'-Situation report
February	6	Maharashtra	5	200	Model House Design
April	9	Gujarat	6	250	
June	6	Maharashtra	8		
June	14	Gujarat	7	400	
September	10	Tamil Nadu	6	150	
November	10	Maharashtra Gujarat	4	250	

## Assessment of impact on beach Dependent occupational groups

### Nagapattinam

Poempuhar is an ancient cultural tourist destination in Tamilnadu. Tourist-based livelihood like handicrafts and other petty shops were destroyed in the tsunami. The assessment team identified about 35 tourism and ocean dependents, who had been affected in Poempuhar. The team also identified women *idli* vendors and fish vendors from eight villages in and around Poempuhar.

### Kanyakumari

Kanyakumari District is another operational area of CCD SSP partnership. About 1600 people from here were affected. They belong to 15 occupational groups which include shell collectors, shell craft workers, limekiln workers, thatch leaf workers, food vendors, petty traders in beach, coir and coir industry related labourers, sea weed collectors, construction workers, head load vendors and fish vendors.

### Identification of beneficiaries and assessment of damage

Volunteers did a detailed assessment of damages caused to each occupational category in terms of their livelihood. They assessed the economic status of the occupational groups, the damage in terms of infrastructure and material; assistance received from other agencies and identified extend of services, which can be provided. The selected groups were the handicraft workers cum traders, small food vendors, ice cream vendors and women.



## Alternate Livelihoods

There is a need to identify and promote alternate and sustainable livelihood opportunities for the tsunami affected communities in a changed economic situation. SSP did a baseline survey in ten villages in Cuddalore district to assess the needs of the community on the training and available resources in nearby areas. The survey found that communities are interested in sending their children to learn trade/skills to pursue a job and avail themselves of alternate opportunities.

### Collaboration with Annamalai University

A collaborative programme was designed with the Annamalai University, Chidambaram to create a continuous education programme for youth in the tsunami affected villages. Based on the initial needs assessment, certified technical training programmes were designed for carpentry, plumbing, boat and engine repair and electrical maintenance. The first pilot training for electricians involved ten youth and was completed in October. Further training is to be undertaken by mid January on a continuous basis.

### Entrepreneur development

With an intention of providing alternate income sources to women, skill-training sessions in incense making and candle making and beautician courses were organised for adolescent girls. Training was provided to a key group of beneficiaries after necessary market linkages were made. As a part of making the programme sustainable, continuous skill building, health services to take care of occupational hazards and crèche care facilities are being developed to enable women to continue the trade. So far over 150 women have received training in incense making.

## Rebuilding communities

### Community Shelter - Poempuhar

The absence of a physical space in the temporary shelters prevents women and communities to convene meetings and dialogue with other sections. Construction of community shelters for facilitating the same would give space for women and community a platform to assimilate their thoughts. Discussions were held with the community in Poempuhar and the members showed an inclination for building a community centre. The panchayat allocated the land in the temporary shelter region and the construction started in April, 2005. The work was completed and handed over to the communities in May 2005.



The space was well utilised by the communities in the time of untimely rains when their shelter got flooded. The shelter served as shade during the hot sunny days when it was not possible to stay in the asphalted temporary shelters. The shelter used to conduct regular meetings with the communities and give them necessary information on various matters. The fishermen also utilised the space to repair and prepare their nets.

### Community Centre - Naikarkuppam

The SHG groups expressed a demand for a community center in their village. Over 150 active SHGs in the village had a history of fighting with the prawn-farming lobby who tried to take away their lands from them. The women welcomed the idea of a centre to develop their networks and organise more.

A series of discussions was held with the SHG leaders and members to make them understand the scope of a community centre for women. A detailed design exercise was conducted after receiving the acceptance letter from the Panchayat and the SHGs in the village. In the village assembly of women, detailed discussions were held on their needs and their role in the whole process.

After discussion, a design was developed based on the needs of the community. Again, it was presented in the village and women's groups meetings to receive suggestions and acceptance. Few changes have been made in the design in terms of location of stairs and orientation of the rooms after the discussions. A committee with the representative from all the SHG groups was formed and it was entrusted the job of monitoring and overseeing the construction programme.

### Mid-term Shelters

The temporary shelter construction in the affected region was taken up by the government on a war footing by the end of January, 2005 and completed within a month's time. In Nagapattinam, with the help of NGOs and corporates, the government constructed a total of 13556 temporary shelters in 54 locations. The pace of the programme as well as the guidelines restricted NGOs and other agencies to make any innovations in this sphere. The major chunk of the temporary shelters was constructed using asphalted sheet covering over casuarina poles. In the absence of reliable information on the affected houses and allocation of temporary shelters, it was impossible to intervene. Besides, stringent monitoring of government was proving counterproductive at times.

### Initial Assessment

In order to evaluate and understand the situation to build mid term shelters, a team of grassroots women leaders from Gujarat and Maharashtra visited 13 villages during the months of January and February, 2005.

## Findings

- Lack of community participation in shelter construction
- Wrong selection of sites
- Vulnerability to fire and floods
- Improper use of materials
- Lack of monitoring over actual construction process
- Poor quality of construction
- Improper location of toilets and latrines.

## Mid-term Shelter at SavadiKuppam

Savadikuppam village, with a population of 450 people, is one of the remotest villages in terms of access. The village had 139 households and suffered heavily from the tsunami. The houses were fifteen to thirty years old and chunks were falling from the roof and wall and the tsunami had left the houses even more vulnerable. Even the women and children were living outside their houses and they kept only their assets like utensils and clothes in the cupboards inside. So the women requested for temporary shelters where they could sleep safely with their children until new houses were built.

The list given by the village leadership was given to the women for appraisal. The women included the names excluded by the leadership. Finally, they decided upon a list of 40 members. The cement painted jute cloth model was explained to the community and the members approved of it over the asphalted sheets, which were being used. The community was put in charge; the materials were handed over and two women and two youngsters were selected to monitor the construction programme. The group maintained stock records and a register for daily labourers with the engineer who was in charge. The construction was completed and handed over to the community by the first week of May, 2005.

Some problems were faced even during the construction of the temporary shelters. The change in the village leadership was a major hurdle. The new village leadership moved away from the responsibilities that they had taken up. After a lot of persuasion they took up the drainage work. Due to the cash for work which was being taken up by other NGO's, the community which was ready for voluntary labor refused to fill the shelter sites. Working with the beneficiary families helped to overcome the hurdle up to a certain extent. A month after the inception, when NGOs promised to build new houses in the place of temporary shelters, most of the beneficiaries moved to their old houses, but kept the place to store their essentials.

## Ticket Counter for Technology demo

On the request of the tourism department in Poompuhar, the makeshift ticket counter at the beach garden was rebuilt. The frame structure, which had out lived its life was replaced with new bamboo poles and a fresh roof was laid with the tarpaulin sheet to prevent any leakage during the rains. The structure now stands as a proud demo of alternative construction technology.

## Temporary shelter Improvement Programme

After the first rains in April 2005, the asphalted temporary shelters started leaking and people had to stay in knee-deep water in the middle of the night. The government and NGOs' promise to provide makeshift arrangements such as tarpaulin sheets was not fulfilled, and communities started worrying about the state of affairs with the monsoons fast approaching.

The decision to improve the temporary shelters was discussed with the Poompuhar Village panchayat and the communities living in the temporary shelters. Eight houses were selected and different methods were tried to make them leak proof, reduce the heat and make them more stable to last for a year at least.

More than 60 labourers from a nearby area were involved in the programme at its various stages. This programme was a capacity-building exercise for the traditional masons and labourers in the area in working with alternate building materials for mid-term shelters. The improvement programme also used jute-based material, as in the case of the temporary shelters in Savadikuppam.

In the whole programme apart from eight trials, 141 more shelters were improved. But unfortunately the government's haste in taking up thatching as an improvement option and getting the work done through contracts, hampered the progress of the work. Because of lack of space for reconstruction, the government authorities intended to relocate the shelters. This prevented the progress of work in another 120 shelters.

## Model House

In order to demonstrate a replicable participatory process of housing, Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP), in collaboration PSI, and CCD initiated a Model House with community involvement in Poompuhar village, Sirgali Taluka, Nagapattinam district.

## Approach

Housing is attached to local traditions and beliefs and there is more to it than a dwelling place. The new housing programme had to address and alleviate a number of vulnerabilities posed by the traditional models. People are ready for a change once they are convinced about the importance of safety and the need for a change in housing construction. Nevertheless, it had to be ensured that the changes were affordable too.

## Developing a Model

The first of the discussions were held with the community women in the temporary shelter premises of Poompuhar Village. The discussion focussed on the needs and priorities of the women. They discussed the location of the kitchen, entrance, toilets, bathrooms, Vaastu considerations practised by local people and the vulnerabilities of the houses that were damaged or destroyed in the tsunami and earlier cyclones. The discussion progressed on the type of roofing and other features that needed to be incorporated into the housing programme. The same consultation was repeated with more than one group and village to evolve a model concept.

## Learning

Later there was an in-house discussion with the engineering support of PSI; the women leaders from Maharashtra presented their learning that had evolved from the discussions. The final design of the house was evolved keeping these concerns in mind and incorporating disaster safe features.

## Community Education

Community men and women were invited to the site on the initial days and interactive discussions were held on the different types of technology and the points they should keep in mind in the reconstruction of their houses. As the workshop progressed, people visited on their own and were learning, either in groups or alone. Points to be kept in mind while monitoring the construction, ensuring the quality of construction and the correct use of technology were discussed with the women and their role in the whole reconstruction process was emphasised in these meetings.

## Masons Training

Capacity building for improving the local resource pool of masons was not only necessary to meet the housing demand arising after the disaster, but also to contribute to safer dwelling places in the long run, as the community moved from disaster to development and in creating a culture of disaster preparedness.

## Mason Training on Disaster Safe Construction Technologies - Poompuhar

Before the construction of the model could begin, local masons were identified. The focus of this training was to strengthen the skills of masons and familiarise the masons with disaster resistant technology features. As a part of the model house construction programme, 17 local masons were trained on disaster safe construction technology. The interaction explored local practices in construction and their advantages and disadvantages and improvements were suggested. Specific technology used for strengthening buildings was explained and tried out on the site. They were also trained on using different kinds of brick bonds, and educated about their uses and threats, and were informed about low cost Ferro-cement roof making.

## Mason Training Program on Low Cost Construction Technology

A Material bank was to supply low cost construction material to the community initiated construction works. The construction material included the preparation of low cost compressed mud blocks, interlocking blocks, Ferro cement windows and doors, floor and roof tiles etc. Two training programmes were conducted for engineers at Vivekananda Kendra- NRDEP training centre at Kanyakumari. These masons and engineers were to lead the construction material banks established in affected areas.

## Mason training on Retrofitting and Disaster Safety, Naikarkuppam

In the village of Naikarkuppam, the communities had taken up the repair and improvement of their houses through another NGO. While observing the improvement programme, it was noticed that there were certain technical and skill related shortcomings. After the discussion with the community, it was decided that a two-day hands on training would be organised in the village for the masons on incorporating disaster safety features into the whole reconstruction programme. Technical and skill improvement training was also to be imparted. From 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2005 a training workshop was organised in the village. After a theoretical session each day, the hands-on training was organised on one house in every street and the features to be included to make the houses disaster safe were demonstrated. The community was very active during the whole training period. Separate meetings were held with beneficiary groups to educate them on construction, monitoring and reducing the cost of construction.



## Exhibition Poompuhar

There was an interesting display of posters on construction technology during Indira Vizha celebrations held at Poombuhar. Indira Vizha is a cultural function held at Poombuhar during the month of April every year. The event is nearly 2000 years old! Now the Tourism Department of Tamil Nadu conducts it. It was attended by hundreds of people from nearby villages. The District Collector, Nagapattinam, inaugurated the programme. The stall displayed other activities undertaken by CCD, SSP and PSI including catamaran repair, agricultural interventions, land reclamation, CMBT Aurum machine and so on.

Table 3: Summary of village level disaster safety education program

Village	Women Meetings	GP meetings	Comm. meetings	Total meetings	Total Attend
Poombuhar	15	4	1	20	1024
Vanagiri	14	5	2	21	1086
Naykarkuppam	24	10	4	38	2556
Savadikuppam	8	6	5	19	460
Chinnamedu	2	2	4	8	180
Chinnangudi	2	4	4	10	420
Madathukuppam	4	2	1	7	245
Pudukuppam	2	1	2	5	125
Melemoovarkkarai	4	2	4	10	410
Keelamoovarkkarai	3	2	1	6	192
Thalampettai	2	4	2	8	204
Perumal pettai	2	2	1	5	192
Puthupettai	1	2	1	4	128
Total	83	46	32	141	7222

## Community Education

### Programme on Disaster Safe Housing

One-day workshops were organised at the village level to create awareness about disaster safety and disaster safe shelters. The main target groups were SHG, the local panchayat and the community. The workshops used scale models to demonstrate the impact of disasters and imparted basic technical knowledge on how to achieve disaster safety.



## 'Status of Life in Temporary Shelters'

Tharangambadi and Sirkali Talukas, Nagapattinam District, July 2005

The study aimed at understanding the life of tsunami-affected villagers in the temporary shelters in Sirkali and Tharangambadi talukas of Nagapattinam District. It attempted to identify areas of immediate attention ahead of the oncoming monsoons. The study covered 2048 temporary shelter units in 11 villages in the two talukas. It found that the major problems faced by villagers in temporary shelters were severe heat in summer and leaking through the roof during the monsoon. None of the temporary shelters were livable.

As far as the shelter sites were concerned, the impact of wrong site selection and negligence to undertake corrective measures were major shortcomings. All sites were flooded during the rain and the villagers were affected.

Though there was enough supply of water, quality and maintenance and timing of the supply remained a concern. Most streets that connected shelters seemed clean and above benchmark sanitation levels. But the condition of toilets was far below standard levels. Only four of 11 villages scored benchmark levels for solid waste management, which highlighted the need for focused action in this area. In terms of delivery of health services, only two villages attained benchmark scores. The delivery of services has to improve from mere referral to focused camps for skin diseases and preventive action.

The study recommends immediate action to address the vulnerability of the temporary shelter structures. It emphasises the need for participatory action to address issues related to drainage, water, sanitation and health. It also recommends participatory risk assessment to address the risks identified. The recommendations are to be developed and implemented locally with the participation of the communities.

## Supporting Vulnerable Groups

The alarmingly high number of widows and destitute women in tsunami-affected villages necessitated the need to organize them and help them in addressing their vulnerabilities.

An initial assessment was done in May and June, 2005 to identify the vulnerable groups in the community. The survey covered categories of destitute women such as widows, divorced women, women left by their husbands, general women headed households, the old and the handicapped.

As a rapport and confidence building activity, meetings were organized to understand various problems faced by these groups in normal as well as in post disaster situations. Information about the social security schemes for these groups was collected from the taluka and district offices and special meetings were organized with these groups to share the information and clarify doubts any matters.

### SIDHA health Camps

During the interventions, it was found that a large section of the community believed in the traditional systems of medicine called the 'SIDHA'. There were recognized sidha Practitioners and the services were being well used by the community. As a part of extending diverse range of accessible health services to communities over 15 Sidha Medical Camps were organized in the Nagapattinam Vilages were the access to allopathic medicines were much lesser compared to Cuddalore. These camps served almost 3000 patients for mainly ailments like cough, cold, body aches, joint pains odema etc.

Table 4: Summary of Vulnerable groups Survey

#	Name of Village	Destitute Women	Widows	Senior Citizens	Handicapped
1	Poompohar	4	166	94	21
2	Vanagiri	5	152	25	18
3	Naykarkuppam	4	39	12	16
4	Savadikuppam	2	21	11	3
5	Chinnamedu	2	19	14	8
6	Chinnangudi	16	80	20	20
7	Madathukuppam	4	22	13	13
8	Pudukuppam	4	26	9	7
9	Melemoovarkkarai	3	15	8	5
10	Keelamoovarkkarai	2	47	12	10
	Total	46	587	218	121

### Access to Health Services

After the tsunami, various agencies visited villages and conducted health camps, and provided medicines but they did not address women's health needs properly. Because of lack of proper facilities and privacy in medical camps, women were reluctant to disclose the ailments to the doctors in the camp. The camps were curative in nature and usually lacked specialty and referral support.

This called for a plan to meet the immediate health needs of the affected community as an initial activity to lead to a more sustainable community health initiative. Ten villages of Cuddalore district were selected.

Our purpose was to conduct the medical camp in the hospital premises to give exposure to the villagers on various health services and that they could avail themselves of the facilities of hospital admission.

### Collaboration with the Pondicherry Institute of Medical Sciences

In accordance with the PIMS rural outreach programme, the hospital spent as much as 10,000/- per patient on a need based manner. From the listed members of the community who were attending the camp, an initial screening was conducted. Most of the patients were treated as outpatients and medicines were provided at the hospital pharmacy free of cost. Those who required any paramedical services such as scanning, ECG, X-ray or higher treatment were admitted as inpatients. This programme covered a total of ten villages and 334 were diagnosed. Fifty-two patients were admitted in the inpatient ward of the hospital for further treatment. So far the activity has covered 6 villages and 254 patients as indicated in the table of whom 41 got higher order diagnosis or treatment.

### Psychosocial counseling

It was noticed during the village visits that a number of people were suffering from psychosocial problems like increased anxiety, fear of sea, sleeplessness, headaches, body pain and so on. With the collaboration of a visiting group of international experts in trauma counseling, (Trauma healing) SSP conducted trauma-counseling camps in five villages. Each psychosocial expert spent at least one hour with every patient. Sixty acute patients from six villages availed themselves of the benefits of this counseling and healing programme.



## Assessment

To understand the health seeking behaviour and the health service economics, a survey was conducted in these ten villages in October 2005. The survey report is being compiled as of now.

Village	No of SHGs	SHG members	Survey sample / Village
Thazhanguda	18	330	300
Sonankuppam	37	626	308
Singarathoppu	43	822	495
Sothikuppam	21	395	277
Rasapettai	17	331	300
Pudukuppam	13	216	202
Samiarpettai	19	350	304
C.pudhupettai	17	324	294
Indira Nagar	5	100	82
Total	190	3494	2562



## Village Level Health Camps

To assist women to women and children special health camps were organised by SSP with the help of various medical Institutions in and around Cuddalore including Aarupadai Veedu Medical College, Mahatma Gandhi Medical College and Research Institute (MGMCRI), Indian Medical Association, Cuddlore, Pondicherry Institute of Medical Sciences etc.

These camps were organised in association with the active members of the village self help groups and village youth groups. They identified the convenient places for the camps, they cleaned and prepared the sites for the camps, arranged for drinking water for visitors, managed the crowd and registrations and helped in bringin the old and the disabled for consultation into the camps etc.

## Village Health Groups

As for finding solutions to the never ending water and sanitation ad health related issues of the village an informal group are being organised in the villages called the village health groups. A trained Health Guide, who receives trainings on various health problems their causes and preventive measures, services each health groups. These are communicated to the health group and they are motivated to take measures to tackle the same in their village.

After the heavy rain in cuddalore, the village health groups cuddalore OT, on receiving information on water born diseases and malaria etc., seized the initiative and called upon the municipal sanitation officer, the municipal councillor of their wards and the municipal commissioner and filed their complaints for clearing of the over flowing waste bins and taking action on increasing mosquito menace. The Health groups, on the arrival of the municipal machinery, directly oversaw their work and made sure that the service was well utilised to keep their villages clean.

## Advocacy

The study ' Status Of Life In Temporary Shelters' was made available online through [www.disasterwatch.net](http://www.disasterwatch.net) by the first week of August. It was also presented to the district government through the NGO Coordination and Resource Center (NCRC), at Nagapattinam. The study received wide acclaim and stood out as one of the only two participatory studies done on temporary shelters available at this point of time. The study along with other studies on technical and other aspects of the temporary shelters forced the government to rethink about investing money in improving temporary shelters with more community participation and alternate technology options.

## Web forum

Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP), India coordinates the Global Working Group on Disasters to link with policy makers and local governments in their countries. It moderates a web forum [www.disasterwatch.net](http://www.disasterwatch.net) act as a node for sharing local initiatives and upstreaming lessons from grassroots initiatives. This platform provides rich resources and quarterly E-newsletters such as "Disaster Brief" and "Tsunami Update" on communities and disaster response.



## Conclusion

It is never enough.....there is always more to be done!

"Has enough been done?" this is a question that comes to mind this black Sunday, when one reviews the past, the present and the future of the tsunami-affected communities. 'No' is the answer with more than 95% of the displaced populations yet to be rehabilitated. The plight of these communities in the temporary shelters is pitiable. Their difficulty in returning to their normal livelihood has been aggravated by the haphazard asset creation drive by the NGOs in the form of boats, nets and so on and this is becoming more and more explicit with every passing day.

The stocktaking has important lessons for everyone. It has shown us what does not work, what cannot make a change, and where the best-laid plans can go wrong. We now know that to make a difference in the lives of the tsunami-affected, it requires a lot more than good will and money. It requires the rehabilitation programme to be 'of the people, for the people and by the people' at least in the largest democracy of the world.



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