

Restoration of Livelihoods Village Boat Replacement Project

American Refugee Committee/Thailand

January 9, 2005

Needs Statement

Surviving fishermen and their families in Ranong and Phang Nga provinces of southern Thailand lost their family members, their homes and their means of livelihood in the tsunami disaster. Traditional small boats are villagers' main and usually sole source of livelihood. Boats represent their way of life and thus their dignity and self respect. In short, their local economy and ways of life lived for generations are now gone and bereaved families have lost loved ones, their homes and their means to make a living.

Almost all villages are completely dependent upon small scale, independent fishing. While small provincial markets and supplier routes still remain intact outside the most affected villages, many impacted fishermen and their families in these villages have lost all possessions they had. Almost all have lost their boats. Though they have suffered a great blow to their hope, they are determined to get their lives on the sea back in order as soon as they are able.

Once fishermen receive the boats and equipment that they need they can quickly reintegrate into existing local market systems to sell their fish. Although they have the determination to do so, the question most displaced fishermen and their family members have on their minds is when and whether they can find the means to rebuild their shattered lives.

The American Refugee Committee (ARC International) has intensively and continuously assessed the situation in the most impacted villages since late December. ARC maintains a long relationship with the local health authorities and communities in the area based on ARC's work with infectious disease control and prevention and nearly 30 year presence in Thailand. ARC remains in continual contact with the local MOPH, Department of Fisheries, and MOI authorities in Ranong and Phang Nga. In participation with local residents impacted by the tsunami disaster, and in recognition of their stated longing to get back to their fishing livelihoods as soon as they are able, ARC is responding together with affected communities to support their needs and address their challenges in innovative but common sense ways that villagers support. The impact of the project will be restored livelihoods for affected fishermen's families and renewed hope and determination of villagers through the process of rebuilding productive lives of dignity and purpose. The values and views of fishermen, impacted women and their families have been and will be included in the further planning of the project and its implementation throughout the project duration. Implementation is now in the initial stages throughout the project target area (*see Figure 1, map, below*).



A young boat owner inspects the wreckage of his boat and contemplates his fortune to be alive and an uncertain future. He was at sea when tsunami hit. Kho Khao Island, Phang Nga, Thailand.

Location and number of small boats 12 meters/under destroyed

Ranong (two districts, 4 villages) and **Phang Nga** (two districts, 10 villages) Provinces, Thailand. **Total: 14 villages.**

Ranong

Kapur District:

Hat Ban Bane village: 100 small boats

Suk Sam Rong District:

Taleh Nok village: 60 small boats

Ban Sai Khao Moo 7 village 70 small boats

Haat Prapat village: 90 small boats

Phang Nga

Kuraburi District:

Prathong Island: 70 small boats

Tagua Pa District:

Nam Khem village: 300 small boats

ARC International Restoration of Livelihoods Village Boat Replacement Project

Kho Khao Island: 100 small boats

Mo. 1-7 villages, Kuka sub district: 53 small boats

Total est. number of boats lost/destroyed: 843 small boats

(Preliminary field assessment estimates pending confirmation by Fisheries Department official registration and loss/ damage lists.)



Wreckage of small boat. Taleh Nok village, Ranong, Thailand. Small boats are almost all destroyed.



Bereaved wife of fisherman with son at remains of their home, Taleh Nok village, Ranong, Thailand.

Restoration of Livelihoods Boat Replacement Project

In participatory meetings held with affected villagers (including numerous former small boat owners now unemployed, village leaders, affected women and families, and local boat craftsmen) the follow strategy is emerging as most appropriate by consensus.

Boats will be made locally in each village by local craftsmen and villagers. Local craftsmen will mentor unemployed fishermen that have lost boats in the rebuilding process. Boats have been made by expert craftsmen on the shores of these villages for generations. Local master boat craftsmen, who come from surrounding villages in Ranong and Phang Nga, make boats on site at the shore of the villages. One wooden long-tailed boat takes 3 craftsmen 12 days to construct.

ARC is collaborating with the Ayutthaya College of Technology and Shipbuilding on the design and construction of a prototype of a fiberglass Thai long-tailed fishing boat. The prototype was tested January 21 in the waters off the Nam Khem village pier. ARC invited village leaders and fishermen from the 14 impacted target villages to test the boat on the open sea and discuss their impressions and design modification needs. According to initial impressions gathered, only slight modification of the fiber craft is required. Village leaders and fishermen are discussing their impressions and findings with their respective communities. Each of the village areas will decide whether the respective communities choose wood or fiber boats as the long-tail boat they adopt for replacement. For standardization, cost-effectiveness and efficient resource mobilization, each village will choose either wood or fiber. One fiber long-tailed boat takes 3 craftsmen 7 days to construct.

ARC is also focusing on small, flat bottom wooden boat replacement. These boats are simple for boat craftsmen to build. One small flat bottom wooden boat takes 2 craftsmen 3 days to construct.

As all small boat fishermen who have lost their boats are now unemployed, a village boat mentoring association will be formed. Through the village boat mentoring association fishermen who have lost their boats will link with a master craftsmen mentor as apprentice boat craftsmen to construct their own boats. Apprentice fishermen will be paid an appropriate daily wage for their services in building their own boats by ARC. These inputs benefit the fishermen and their families now, stimulate and revive the local economy, and, importantly, *give them hope* until their boats are completed. ARC's psycho-social assessment in the area with a small team of experts (in coordination with UNICEF) indicates the importance of therapeutic initiatives for the fishermen and their families to participate in constructive activities that directly benefits their and their communities' futures immediately. This skill also increases their skills in repair if their boats are later damaged in the scope of normal use.

Wives and families of deceased fishermen boat owners will be provided a boat as well to replace their family boat. Though many women traditionally don't fish themselves, they will use the boats with their extended families to fish, taking a share of the income, or rent their boats to neighboring fishermen. Eventually they will use them in their own

immediate families when their surviving children come of age. This will greatly assist in lessening the long term social burdens on women and children survivors in impacted communities.

Affected bereaved women and those that have lost their homes and property will be involved in the project by making net and trap sets for boats. These sets require assembly of ropes, netting, sinkers, and floats (for fish, crab and shrimp nets) and rope, wood, and netting (for squid traps). Women will be paid an appropriate daily wage for their services. This is work that women traditionally do in these villages for their family's fishing boat enterprises; many have the requisite skills. Boat owners will be encouraged to use their government compensation to purchase materials in a collaborative effort by ARC to benefit local affected women in the communities.

The local economy and boat craftsmen will benefit by their involvement with ARC's project whether wood or fiber is used. Wood craftsmen will be trained to construct fiber boats as well. The simple techniques utilized in fiber boat construction, combined with the many years of expertise of the master boat craftsmen, ensure a quick learning process combined with effective skills to repair fiber boats when required later.

ARC will focus on boat replacement only for boats completely destroyed. To address equity and parity concerns, boats 10-12 meters will be replaced by 11 meter boats (2-3 persons and gear), boats 7-9 meters will be replaced by 9 meter boats (2 persons and gear), and boats 4-6 meters will be replaced by 5 meter boats (1 person and gear). Eleven meter boats can also be used to carry tourists to surrounding islands for day and diving trips.

Assessments done by ARC and the local and regional fisheries departments indicate that villagers who have lost the various sizes of boats 12 meters and under will accommodate replacement boats of a similar approximate size. Replacing all small boats with similar sizes of boats provides for their versatile needs, restores fishing communities to a similar or improved standard, and also meets general equity and parity needs. This is considered by villagers interviewed to be the recommended strategy to ensure all villagers who have lost boats are satisfied and communal harmony maintained. It will also add restored quality to their lives by replacing their boats to an acceptable agreed standard with the approximate size of boat that they lost. Virtually all small boats in the impacted villages were destroyed, so the project impacts all small fishermen and their families in these communities.

More than 275 boats (100 wooden and 175 fiber boats) may be made in the initial three months of project implementation in affected provincial areas using existing resources in the provinces of combined master craftsmen and fiber training inputs. It is expected that with increasingly trained and experienced boat makers the rate will increase thereafter. At this rate the current estimated fishing fleet could be replaced at the end of the next rainy season when fishing begins again in earnest. ARC will operate in all village areas simultaneously in order to expedite rehabilitation of the villages' fishing fleets and to avoid equity/parity disparities to ensure that villages' fishing livelihoods develop in an organized, sustained and mutually progressive and beneficial manner. ARC will procure and deliver boat kits and oversee and monitor the assembly and labor processes while

facilitating participatory processes supporting and revitalizing existing village social and societal structures. ARC collaborates closely with responsible partners in the area, most notably the district, provincial and national Fisheries Department, the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH), the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and labor ministries.

It has been recently reported that Thai government may provide 60% of the cost of fishermen's start up and that the fishermen will have to provide the remaining 40% of costs. Compensation for boats equal to or under 10 meters is currently set by the Fisheries Department at 10,000 baht (approx. 250 USD) for moving boats, up to 20,000 baht (approx. 500 USD) for repairing boats and equipment, and up to 66,000 baht (approx. 1,650 USD) for replacing boats and equipment. This fits ARC's strategy very well. Costs for wooden or fiber 9-11 meter boats (materials and labor) are estimated to be around 1,250-1,875 USD each depending on final materials used. (The costs of smaller 4-6 meter boats are less than 500 USD each.) Costs of outboard motors (85-105 horsepower standard) are estimated to be about 1,000 USD each. Costs of either nets or squid trap sets for each boat is estimated to cost 1,000 USD or less depending on extent of utilization. The costs of motors and nets, which can be easily purchased in local markets, are up to 50% of the total costs for becoming operational. If the fishermen and their families invest in some equipment such as net pullers, floats or lights, the costs of their start up apart from boats easily amounts to 60% of their operational investment costs. ARC is working closely with the Thai government and the Fisheries Department in this regard so as to complement the initiatives of the government and strengthen the impact of government interventions. This has long been an important element of ARC programming in Thailand and our supporting initiatives with the Thai government are very robust and respected.

ARC will focus on boat replacement and labor. The villagers themselves will use relevant government compensation to purchase outboard motors (available in the provincial capital local markets) and to purchase related necessary equipment such as nets and traps. ARC will also provide the labor in the project for assembly of the nets and traps in a collaborative effort with the village families. This will help the villages to help needy women and families who are bereaved or suffer critical economic hardship until their new boats are ready to launch. ARC will expedite collaborative, participatory approaches with villagers and community leaders to fast track boats of the most vulnerable individuals such as widows and bereaved families. In discussion with villagers, the priority order list for impacted persons who have lost boats consists of the following groups: 1) women who have suffered a death in their immediate family; 2) other persons who have lost a family member; 3) persons whose house is destroyed; 4) persons whose only boat was destroyed; 5.) all other persons. The order of persons in each of the priority groups will be chosen at random in community forums.

Impacted fishermen and their family's involvement in making their own boats will provide them the opportunity to engage in short term work quickly in their own villages as their long term livelihoods are reestablished. This will decrease their need to consider leaving their families to find low paid, unskilled work. It will help to maintain their family integrity and decrease their own, their families' and their communities' huge burden of stress and anxiety. Fishermen and their families will collaborate with their friends and neighbors who have been severely impacted in a joint effort to restore their

collective livelihoods, rebuild their sense of individual and community strength and determination, and, most importantly, rebuild their collective livelihoods from the sea that has given them so much but shaken their lives so enormously.

“The Ocean gave us a lot, so much. We have to give back a little. Still, we love the ocean. This tragedy didn’t come from the ocean—it came from an earthquake in the ground. The ocean takes care of our people. If you have us live away from the ocean, we won’t go. We can make money easily when we go out to sea for one day and live for many. We don’t need to take care of the ocean; the ocean takes care of us. Ever since we lived here, it’s been peaceful—just this once. Nobody wants to run away from the ocean. We can live here because the sea takes care of us. Why should we be afraid?”

--Village leader, impacted village, Ranong



Master boat craftsman with remains of fishing boat under construction. Taleh Nok village, Ranong.



Fishing boat in less impacted inland waterway village in Ranong not in ARC’s target group. ARC will help the most impacted coastline communities build boats in partnership with community

members, fishermen's families and local master boat craftsmen/mentors of the type small, independent fishermen and their families rely upon.

For further information or to donate a small fishing boat to severely impacted Thai villagers, please contact:

American Refugee Committee (ARC International)

430 Oak Grove Street, # 204

Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55403

Telephone (612) 872-7060, Fax (612) 607-6499

Or contact our website: www.archq.org



Master Craftsman fits a brace on fishing boat--an example of the expert craftsmanship, local know how and cost-effective, coordinated resource allocation used by ARC in collaboration with local craftsmen in boat replacement. Kuraburi, Phang Nga.



Inaugural testing runs of long tail fishing boat prototype by the Ayutthaya College of Technology and Shipbuilding and ARC involving key stakeholders: fishermen, community and government representatives and boat/engineering experts January 21-22, 2005. ARC provides villages the choice of traditional wood or durable, environmentally sound fiber boats modeled under exacting standards after traditional Thai craft with design input from local fishermen. Ban Nam Khem, Phang Nga.

ARC International Restoration of Livelihoods Village Boat Replacement Project



Figure 1 Implementation Map

Site map of ARC's Restoration of Livelihoods Village Boat Replacement implementation in villages of Kapoe and Suk Samran districts, Ranong and Kuraburi and Takuapa districts, Phang Nga.

Assessment and photos: Gary Dahl, ARC Country Director, Thailand

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