



To: OCHA-Geneva, UNCT in Thailand
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UN Resident Coordinator, Thailand
Subject: **Disaster, Field Sit Rep 14**
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I. SITUATION

The Thai Ministry of Interior Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation issued its latest data on the tsunami on 19 May: the overall figure for **fatalities** is now put at 5,396, i.e. an increase of one foreign national since the last report. 1,175 bodies remain unidentified.

II. OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES, RESPONSES

To improve coordination, a **TICA** (Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency) and **DDPM** (Department for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation) delegation visited OCHA Geneva 12-13 May, sponsored by **UNDP**. The visit gave all sides an opportunity to explore issues of particular interest and identify areas of potential collaboration in disaster preparedness and management. Conclusions and action points have been identified – including, for example, TICA identifying **participants** for UNDAC training in Singapore; Thailand **joining** INSARAG, IHP and Environment Emergency Partnership; and a follow-up meeting is taking place 26 May.

Social protection

Under the IOM project on 'Support to displaced migrant workers and other mobile populations in the field of health care and basic needs', distribution of **humanitarian aid to migrant workers** began in Phang Nga in May. Goods were donated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the first batch of relief items (donated clothing and water) was distributed to migrants in Ban Bang-Neang, Takua Pa district, in collaboration with MSF Belgium. A Migrant Coordination Centre will open at Baan Nam Ken health centre, Takua Pa District, Phang Nga in early June to coordinate services targeting migrants in the province. IOM is in discussions with the national police and the Phang Nga provincial health office to set up a mechanism to coordinate **Disaster Victim Identification (DVI)** of migrant workers. A pilot mechanism has been drafted and the Migrant Coordination Centre will be used as an information and screening centre for migrants who ask for DVI assistance.

With support from UNFPA, Mahidol University's Institute for Population and Social Research has started a **field survey** among migrants affected by the tsunami, using volunteers from the community to conduct in-depth interviews on the effects of the disaster. Results will be available in three months.

UNICEF reports that the number of **people in temporary camps/shelters (6,000** as counted by their field officers) continues to fall and any continuing emergency needs for the affected population are largely being met. There is no change to the number of children orphaned by the tsunami: over 80% of orphaned children are living with a biological parent or other relatives, while around 15% of orphans are living with non-relatives or no relation is specified. A recent UNICEF assessment mission to the north-eastern province of **Nakhon Phanom**, counted 373 people affected by the tsunami, including 20 dead and 33 missing. This group includes 48 tsunami orphans and 25 children with missing mothers or fathers, relatives of migrants working on the Andaman coast. This population faces the same challenges as those in the Andaman provinces, i.e. loss of income and material stress, psycho-social stress among children and grandparents etc, but the procedure for compensation payment without death certificates is more complicated - it will take up to two years before the authorities will pronounce the missing legally dead (whereas this time has been reduced to three months in the southern provinces).

The Ministry of Interior has issued its latest figures on housing and other issues: since sit rep No.13, a further **507** permanent homes have been completed, so the total is now **791**, with 2,067 homes under construction. Reconstruction in Phang Nga province, particularly in the in Ban Nam Khem fishing village, is moving fast, with more than 200 permanent homes already built, mainly by military personnel. In terms of basic infrastructure in the affected provinces, The Ministry reports that **3,833**

non-residential buildings were damaged by the tsunami, 826 of which were completely destroyed, but 2,430 can be repaired. Altogether the Government has provided **1,436.62 million baht** worth of financial assistance to the six provinces.

Livelihood restoration

Various initiatives are underway, both government-, UN- and NGO-led. UNDP currently has five projects ongoing and a further two at the approval stage, with implementing partners from the UN system, government departments and national NGOs. The latest project to have been launched is focusing on 'Indigenous Livelihood Restoration and Sustainable Ecology for Lanta Island'.

It is of particular note as it seeks to support local government, community leaders and the private sector to design and implement a visionary plan for developing the island in a **sustainable, eco-friendly, tourism-smart, culturally-sensitive** way, well beyond the immediate tsunami recovery needs. It therefore demonstrates that sustainable livelihoods and environmental management are mutually inclusive.

Disaster preparedness

The **National Lessons Learned Workshop** will take place in Bangkok 30-31 May. The Director-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department for International Organizations will represent the Thai Government, as working groups discuss issues of disaster preparedness planning (local and national levels); the legislative and institutional framework; stand-by arrangements and awareness-raising, among others. The OCHA Regional Office for Asia Pacific is organizing the event in close partnership with the Government and the UN System in Thailand. The recommendations and best practices identified will be presented at the regional workshop scheduled to take place 13-14 June in Medan, Indonesia.

Thailand's **National Disaster Warning Centre** is to be formally opened on 30 May by the Prime Minister. The event will also include a presentation on the development of the country's Early Warning System.

DDPM is now working in close cooperation with UNDP and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre to develop a project that compliments other disaster management activities and is based on a comprehensive national risk management framework.

The RTG is in the process of preparing a coastal management plan for the Andaman provinces: in advance of completion they reveal that this will include a zoning plan, with beach furniture and structures limited to a distance of 10 metres from the shoreline. Other elements of the plan will include strengthened buildings and infrastructure, and measures to make resorts more attractive and well-maintained.

III. MAIN CHALLENGES

Thousands of tsunami-affected migrants continue to remain vulnerable, although more jobs are now available in sectors including fisheries, construction and rubber plantations. Several hundred work permits have been re-issued with the assistance of NGO staff and lawyers and, according to a Cabinet announcement on May 10 2005, the **re-registration of all migrant workers** in Thailand will begin in July. This will allow migrants who are already registered and have work permits to extend their stay. But there is growing concern that migrant workers affected by the tsunami, having lost their identity documents and/or have moved to other provinces, will not be able to re-register. Up to 25 migrant workers have been confirmed dead by the authorities as a result of the tsunami, but it is suspected that many more died and have not yet been identified: several NGOs are working with the police to make available Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) DNA testing of individual cases.

UNICEF has identified a need for more **consistent monitoring of the situation of orphans** and vulnerable children in the six tsunami-affected provinces, as well as in other provinces in the northeast and north is needed; there is no standardized system of orphan registration, e.g. some provinces are using different definition of orphan age as 'children' up to 24 years, rather than 18.
