

## Tsunami Report Part 2

*Lembah Lhok Seudu about to test-drive community Palung*



## Co-operative Strengthening and Capacity Building

Our special report last month gave an overview of ICA's tactical response to the Asian Tsunami. In Digest 55, reporters Jan-Eirik Imbsen, Robby Tulus, Rajiv Mehta and Suroto Ph report on co-operative reconstruction in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and India.

### Indonesia - Aceh

ICA and members worldwide have donated to begin reconstruction of some of the

most devastated co-ops in Aceh. The UK co-operative movement has provided support and funding for two fishery co-ops to enable the rebuilding of essential infrastructure.

The co-operative spirit is 'alive and thriving' in communities serviced by the six pilot co-ops in the three pilot areas of Aceh Besar, Banda Aceh and Pidie. Yet it will take a long time for some co-ops to rebuild because of the extensive damage to land, villages – and community spirit.

The Bahari Karya fishery co-op in Pidie has reopened its consumer store selling to fishers and has rebuilt an ice-making facility. Lembah Lhok Seudu fishery co-op in Aceh Besar now operates a community boat and a pick-up van. Construction of another Palung for Bungong Jeumpa co-op in Aceh Besar is progressing.

These resources have increased the income to fishers and given communities the confidence to rebuild their lives.

### Empowering women – micro-loans pay encouraging dividends

With support from ICA, the Kami Sepakat Women's Co-operative has revived its savings and loans activities.

The 32 members borrow micro-loans in order to generate new, small enterprises includ-

ing kiosks, fish drying and selling to local markets and cake-making. The women are overjoyed about restoring their own livelihoods and those of family members.

Training and education provided by DEKOPINWIL/LAPENKOWIL in Aceh has meant that the women themselves can manage their co-op yet more classes in accounting and bookkeeping are needed.

Although small, the Kami Sepakat co-op has a board of directors to develop policies.

The board has appointed Mas Asriyani to manage the co-op. Mursidah, a member

of Kami Sepakat, said that the board is transparent and open-minded. "It allows us to discuss every issue during our Friday-meetings following prayers.

I benefit a lot from being a member and have raised additional income from the loan. I can now buy and dry fish, which I sell at the market," she said.

In 2006, the co-operative earned a net profit of Rp. 2,300,000 (USD 250).

*Kami Sepakat Women's Co-operative – and a few men*



## Tsunami

## Trailblazing young co-operators

The community can be proud of the young people involved in co-ops in Aceh, especially Tuah Shikai. Eighty per cent of the co-op members are young, and even board members are chosen from this refreshing group of bright young men and women.

With assistance from ICA, the co-op has been able to promote a consumer store, a Shariah-based savings and loans unit, and distribute essential commodities. In collaboration with the Jasa Rahardja Institution, it has built bus shelters, supplied com-

puters to members and created new business ventures.

However, there is stiff competition because the consumer store is now being threatened by privately-funded consumer stores charging high prices. It is crucial that Tuah Shikai co-op remains the main channel for delivering commodities to members and to economically challenged communities in Banda Aceh.

Members have benefited from the training and education conducted by DEKOPINWILLAPENKOP-

WIL, with support from ICA. Future training will focus on membership, administration and marketing.

*All smiles and a few giggles – Tuah Shikai's young people in a colourful training session*



## Vale: Dr Ibnoe Soedjono, committed co-operator

The reconstruction programme in Banda Aceh was progressing under the leadership of Dr Soedjono (Pak Ibnoe) Director of LSP2I until his death on November 1, 2006. Pak Ibnoe was a committed co-operator with a wealth of knowledge and experience that he was always willing to share. We benefited greatly from his guidance, inspiration, advice and wisdom in our joint project to reconstruct co-operatives in Banda Aceh.

## Sri Lanka

ICA's primary concern was to rebuild sustainable livelihoods for surviving co-operative members and families in the communities hit by the tsunami. A joint effort between government and national co-operative federations demonstrated cooperative solidarity and collaboration and the lessons learnt were replicated in other tsunami-affected countries.

The ICA and its four member organisations (National Institute of Cooperative Development (NICD); Thrift and Credit Cooperative Fed-

eration of Sri Lanka (SANASA); Consumer Cooperative Federation of Sri Lanka (COOPFED); and National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka (NCC)) met with the Sri Lankan prime minister and the Ministry of Co-operatives. The government followed up with an extensive report on the damage suffered by co-operatives in Sri Lanka.

A Co-operative Empowerment Programme was adopted with the aim of building the capacity of the most vulnerable co-operatives. A training manual on sustainable business development

proposals was prepared for co-operative leaders and managers. Reconstruction of damaged facilities was funded by the Israeli Co-operative Movement.

A measure of the programme's success was the way in which people tapped into local resources rather than waiting for external assistance.

Many co-operative leaders and managers obtained investment credit from local banks and an entrepreneurial spirit was fostered.

The project has helped to

*“ICA's primary concern was to rebuild sustainable livelihoods for surviving co-operative members ... “*

## Tsunami, part 2 (cont.)

### India

Experience with the aftermath of the killer earthquake in Gujarat in 2001 meant that the res-



*Inspecting tsunami relief reconstruction efforts in India*

cue and relief operations in India were managed well. However, like in Sri Lanka, most of the agencies catered for the needs of individuals rather than focussing on the co-operatives.

As such, people, whose livelihood depended on co-operative societies, were largely left unattended. For political reasons, contributions and

donations from co-operatives could not be used in the reconstruction of co-operatives. But local governments, aware of the distribution capacity of co-operatives, channelled the supply of essential commodities through temporary shops run by primary co-operatives. The Post-Tsunami Reconstruction Project targeted Cuddalore district in Tamil Nadu and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. In Nicobar Islands alone, the tsunami washed away almost 90% of households and civil infrastructure rendering thousands of tribal families homeless and jobless. The project financed by the UK co-operative movement and the NCUI (National Co-operative Union of India) was carried out by ICA AP and the NCUI in collaboration with state governments.

The aims were to restore primary co-operative infrastructure at village level, regenerate co-operative busi-

nesses and assist women members of co-operatives to shoulder family responsibilities through micro-credit enterprises. Reconstruction work carried out voluntarily by co-op members gave them a sense of ownership of the assets. Phase one of the work has been completed and facilities handed over to the primary co-operatives. A second phase in Nicobar, financed by the UK co-operative movement, is well under way. The disaster response and reconstruction work have enhanced the image of co-operatives in the affected communities and initiated the release of financial resources for co-operative rehabilitation by various state governments. A disaster relief workshop organised by ICA AP and NCUI for co-operative leaders and local government representatives will ensure that they are better prepared to respond to future disasters.

## Obituaries



*Dr. S.S. Sisodia*

### Long time Indian co-operator passes away

Dr S.S. Sisodia, President of National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI) and the ICA-AP Standing Committee Member died on 24 March 2007 from a heart attack.

Dr Sisodia was also a long serving member of the ICA's global Board.

Dr Sisodia was re-elected unanimously for the second term of five years as President of NCUI in March 2005. Dr. Sisodia has been associated with the co-operative movement for the past forty years and has worked in

various positions at different levels from the primary level co-operative society to the national and international organisations. He is a member of the International Raiffeisen Union (IRU) and President of the Asian Farmers Group on Co-operation (AFGC), Japan.

A trustee and Chairperson of the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development.

Dr Sisodia was a member of Parliament for

some fourteen years.

Author of books and articles on different subjects concerning co-operatives, literature, legislative, social and culture, his contribution in the field of co-operatives, social and culture is well recognised.

ICA President, Ivano Barberini was present in India at the time of Dr Sisodia and was able to pass on the condolences of the international movement.