

# WITH THE PEOPLE FOR THE PEOPLE

Tsunami relief and reconstruction work by SOS Children's Villages



**SOS-KINDERDORF**  
International

# A NEW START THANKS TO GLOBAL SOLIDARITY

Since 2004, 26 December has been closely linked in people's minds to the word "tsunami". It is estimated that in eleven countries 230,000 people, thousands of whom were children, died on this day. This date will also remain especially memorable to SOS Children's Villages. After they had recovered from the initial shock, our colleagues at SOS Children's Villages did everything within their power to help.

The circumstances over the first days, weeks and months were particularly exceptional. What our colleagues managed to do on the ground, sometimes in the most difficult of conditions, cannot be overestimated. Within three years, they have made a vital progress towards the fulfilment of the promise we made our donors: that we would pro-

vide comprehensive, specific support tailored to people's needs. Our objective is to secure the future of children and their families.

By the end of 2007, almost all projects that are part of the largest emergency relief and reconstruction programmes ever launched by SOS Children's Villages will have been put into practice with great commitment, high standards and consideration of local circumstances.

I think that one of our strengths is that we are established on the ground and can assess what is feasible and will help people in the long-term.

This direct and long-lasting relationship is one of our commitments to our partners: our many donors, sponsors,

towns, communities, schools, private initiatives, governments and businesses. It is only with their support that we can take action!

We would like to express our gratitude to all those who made our joint contribution to the post-tsunami relief aid possible and who despite the difficulties faced did not give up hope for a new beginning.



**Helmut Kutin**  
**President of SOS Children's Villages**



*SOS Children's Villages commemorates the many children who died on 26 December 2004, trusting in the future of the coming generations.*



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# WITH THE PEOPLE FOR THE PEOPLE

## Tsunami relief and reconstruction work by SOS Children's Villages

**"I didn't know whether I could cope with the disaster", says Masriya, recalling the shock that she, her family and hundreds of thousands of other people suffered as a result of the tsunami. Immediately after the tsunami there was a scene of complete devastation, not just in terms of material items, but also in terms of the people themselves.**

During the first few days following the disaster on 26 December 2004, staff from SOS Children's Villages reacted spontaneously and organised relief where and in which-ever shape or form it was needed. SOS Children's Villages had the advantages that the organisation had already been active on the ground in India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and



Murtypudukuppam/India - © Dominic Sansoni

Thailand for years and that its staff is mostly local. The greatest problems faced were the scale of the disaster, the infrastructure that had been completely destroyed in many areas, the lack of coordination, the large distances, changing laws and a precarious security situation in some areas.

The emergency relief that lasted for several months reached out to 23,000 people from the south-west coast of Sri Lanka to Banda Aceh on the Indonesian island of Sumatra. Trauma centres were set up for children, as were nurseries to relieve parents. Emergency relief packages,

### Active participation of the communities and respect for cultural and local characteristics

clothes, medication and school materials were distributed, start-up money was provided for families, and over 340 fishing boats were made available.

From the outset, it was clear to SOS Children's Villages that the programmes that would follow the emergency relief were to have a long-term impact so that people would be in a position to manage their lives in the future without external aid and that coming generations would be able to build on this support.

The active participation of communities was as important to SOS Children's Villages as respect for cultural and local characteristics, the sustainability and quality of projects and the focus on the special needs of families and their children. Despite great difficulties, the

*“It’s great to watch my children play and to hear them laugh again”,  
says Tamilselvi from Nagapattinam in India.*



Murtypudukuppam/India - © Dominic Sansoni

vast majority of projects were implemented within the scheduled timeframe.

SOS Children’s Villages built more than 2,200 family houses in 15 locations and carried out repairs to the infrastructure of whole villages. 18 multi-purpose centres were established. These serve as contact points for families, social facilities such as kindergartens, vocational trainings for girls and mothers in particular, health centres and as places of refuge during floods. The centres are due to be handed over to the communities after a period of three to five years so that they can manage them themselves.

The tidal waves killed thousands of children. Many children were orphaned. Many more lost one of their parents, siblings and/or other relatives. And again, it was a disaster that affected those who had already faced difficult living conditions

before the tsunami most. Six new SOS Children’s Villages were built for children who had lost their parents and whose extended families are not able to look after them. Kindergartens, social centres and a number of family strengthening programmes are mainly intended to ensure the survival of children and keep families together, as well as to encourage communities to organise themselves.

“We have come across village communities that have helped and are still helping each other in the most difficult of situations”, said Siddhartha Kaul, director for SOS Children’s Villages in Asia. People have gradually learnt to have trust in life and believe in the future again, as well as look forward to it, despite the shadows of the past.

# BRICK BY BRICK

2,232 family houses in 15 communities

**Prior to the tsunami disaster, SOS Children's Villages had never before embarked on such a comprehensive reconstruction project. A total of 2,232 family houses were built for more than 11,000 people in four countries. This project was a first and was a real success for the child-care organisation specialised in out-of-home care for children.**

Sri Lanka saw a concentration of all the problems that many aid organisations faced during the reconstruction process. Disputes over land, conflicts of interest, frequently changing legal requirements, political disputes and incidences of violence were some of the hurdles encountered.

In light of this, particular mention should be made of the construction projects that staff from SOS Children's Villages implemented, sometimes in dangerous circumstances. SOS Children's Villages was the first non-profit organisation in

Sri Lanka able to sign a memorandum of understanding with the government to build a whole village.

The houses built corresponded both to local conditions and to the families' needs. Village infrastructures (roads, water and electricity supply, sewerage systems, etc.) were also repaired.

More than 600 new houses were built in Komari alone. Social facilities for kindergartens, schools, health centres and advice points were also set up in the small fishing village on the eastern coast of Sri Lanka. Despite logistical challeng-



Kayankerni/Sri Lanka - © Sebastian Posingis

## Reconstruction with the active participation of those concerned

es, it was also possible to build houses in the villages that had been destroyed on Sumatra within the period of time planned and with the active participation of those concerned.

People in areas stretching from Komari to Pudukuppam on the coast of India to Gampong Cot in Indonesia literally had nothing. Entire villages had dis-

appeared, as had people and all belongings. Raju, Komari's former postmaster, wanted to enjoy retirement. Instead, he lost his house, which he had wanted to hand down to his daughter. He and his fam-

*"To me, this house is like a wedding present."*  
Karnini, mother from Lambada Lhok/Indonesia



Komari/Sri Lanka - © Sebastian Posingis

ily now have a small home of their own again, as do thousands of other families. Something that is even more important

is that people now believe in the future again and are confident that they can make it.

### **INDIA**

653 family houses in four villages (150 houses were built in cooperation with SOS Chatnath Homes)

### **SRI LANKA**

977 family houses in three villages

### **INDONESIA**

521 family houses in three villages

### **THAILAND**

81 family houses in four villages

**UN Habitat**, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, published a study in 2006 on the reconstruction of family houses carried out by around 35 organisations in Indonesia. The participation of those affected, the quality of the construction and the process of allocating the houses were evaluated. SOS Children's Villages' projects were ranked amongst the best. The construction of houses in Suak Raya obtained the highest possible mark.

# HELPING FAMILIES HELPS CHILDREN

18 multi-purpose centres, three SOS Social Centres and eight family strengthening programmes

The district of Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu was hit hardest by the tidal waves in India. The area, which is well-known for its fishing, saw the most deaths. Fathers did not return from sea and mothers did not return home. Pictures of ships piled up on top of each other were seen around the world.

As in the other areas hit by the disaster, in Nagapattinam those affected most were families who had already been struggling to survive in tough conditions before the tsunami. Children's fates depend on the

## Responsibility for themselves and each other

fates of their families. Families in turn depend on active village communities. This was the simple logic that SOS Children's Villages applied when building multi-purpose centres and social centres, and when setting up family strengthening programmes. A total of 18 community cen-

tres were built in India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. They are functional buildings that house amongst others nurseries, schools and advice points. The houses are built in such a way that people can take refuge on their

roofs if there are floods. The centres are to be handed over to the communities for them to manage themselves after a period of three to five years, during which SOS Children's Villages will be present to coordinate and give advice.

SOS Children's Villages is running new SOS Social Centres and family strengthening programmes. The centre in Nagapattinam consists of one main house



Akkampettai/India - © Dominic Sansoni

and small branches. The house was built during colonial times specially for one single lunch party which never took place. It is now the "heart" of the SOS family strengthening programme in the town. Around 1,500 children benefit from the many

services the centres offers. Another important target group is young women and single mothers, many of whom are widows. The girls and women learn to sew, embroider, make candles or grow mushrooms, and how to run their own small businesses. There is IT training and extra tuition, music and dance classes for children and mechanics classes on boat engines for older boys and young men. It also provides medical care, advice on how to bring up children, workshops on

*"I deeply missed my mother, but dancing has helped me to get over it. I've also made good friends here."* Satya, a girl from Nambiyar Nagar/Nagapattinam



Nagapattinam/India - © Dominic Sansoni

children's rights, self-help groups, etc. Every aspect of the programme aims to ensure that families manage their own lives themselves again, that the children are well-cared for and receive a proper

education, that they form social networks in which families assist each other and that people take responsibility for themselves and for each other in village communities.

## INDIA

- Three multi-purpose community centres
- One SOS Social and Medical Centre and several family strengthening programmes for 1,500 children

## INDONESIA

- Three multi-purpose community centres
- Three family strengthening programmes for 720 children

## SRI LANKA

- Twelve multi-purpose community centres
- Rebuilding of a state-run high-school for 1,750 pupils
- Two SOS Social Centres

## THAILAND

- One primary school

# LIVING WITH THE SEA

343 fishing boats for more than 1,100 families

In many countries, the sea is revered as a goddess. Before they go out to sea, fishermen pray that they will catch plenty of fish and will return safely. This is also the case in Thailand. Many people in the coastal areas live of fishing - they sell their catch at the market and cover their own needs.

It is more than symbolic that the fishermen are once again praying before they go to sea each day. Their very existence depends on the sea and many cannot imagine and do not want to even consider leading a different life style. The loss of boats and fishing equipment in the tidal waves hit many fishermen very hard. Isahak from a small village in Thailand called Bang Kluay Nok was one of them.

It was a scene of celebration when the men set sail in their new boats and with their new nets for the first time. In India, Thailand and Sri Lanka, SOS Children's Villages pro-

vided 343 boats, as well as nets, other fishing equipment, cool boxes and boat engines. Many now have sturdier boats and can spend the night out at sea. It often happens that several families share a boat.

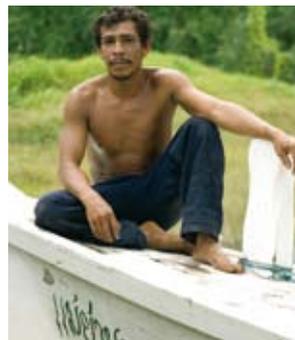
The disaster relief in Thailand was the most well-organised because of a professional network of national and international relief organisations. This was why SOS Children's Villages concentrated on assisting small villages away from tourist areas, which had been badly affected but were not being helped as part of the reconstruction work. The people were assisted by SOS Children's Villages in building sol-

## Fishermen look after their families without charities from others



Bang Tung Wha/Thailand - © Sebastian Posingis

Faith in the benevolent sea goddess was seriously shaken after 26 December 2004. "A mother doesn't eat up her children", said 14-year-old Jeevanandam from India. Most people had never even heard of a tsunami.



Ban Tung Wha/Thailand  
© Sebastian Posingis

*“In the evening, the children stand in front of the house and wait for their father. They know that he’s going to come home soon with his new fishing net and that we’re going to eat together.”* Amena, a mother from Bang Kluy Nok, Thailand



id houses and were provided with boats. This meant the end of the crippling inactivity for Isahak. He can now look after his family without charity from others. Children of fishing families usually work as well, but Isahak has broken with this tradition. His children now go to school.

#### **INDIA**

191 boats and fishing equipment (e.g. motors, nets, cool boxes)

#### **SRI LANKA**

22 boats and fishing equipment

#### **THAILAND**

71 boats and fishing equipment



Akkampettai/India - © Dominic Sansoni

# LOSS AND A NEW BEGINNING

Six new SOS Children's Villages in three countries



Meulaboh/Indonesia - © Sebastian Posingis

The children were very excited as they marked out the places for their favourite plants. Trees, flowers and bushes were planted. That was just before they moved into their new homes at the SOS Children's Village Meulaboh on the southern coast of Sumatra. It is estimated that 40,000 people in the main town of the Aceh Barat district died as a result of the tidal waves. Just under three years after the disaster, children and their SOS mothers moved into the new village.

Almost all of them are tsunami survivors - the mothers as well. Some of the children lost both their parents; others have lost either their mother or their father. Some of them lost brothers and sisters. Those relatives who have survived are not always able to look after their children for various reasons. And there are also children from broken homes. Many women,

**A new home for more than 800 children, support for disadvantaged families**

who now care for a newly grown family, have lost their husbands and children. Such is the case for Yusmanidar, who,

with her two biological children who were left with her, has found new meaning in her work as an SOS mother.

Altogether six new SOS Children's Villages were established: two in India (Pondicherry and Nagapattinam), three in Indonesia (Medan, Banda Aceh and Meulaboh) and one in Thailand (Phuket). Generous donations will

cover the running costs of the villages for several years. Plans to build an SOS Children's Village on the eastern coast of Sri Lanka had to be cancelled because the civil war flared up again.



Medan/Indonesia - © Sebastian Posingis

The new SOS Children's Villages can accommodate more than 800 children. The specific locations were chosen to enable disadvantaged families in the neighbourhoods of the SOS Children's Villages to make use of a wide social infrastructure



*“The pain of mourning has decreased each day because I have seen how the children are learning to cope with the disaster. They give me strength and give my life meaning.”*  
SOS mother Yusmanidar, Meulaboh



#### INDIA

- Two SOS Children's Villages (Pondicherry and Nagapattinam)
- One SOS Kindergarten
- One SOS Vocational Training Centre (Port Blair/Andaman Islands)

#### INDONESIA

- Three SOS Children's Villages (Medan, Meulaboh, Banda Aceh)
- Three SOS Kindergartens

#### THAILAND

- One SOS Children's Village (Phuket)

Medan/Indonesia - © Sebastian Posingis

(family strengthening programmes, kindergartens, social and vocational centres).

Nasrudin says in a quiet voice that he

sometimes has flashbacks and can even remember the strange smell that filled the air. When this happens, he can hardly breathe. He was the first child to be given a new home at SOS Children's

Village Meulaboh. When shadows of the past fade away again, he smiles and says: “Eventually I'll be director of an SOS Children's Village and will help other children who have lost their parents.”

# INCOME FROM DONATIONS - OVERVIEW

| Country                 | (in 1,000 USD) |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Germany                 | 30,960         |
| Austria                 | 8,284          |
| Sweden                  | 4,140          |
| Norway                  | 3,432          |
| France                  | 2,640          |
| Netherlands             | 2,460          |
| Indonesia               | 2,169          |
| Great Britain           | 1,236          |
| India                   | 1,186          |
| USA                     | 1,181          |
| Luxembourg              | 1,092          |
| Denmark                 | 984            |
| Switzerland             | 768            |
| Belgium                 | 499            |
| Sri Lanka               | 397            |
| Iceland                 | 252            |
| Finland                 | 192            |
| Italy                   | 173            |
| Canada                  | 124            |
| Spain                   | 108            |
| International           | 67             |
| <b>Total (in 1,000)</b> | <b>62,344</b>  |

EARMARKED DONATIONS  
from national SOS Children's Village associations

## ALLOCATION of donations (USD)

|  | INDONESIA         | SRI LANKA         | INDIA             | THAILAND         | Total             |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>EMERGENCY RELIEF</b>  | 450,000           | 290,000           | 1,400,000         | 489,000          | <b>2,629,000</b>  |
| <b>RECONSTRUCTION</b><br>(family houses,<br>community centres,<br>boats, etc.) | 5,323,000         | 11,834,500        | 5,552,000         | 619,300          | <b>23,328,800</b> |
| <b>SOS CHILDREN'S<br/>VILLAGES FACILITIES</b>                                  | 4,476,700         | 545,000           | 3,525,000         | 2,628,000        | <b>11,174,700</b> |
| <b>Earmarked<br/>RUNNING COSTS</b>   | 5,986,800         | 1,697,300         | 6,038,600         | 3,350,000        | <b>17,072,700</b> |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>16,236,500</b> | <b>14,366,800</b> | <b>16,515,600</b> | <b>7,086,300</b> | <b>54,205,200</b> |



## SOS Children's Villages INDIA

- 653 family houses in four villages (150 houses were built in cooperation with SOS Chatnath Homes)
- Three multi-purpose community centres
- 191 boats (including fishing equipment e.g. motors, nets, cool boxes)
- Two SOS Children's Villages (Pondicherry and Nagapattinam)
- One SOS Kindergarten
- One SOS Vocational Training Centre (Port Blair/Andaman Islands)
- One SOS Social and Medical Centre for 1,500 children and several family strengthening programmes

## SOS Children's Villages THAILAND

- 81 family houses in four villages
- 71 boats and fishing equipment
- One primary school
- One SOS Children's Village (Phuket)

## SOS Children's Villages INDONESIA

- 521 family houses in three villages
- Three multi-purpose community centres
- Three SOS Children's Villages (Medan, Meulaboh, Banda Aceh)
- Three SOS Kindergartens
- Three family strengthening programmes for 720 children

## SOS Children's Villages SRI LANKA

- 977 family houses in three villages
- Twelve multi-purpose community centres
- 22 boats and fishing equipment
- Rebuilding of a state-run highschool for 1,750 pupils
- Two SOS Social Centres

## OVERVIEW

- DIRECT EMERGENCY RELIEF for 23,000 people (start-up money, relief packages, first aid, clothing, school materials, etc.)
- Eleven temporary DAY CARE CENTRES for 1,800 children
- 343 FISHING BOATS for 1,120 families
- PROVISIONAL ACCOMMODATION for around 1,370 people
- Construction of 2,232 FAMILY HOUSES for a total of 11,079 people in 15 communities
- 18 MULTI-PURPOSE COMMUNITY CENTRES (for kindergartens, education courses, family advice, medical points, shelter in the case of flooding)
- SIX NEW SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES for around 830 children (incl. kindergartens, social centres, youth facilities, vocational training centres)
- Three SOS SOCIAL CENTRES and eight FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMMES

# THE END AND THE BEGINNING

House number 8 in Gampong Cot in West Aceh is one of the 130 houses that SOS Children's Villages built in the village. It is home to Saljani and her daughter Putri, who is a healthy, pretty girl.

Putri's full name is "Putri Tsunami Irayana", which means "Daughter of the Tsunami". She was born on 26 December 2004 on the roof of the mosque, the only building in Gampong Cot that remained standing in the swirling waves. 300 people took refuge on the roof of the mosque, but Putri's two sisters were not so lucky. After Putri was born, her father Adnan placed her in a reed basket that fishermen normally use to transport their catch. He and his wife then waded through the water for seven whole hours to reach a clinic where they both received care. Adnan died later as a result of his injuries.

Putri Tsunami Irayana embodies both the joy of new life and the pain of the past. House number 8 with its blue roof is also a place where people laugh.



Putri with her mother - © Sebastian Posingis

*"Udep tanyau nyoe meusti ta peujak laju" - "Life must go on",  
say the people of West Aceh.*



SOS-Kinderdorf International  
Hermann-Gmeiner-Strasse 51  
P.O. Box 209  
A-6010 Innsbruck  
Austria  
[com@sos-kd.org](mailto:com@sos-kd.org)  
[www.sos-childrensvillages.org](http://www.sos-childrensvillages.org)