

# FROM HELP TO HOPE CONTINUED

That night Yan and his son went out fishing for the first time in four months. They caught an expensive fish that they were able to sell for \$120. A usual day's catch would be a fourth of that.

## *A lasting presence*

The center of activity for Aceh villagers has always been the mosque where the children spend their after-school time reciting the Koran. Cahaya Suku built a community center to provide activities for the children and women including crafts, traditional dance, art, sports, and reading. These activities have gained a lot of support from the community. Children flock to the community center after school. The women also gather for literacy training. The library is full of books and magazines for women.

Coupled with the clinics, which provide free medical care and public health training, the community centers enhance the quality of life for the people in the villages and give our partners a lasting presence in these communities. Community centers in other villages are also in the works.

## *"May our lives be an inspiration to them!"*

Another ministry partner working in Aceh, Dairi Christian Fellowship (DCF), benefited from Partners International's Relief Consultant Mr. Hoe who gave crisis relief training to prepare them for future emergencies. He also helped the ministry leader, Wati, reorganize their teams for greater efficiency and effectiveness and gave three days of leadership training to the DCF team.

Each week Wati and teams go to five disaster areas to do friendship evangelism and hold revival services. So far, they have distributed about 100 tons of food and daily necessities. Wati shared that the



*Acehnese children flock to the new community centers built by our partners Cahaya Suku.*

disasters have broken down walls and many people are eager to hear the Gospel. "In one area, at least 2,000 people attended a revival service and a good number received Jesus as their Savior," Wati said. "We plan to continue this program for three years, until the people can sustain themselves and until the seed of God's Word grows and multiplies."

Because our partners already had relationships with many Acehnese before the tsunami, they have credibility and are well accepted by the people, even becoming as brothers and sisters to them. "We are praying for a spiritual transformation of the people we are serving!" said one ministry partner. "May our lives be an inspiration to them and may they see the love of Christ in us!"

*Partners International is a global ministry that works to create and grow communities of Christian witness in partnership with God's people in the least Christian regions of the world.*



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# TSUNAMI REPORT

## *Rebuilding Lives and Livelihoods*

September 2005

*Even though the news media has turned its attention to other stories, the tsunami tragedy is not over. If "9/11" is the event that will define a generation in the United States, the tsunami of 12/26/04 is the event that will define a generation around the rim of the Indian Ocean.*

*Thanks to your financial and prayerful partnership, Partners International continues its focus on rebuilding the lives and livelihoods of those who lost so much. Our indigenous ministry partners are demonstrating in word and deed the love of Christ for those in need. While resources are limited, we work with our partners to identify the places where we can have the greatest impact on specific communities. This report tells some of the stories of those whose lives are being transformed by the holistic witness of our outreach.*



## WHO EVER THOUGHT?



One hour from the southern tip of India, our partner, Bible Faith Mission, has "adopted" 120 families to support with fishing nets, boats, utensils, vocational training, and school books and uniforms for children.

One fisherman expressed his gratitude when he received a new boat: "We and our people lost everything within seconds. We never thought there were God's people who cared for us. Now we understand that in the name of Jesus, there is love, care, and rehabilitation. We and our generations will never forget the tsunami disaster as well as this loving kindness from the Christians through Bible Faith Mission."

*Many Sri Lankans lost their livelihoods in the tsunami. Transitional housing adds to the difficulty of regaining independence and the ability to care for one's family. Through your gifts, our partner has helped 60 individuals learn new income-generating skills and gain hope for the future. Thank you!*

## WORDS...

*We received an offering for your Tsunami Relief Sunday: \$8,689. One very young child brought a plastic bucket full of \$80 worth of change.*

—Judi Chan  
Valley Bible Church

*One of our partner ministries in Vietnam took up an offering from some of their house churches for relief in Aceh. They presented me with a big pile of 5 million Vietnamese Dong...about \$320...I think our partners see themselves as international givers too and not just as receivers.*

—Indochina Area Director  
Partners International

# TAKING CARE OF THE WIDOW...



Kargil Vetri Nagar is a makeshift settlement with 2,100 tsunami survivors from five fishing villages squeezed into an array of cardboard houses. Our ministry partner, Church Growth Association of India (CGAI), was able to enter the camp with the help of a local pastor who ministers in one of the fishing villages.

Ezhilarasi (which means “princess of beauty”), her husband, and child loved the Lord and attended the local church. Her husband was a fisherman and the night before the tsunami, went fishing. The next morning around 8:25 he called Ezhilarasi from a public phone booth near the seashore, telling about his successful catch. He told her he’d be home for breakfast in half an hour and then they would attend church. Suddenly, while they were talking, Ezhilarasi heard a turbulent noise through the phone and the line went dead. His body was later found.

As the months passed, Ezhilarasi pulled out of her shock and made a decision to live not only for her child but also for other tsunami victims. Through CGAI, she is teaching tailoring skills to many women and also wants to take literacy classes.

*Partners International is providing assistance to widows of the tsunami through grief counseling, vocational training, literacy classes, and the hope of the Gospel.*

“By God’s grace we have established three Self-Help Groups of 12-15 women each, training them in vocational skills,” said Mano Albert, leader of CGAI’s women’s outreach.

## ...AND THE ORPHAN

Children were severely affected by the tsunami, with many becoming orphans. Many lost educational opportunities when teachers died and schools and supplies were destroyed. Our partner, Evangelism Mission Outreach Service (EMOS), chose to focus on this need. EMOS hired ten trained teachers in ten villages to help 500 tsunami-affected students with their school work and to mentor them. These coaching centers open at 5:30 p.m., starting with a short reading from the Bible and prayer, followed by snacks and tea, and closing at 8 p.m. In addition to class instruction, each child has received a school bag and, essential during the monsoon season, their own umbrella.

Thirteen-year-old Jenila studies at one coaching center. Her family lost all their belongings, including their fishing boat, in the tsunami and now lives in a makeshift hut. Her mother’s hands are deformed due to diabetes but they can’t afford medical treatment because Jenila’s father spends their small income on liquor. Often the family has no food. When Jenila’s teachers learned about her situation, they went to visit the family. Jenila’s father sheepishly told them that their abject poverty drove him to drinking. He is in counseling now.

“In her family, only Jenila goes to school,” shared ministry leader Dr. A. Selvaraj. “She loves her brothers so much that she takes the snacks given at the coaching center home to them. In spite of the family situation, she is always happy and ready to help others.” Please pray for this family.



*The tsunami will define the current generation living around the rim of the Indian Ocean.*

# FROM HELP TO HOPE

“In these past six months, God has helped us to do many things that we could not have imagined,” shared our Indonesia Area Director. “We’ve worked with the people in each of our adopted villages in Aceh, building homes and restoring livelihoods. The challenges have been great for each project, but we sensed the Lord’s guidance every step of the way.”

In one of the villages, our local partner, Cahaya Suku, worked tirelessly for weeks with the people to build houses and restore salt flats. Only three months after the tsunami, this village started their normal life again, much faster than surrounding villages. A party was held to celebrate the completion of this first phase of reconstruction. The villagers, mayor, and many local authorities came. National television covered the event where children sang and danced and everybody enjoyed a feast. Then a village leader read a list of assistance they had received from Cahaya Suku and outlined for the government the ongoing medical and education work that our teams are doing in the village.

*“There is no way anyone is going to do that for us”*  
Reconstructing shrimp ponds continues with 100 acres of ponds completed in another village. Our partner rented a pond to demonstrate how to use mangroves and other eco-friendly means to increase their yields.

Many boat builders lost their lives in the tsunami, so Cahaya Suku brought in builders and set up several boat-building workshops. The teams, with help from the community, turn out about 30 boats a month.

Yan was the first recipient. After receiving his boat, he replied: “For four months after the tsunami, I lived with no hope. As head of my household, I had no job and was unable to provide for my wife and nine children. Since my youth, I have only worked as a fisherman. When I heard Cahaya Suku was providing boats for our village, I thought, ‘There is no way anyone is going to do that for us.’ But when I saw the boat workshop under construction and I was chosen to receive one of the first five boats, I grew convinced that this was not just an empty promise.

“Today I have received my boat. My heart is overjoyed. I want to express my family’s gratitude to Cahaya Suku whom we view as our savior from the disaster that has come upon us.”

*continued on back...*



*The night Yan (above) received his boat, he and his son went out fishing for the first time in four months.*



*Dairi Christian Fellowship’s long-standing relationships in the Aceh community (right) smoothed the way for providing aid immediately after the tsunami.*

## BREAKING THE TSUNAMI’S HOLD

In partnership with Vinnarasu Association of India, a ministry on the southern tip of India, so far we have trained 175 youth in income-generation skills including making umbrellas, making products from banana fiber, and tailoring. This helps supplement their families’ incomes. Christian values are taught to help the youth grow in Christ-like qualities.

In addition, six support groups meet weekly for widows and destitute women. “It is very difficult to bring tsunami survivors out of their trauma and depression,” shared Dr. D. Mathias, president of Vinnarasu: “The fear of the tsunami will not go away from their minds. Our people regularly visit families to comfort them, extend prayer support, and counsel them. We share the love of Christ with them. We’ve also started Bible studies with the help of nearby churches.”