



Press release

Chiang Mai, 18 December 2007

Tsunami rehabilitation revisited – giving the people a voice

Publications of the „Tsunami Aid Watch“ programme

Three years after the Tsunami, the tourism industry is booming in the coastal areas of Southern Thailand. But how has the rehabilitation process been working out for the affected communities of the Andaman coast? Were they able to safeguard their fair share of the aid provided? Could they benefit from the development opportunities that have evolved after the disaster? These questions of fairness and sustainability of the reconstruction process are dealt with in the publications of the „**Tsunami Aid Watch**“ programme (TAW).

A whole range of studies has been facilitated by the **Save Andaman Network (SAN)**, a local network of non-governmental organizations (NGO) in the Tsunami impacted provinces. These reports are aimed at giving the locals and their organizations a stage to present their view on the Tsunami recovery to a broader audience.

The most recent publication is „**Building for the Future. A case study in rebuilding houses and rehabilitating Andaman coastal communities after the Tsunami**“. It deals with one of the most pressing challenges after the disaster, the (re-)building of houses for the affected population. The author Chalinee Sathanboa presents us five good examples of house rebuilding projects in Bahn Nahm Khem, Bahn Koh Muk, Bahn Thabtawan and Bahn Boh Jet Look. She describes the working structures set up by the communities with the support of SAN, as well as the implementation process, while also highlighting the obstacles.

The author Pikula Sithiprasertkula presents a case study of the role of Christian religious organizations' aid efforts at Thungwa, Thabtawan and Nahm Khem villages of Phang Nga's Takua Pa district: „**Tsunami: CROSS-Effects? Christian Religious Organizations' Support and its Socio-cultural Effects on aid recipients in Tsunami Rehabilitation**“. She discusses from a local Buddhist perspective the way in which Christian groups provided aid to the local population, why this was at times considered particularly helpful by local communities, while at others causing negative impacts. As a result, though, the author claims that missionary activities, if intended, did not prove too successful in the mainly Buddhist and Muslim dominated area.

Another publication in cooperation with SAN is „**Andaman Sea Gypsies: their origins and culture**“. It offers us an insight into the myths and some of the stories that accompanied the Morgan-Sea Gypsies on their centuries long migration from the Celebes Sea to the Andaman Islands of Thailand and Burma; as well as a window on to their current predicament after the 2004 Tsunami, along with their present living conditions, as a contrast to their rich history of exploration across today's Indonesian archipelago.

The resource book „**Tsunami Early Warning System in Thailand**“ compiled by TAW programme, has amongst its additional material, the perspectives of the representatives of various groups of local stakeholders on the state of implementation of a Tsunami Early Warning System 30 months after the disaster in Thailand.

To be published by the end of this year is a case study in Bahn Nahm Khem with the draft title “**The Permanent Changes of Communal Environment and Ecology of the Tsunami Affected Communities**“. After the Tsunami struck the coastal provinces in the south of Thailand, their ecology has been seriously harmed. But even though the destroyed environment is slowly but steadily recovering, the authors claim that it is mostly reconstruction aid, and government policies in particular, that is endangering the resource base of the affected communities. Thiwawan Chaikao, Romlee Maeroh and Karl Segschneider criticize the policy of changing properties to capital and the policy to issue title deeds on sea banks, threatening access to these resources for the villagers in the future.

One of the first publications about the recovery aid process one and a half years after the disaster was: „**78 weeks later. A descriptive, quantitative and qualitative summary after the Tsunami in Thailand**“. Having served as an analytical starting point for the TAW programme, it discusses the impact of the disaster, the state of reconstruction at the time, as well as the particular structures in Southern Thailand that influence paths to sustainability in post Tsunami rehabilitation.

Out of this analysis and intense debate with the local target groups the concept paper „**Seal of Fair Recovery (SoFaR) – Siegel “Fairer Wiederaufbau**“ evolved. It is intended as a support tool for post disaster rehabilitation that contributes to fairer rehabilitation results, first and foremost in regard to economic opportunities for all stakeholders. With SoFaR we want to contribute to the discussion on how to ensure fairness for disaster affected communities and industry alike in the post disaster development of the tourism sector. The seal would be granted to such companies that included principles of fairness and sustainability in the reconstruction process.

All studies and concept papers mentioned above have been developed under “**Tsunami Aid Watch**” (TAW), which is a programme to study the effectiveness and sustainability of aid provision during the post-Tsunami rehabilitation. It was initiated by the Southeast Asia Regional Office of Heinrich Böll Foundation in July 2005 to systematically monitor the impact of Tsunami aid packages and the mechanisms of implementation for best practices in the long term. TAW’s objectives were to systematically analyze aid development, aid structural deficiencies and its processes on the basis of previous results in case studies examined in the Tsunami recovery and rehabilitation process.

To download the publications of the TAW series, as well as upcoming information about our public forum taking place on January 26th, 2008, in Bangkok, please visit our website: www.taw-hbf.org. All publications are available in English and Thai. Until early 2008, all of them will be available in a printed version. Brigitte Link can also send them to you as books or by e-mail (gitte@taw-hbf.org).

Contact:

Phone: 053-810156

Fax: 053-810805

E-mail: gitte@taw-hbf.org

Website: www.taw-hbf.org
