

Effectively Addressing the Mid- and Long-Term Needs of Young People Affected by the Earthquake and Tsunami in Aceh

An On-Site Assessment 28 February 2005



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Introduction

- Assessment conducted in Aceh Province from the period of February 15th to February 27th by a team comprised of five individuals
- Team examined both needs and the extent to which young people (age 14 – 24) were involved in the planning and implementation of ongoing rebuilding and relief efforts
- Team assessed the degree to which young people could be involved in such efforts as the recovery process moves forward

Key Activities

- Reviewed existing documents that had been developed or compiled by the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance from the inception of the disaster relief response
- Met with approximately 20 organizations including UN agencies as well as international and local programs presently working in Aceh
- Conducted direct discussions with young people in a variety of settings

Issues Affecting Young People





The bodies were just floating all around me like in a movie.

Young man, 21 years old

Issues Affecting Young People

- Overwhelming sadness of loss associated with an event of this magnitude
- Concerned that the tsunami will strike again
- Very little for them to do on a day-to-day basis
- Education process disrupted - schools have been destroyed and teachers killed or missing
- General lack of employment and involvement in recovery efforts at any level

Issues Affecting Young People

“Young people are angry, but they are not angry about the tsunami. They see that as an act of God and of nature. They are angry about the lack of systems to help them get a good education and get jobs. This was the case before the tsunami; the tsunami has just made it worst.”

Young man, Banda Aceh



Current Response

Current Response

The following four quotes are from senior staff of three UN agencies and a large INGO in Aceh

- “Of all the requests for information I have received in the past two months, **your request for data on young people is the first** time that I have to say that I don’t believe we have anything of that nature.”
- “**No one is assessing the needs of young people & no one is considering how to provide them input** into the planning phase & involvement in the recovery process.”

Current Response

- “The initial focus was on providing food and shelter. Now **as we move past the emergency phase**, programs are emerging that focus on other issues; but these **new programs are not particularly focusing on young people.**”
- “There is a **major gap in providing support for young people**. Many programs exist for adults and young children, but there is a definite gap for young people.”

Recommendations



Recommendations for Action

- Work with young people to conduct needs and resource assessments that focus on both provision of services and increased involvement for young people

Recommendations for Action

- Involve young people immediately in the planning and implementation of rebuilding and recovery efforts

Recommendations for Action

- Strengthen educational opportunities for young people and create opportunities and vocational training to support the employment of young people

Recommendations for Action

- Develop a range of specific program activities in partnership with young people that provide direct support in those areas of most importance to them

Recommendations for Action

- Work collaboratively with local organizations to maximize impact and ensure sustainability

Recommendations for Action

- Develop mechanisms to distribute funds to local organizations and individual young people as well as develop processes for technical assistance and ongoing monitoring of program activities

Recommendations for Action

- Develop systems for documenting activities related to the involvement of young people, so that the lessons learned in this experience can be applied in the future



Benefits

Key Benefits of Involving Young People

- Benefit the **young people themselves** since the opportunity to support rebuilding efforts is the best therapy that we can offer in terms of dealing with the feelings of helplessness disasters of this magnitude create

Key Benefits of Involving Young People

- Benefit the **entire community immediately** in that young people will bring a great deal of energy and commitment to bear on this situation by playing a role in support of all aspects of recovery activities

Key Benefits of Involving Young People

- Benefit the **community in years** to come since involving young people in recovery efforts will develop a cadre of individuals who will provide the leadership and human capacity to continue to build systems of support for young people, families and their communities into the future

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