

UNICEF NEWS

Aceh & Nias

February 2007



100 Schools!

14 schools completed – 86 under construction

AYO SEKOLAH, STUDENTS of SDN 96!

UNICEF opens 14th permanent school in Aceh

Reaching yet another milestone – 100 schools!!!! The mayor of Banda Aceh, Mawardi Nurdin, this month opened SDN 96 primary school in Neusu Aceh, Baiturrahman, Banda Aceh, thereby crossing the 100 school-mark: SDN 96 is the fourth school in Banda Aceh and the 14th school overall in Aceh and Nias to be completed by UNICEF. 86 more schools are under construction.



Atun (m.) before her performance.

All 130 students and 16 teachers of SDN 96, parents, members of the community, officials from the Ministry of Education and even principals from other schools joined the celebration.

Together they listened to Atun, a fifth-grade student, reciting a poem about her new bright-blue school. Together they watched the traditional *peusijek* ceremony, which is meant to bring good luck and keep bad spirits away from the building.

And together they watched as UNICEF's Chief of Field Office, Aceh and Nias, Edouard Beigbeder, handed a giant

sized blue key to the Principal of SDN 96 to symbolically "unlock" the new 2-story, six-classroom building.

"We have come a long way together to reach this important moment", said Mr. Beigbeder, and continued: "I sincerely welcome you to your new school, and I encourage you to be actively involved in its maintenance and use, so that many generations in the future can continue to have a beautiful space to learn in."

Like all UNICEF schools, SDN 96 is child-friendly with a degree of earthquake resistance factored into its design. The school cost approximately \$160,000 to build. The school also includes a teacher's office, a library, a big courtyard for the students to play and separate toilets for boys and girls, among many other features.

The original school building of SDN 96 was badly damaged by the earthquake of December 26, 2004 and finally demolished in 2005. After studying in UNICEF emergency tents after the earthquake, teachers and students then moved into two semi-permanent school units provided by UNICEF until the construction of the permanent school was completed.



Edouard Beigbeder handing over the "key" of the new school to the Head of the Ministry of Education, Pak Anas.

A very proud principal of SDN 96, Ibu Hurin, said: "UNICEF has been helping the students of SDN 96 since the earthquake and with every step improved their learning environment and thus their lives. The whole community is very proud of our new school." The two semi-permanent units will now be used as a kindergarten and a community centre.

In total, UNICEF is planning to build 367 child-friendly and earthquake resistant school units in Aceh and Nias. 350 school sites have been selected. In addition to the 14 completed schools, 304 schools have been contracted to UNOPS and two design and supervision companies.

IMPRESSIONS FROM SDN 96



14 schools already completed...

14 permanent schools have been completed in the province of Aceh and Nias Island, North Sumatra, with another 86 under construction. 6 of these are on Aceh's west coast, introducing new standards of child-friendly design and degrees of earthquake resistance.

SDN Alue Piet Krueng Sabee; SDN Kampong Baro, Setia Bakti and SDN Keude Krueng Sabee, all in the District of Aceh Jaya were officially opened on 18 December 2006.

UNICEF Indonesia's Representative, Dr. Gianfranco Rotigliano, who participated in the opening ceremony said: "It is important that we build schools with higher levels of safety in these areas so prone to earthquakes. There can be no compromise on this quality issue".

SDN Alue Piet, located only a few hundred metres from the sea on the road from Calang to Meulaboh, originally had 167 pupils. The tsunami completely destroyed the school building and killed nearly 100 students. By the time the semi-permanent school opened in November 2005, numbers had increased from 72 to 112, but it is expected that this will increase now that the permanent school is open and up to 300 houses are being built nearby. SDN Alue Piet is the only primary school in the area and serves four villages.



SDN Kampong Baro currently has 100 students and 5 teachers, but numbers should also rise here as permanent housing construction is on-going in the area.

SDN Keude Krueng Sabee is about 10 miles away from Calang. The original school, far away from the sea, was completely destroyed by the earthquake that preceded the tsunami in December 2004. Before the disaster there were 199 pupils and today 169 pupils with 12 teachers study in the school. As well as the village of Keude Krueng, two nearby villages attend classes – one village tsunami-affected and one affected by the conflict.



SDN 10 Meulaboh is located in the heart of Meulaboh town, Aceh Barat. 220 pupils and 17 teachers were studying in a three classroom semi-permanent school built by UNICEF and implementing partner IOM from December 2005 until January 2007, when they moved into their new 6 classroom earthquake resistant and child-friendly permanent school.



Situated in what should have been an idyllic spot close to the sea, the original SDN Kuala Baro school in the District of Nagan Raya was completely destroyed by the tsunami. Three school tents were provided for immediate needs and two x 3 classroom semi-permanent school units were provided soon after on land 2km in from the coast. The 6 classroom permanent school opened in January 2007, and 307 pupils - over 20 more than prior to the tsunami - with 12 teachers currently attend classes there. The new school is not far from the main airport to Meulaboh town road.

The original MIN Krueng Sabee school was located in the middle of the hardest-hit tsunami area of Aceh Jaya and the school buildings were completely destroyed. Immediately after the disaster, UNICEF provided two school tents for the children to study in, replacing them soon after with two x 3 classroom semi-permanent school units. In February 2007 the 111 children and 14 teachers started lessons in their new 6 classroom permanent school.



SDN Meunasah Tutong in Aceh Besar, and 3 more schools in Aceh Barat - SDN 4 Meulaboh, SDN Alue Peudeung and SDN Alue Kuyuen - will be completed over the next few weeks.

...and 86 are under construction!!

UNICEF is committed to setting new and higher standards in school construction by 'building back better', providing schools that are earthquake-resistant and child friendly, a new concept in Indonesia.

In mid-2006, UNICEF established its own Construction Unit to oversee the permanent school project. Agreement has currently been reached with implementing partner the United Nations Office for Project Services to build 170 schools; and two design and supervision companies, Nippon Koei and Bitu, to build 67 schools each, including school reconstruction in areas affected by Aceh's 32-year-long armed conflict as agreed by the Government of Indonesia in August 2006.

In Banda Aceh / Aceh Besar, 37 schools are under construction with 3-4 going to be completed within the next two months.



In the District of Aceh Jaya, 15 schools are under construction and 17 in the Nagan Raya and Aceh Barat Districts. Eighteen, 9 in each of the areas, are due for completion by the middle of the year.



Building earthquake-resistant schools takes much more time than that of a non-earthquake resistant structure. Every building stage requires close monitoring and continuous testing to standards. UNICEF does not compromise on safety and the quality of its learning environments, however, where possible, strides have been taken to speed up the process. Modular schools of two and three classrooms have been designed which can be built with concrete or from alternative construction materials using lightweight-steel frames and concrete substructures, to ease building time and transportation of materials to less accessible sites.

4 concrete schools are under construction in Nias, and construction has started on 24 of the substructures (concrete slabs) and 20 of the superstructures (lightweight-steel frames) of the alternative construction method schools in Nias and Nias Selatan Districts.

Lessons-learned so far have been invaluable for UNICEF. Major hurdles have had to be overcome particularly in site selection. Many of the proposed school sites, for example, had too few children living in the area, making it difficult to commit funds to building a permanent school if there were no signs that the population would resettle soon. Land issues, property disputes and other challenges have also needed further discussion, resulting in sites changed or construction plans redesigned. Other sites have posed different challenges with obstacles like hills, swamps and large outcrops of rock. Much of the road network is still being rebuilt and some sites have access only on foot or motorbike. Given that large quantities of building materials will be transported, this presents a problem in locations away from urban areas, a challenge particularly acute on Nias Island.

UNICEF actively promotes community participation throughout the whole process from site selection and school design, to the longer term where it is important to ensure the school is properly managed and maintained by the local community.

“Making houses cleaner and safer is our responsibility”
More than 250 participants attended 2-day workshop on housing sanitation

Ibu Nuria is not happy. Even though she likes her newly built house in Klieng Cot Arun village, Banda Aceh, the facilities are incomplete. “There is no drainage system in place, it concerns us”, she says. Across the street, a family is digging their own well, because they are not yet connected to a water distribution system. The well is only five metres away from their septic tank – it should be at least 15. The septic tanks in the village are not sealed and do not have any secondary treatment of the waste. They are constructed poorly and leak, allowing human waste to soak into the groundwater – which contaminates the water in the well.



The way it should be: Foreground: top of fiberglass septic tank. Background: vegetated leach field. Result: flowers and vegetables growing from septic tank outflow in narrow land plot.

The homes of almost 200,000 families were damaged or destroyed by the earthquakes and tsunami nearly two years ago, and since then more than 50,000 new houses have been built in Aceh and Nias. Given the enormity of the task, the focus was on speedy construction and sanitation was often given only minor attention and only simple interim solutions were provided.

Consequently, long-term sustainable systems which comply with the Indonesian National Standards need to be implemented immediately in thousands of housing projects, to avoid large scale health and environmental problems in the future.

According to the Indonesian Government’s Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Agency, BRR, another 50,000-70,000 houses will be built by in the next two years. Furthermore, around 80,000 houses will have been repaired before the end of 2009.

As early as 2005

BRR instructed all housing agencies that they are responsible for the on-site water and sanitation in their projects. But still, assessments show that many houses do not have any or inadequate sanitation facilities.

Some of the problems include:

- Unsealed septic tanks which allow the water to soak into the soil, thus contaminating the ground water often used by the residents as a water source.
- The level of the floor of the house is too low, and will not allow the toilet to flush properly into the septic tank.
- Secondary treatment from the septic tank outflow is often omitted, in many cases foul water is flowing directly into open drains.
- Where a septic tank is not sealed, and flooding occurs, the contents will float out, posing a risk to human health.



As a consequence, houses remain empty because people refuse to move in. “In some cases people can not move into the new houses because they are not complete”, said Dara Johnston, Head of Water Environmental Sanitation at UNICEF Banda Aceh.

On February 13th and 14th 2007, BRR with Public Works, UNICEF, GTZ, Oxfam, IFRC and USAID-ESP project, organized a comprehensive 2-day seminar to develop better guidelines for housing sanitation. More than 300 representatives from over fifty housing agencies, and almost one hundred local government officials participated.



Guest speakers from the National Ministries of Health, Public Works and Environment, and from the national Taskforce on Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation provided useful insight for the participants before they divided into three groups (septic tanks; secondary treatment; community management) to discuss possible solutions.

Outcomes include:

- Septic tanks should be watertight, and it has been demonstrated that this is possible to construct on a large scale for the houses in Aceh already.
- Secondary treatment should be a requirement for all of the sanitation systems being built in Aceh and Nias. Partial and poorly built systems have no place in the construction of real homes. A declaration will be signed by those building houses, committing them to the construction of sustainable sanitation systems.
- It must be recognized that local communities do not necessarily have an understanding of the benefits of sanitation. Therefore, there is a need to integrate information of health and hygiene promotion with the introduction of appropriate sanitation technologies, as well as a need for participatory monitoring and evaluation by government authorities and the communities, using effective mechanisms, which if not already existing, need to be established.

All the groups agreed that community mobilization and involvement of local government must be part of the planning, implementation, operating and monitoring stages.

Now, the results of the workshop need to be acted upon: As a first step, the recommendations will be presented to government officials and decision makers of all involved stakeholders. On the basis of the recommendations, guidelines for sustainable sanitation for the reconstruction in Aceh and Nias will be compiled and endorsed by BRR. The document will include actual samples of possible systems, which not only can be used in reconstruction in Indonesia, but also reconstruction projects anywhere.



UNICEF has already announced its support to BRR with the monitoring of implemented sanitation systems by providing resources in terms of funding, experts and equipment.

The seminar received a further endorsement during the proceedings. Mrs. Chairani, Head of Provincial Public Works Aceh announced that relevant standards, currently only recommendations in the Standar Nasional Indonesia (SNI), will be proposed as local law (Qanun) and therefore binding and enforceable. Mrs. Chairani said that the seminar proceedings will be considered when the law is being drafted.

Challenges do remain. The implementation of the guidelines must be enforced and monitored. “At least the agencies know their responsibilities now”, says Mr. Johnston. “But it is crucial for the community to be aware of what they are entitled to, and to be involved in monitoring the implementation of housing standards.”

UNICEF supports exhibition on vocational schools in Nias

Merdeka Field in Gunung Sitoli was crowded with people from 8-10 February as an exhibition was held to promote health and vocational schools for post-junior high school students.



UNICEF stand at the exhibition



Pupils reading hygiene promotion messages

The aim of the exhibition, coordinated by teacher Pak Firman Harefa, was to promote vocational schools particularly to students of third class SMP schools, who will be moving into a new school in July this year, and to parents who may be considering sending their child to a SDK (vocational) school.

The vocational and health schools train students in areas such as tourism, agriculture, fisheries, health, building, business and management, electronics, car and motorbike mechanics, IT, audio video, woodwork and metalwork.

Opened by the Bupati of Nias, the exhibition got off to a great start with hundreds of students, parents, teachers and officials enjoying the atmosphere on a beautiful sunny day. 11 vocational schools and 1 health school promoted their activities, as well as UN Agencies and NGOs, who supported and/or participated in the exhibition.



UNICEF staff demonstrate how to test water samples

UNICEF promoted its four areas of work – Water Environment and Sanitation, Health and Nutrition, Child Protection and Education - with emphasis placed on vocational aspects such as studying today to become a teacher, health worker, midwife, nurse, doctor, engineer, builder, social worker or water inspector, and was very pleased to support the exhibition and help to promote the future of Nias' students.

Learning the importance of breastfeeding 44 midwives and health staff participate in UNICEF workshop

Ibu Juriah Daud works in the maternal and child health development section of Johan Pahlawan Puskesmas, the biggest health centre in Meulaboh with 17 staff. The 40-year-old nurse was one of the participants of the breastfeeding counselor training organized by the District Health Office in Aceh Barat and supported by UNICEF at the end of 2006.



Ibu Juriah says she always wanted to be a nurse and is now in her third semester of part-time studying for a Diploma in Midwifery. “With three children of my own, I wish I had been given breastfeeding advice before having my children, as it would have made things much easier. I would have understood why breastfeeding is so important to a baby’s development.” Her daughter, currently studying medicine in Medan, plans to be a doctor, and her two sons want to be dentists like their father.

Pregnant women and mothers bringing their 2 month to 1 year olds (it is traditional in Aceh for mothers to remain in the house for 40 days after birth) to the puskesmas for immunizations are educated on good breastfeeding practices. Women in Aceh give birth at home with a midwife or birth attendant present, or in a private clinic if they can afford it, with between 3-5 births every day. Many women in the province have received little health education and believe that if their baby cries after feeding it is because breastmilk is not sufficient and they supplement it with formula milk or banana. Since receiving the training, Ibu Juriah can now counsel the mothers on the importance of good breastfeeding techniques, how to overcome problems and to share other mothers’ experiences.



One mother, who was worried she was not producing breastmilk, learnt techniques from Ibu Juriah and overcame the problem. Another mother wanted to stop exclusive breastfeeding after 4 months but took Ibu Juriah’s advice to continue to 6 months. The baby later came third in the 2006 World Vision Healthy Baby Competition, of which both the mother and Ibu Juriah are very proud.

But not only women attended the training. Pak Arham is the nutrition specialist in the Meurebo Puskesmas, as well as the posyandu coordinator. Since the workshop, Pak Arham has facilitated training for 135 cadres in Aula Muhammadiyah, has been counseling midwives in the puskesmas, and giving breastfeeding education to pregnant women and new mothers in 5 posyandus each month.

In the Meulaboh area, many women suffer from anemia and come to the puskesmas for free essential mineral and vitamin supplements, and Pak Arham advises them on balanced nutrition, as well as giving breastfeeding education.



Pak Arham says “one of the biggest problems is the lack of support from fathers, who want their wives to use formula milk and other supplements to feed their child as soon as possible, so that the wife is free to do other tasks in the home.” He strongly promotes that a child is both parents’ responsibility, and is proud that he helps his wife with their two sons.

Another big problem is the active promotion of formula milk. Companies approach midwives directly and convince them to earn an additional income by selling formula milk to new mothers in the puskesmas. A quota has to be reached each week and good performers are rewarded with trips overseas. Pak Arham worked for one of these companies but stopped when he learnt the essential benefits of breastfeeding and that formula milk should only be used to feed a baby under exceptional circumstances. Formula milk companies further push their goods by paying

television companies not to run adverts promoting breastfeeding, and Pak Arham is trying to counteract this by convincing the government to ban television adverts on formula milk.

For both Ibu Juriah and Pak Arham, the breastfeeding counselor training was another important step in learning how to better advise pregnant women and young mothers, and help to correct traditional and often inaccurate beliefs and behaviours.

“This is my chance to help!”

Acehnese youth participate in workshop on children affected by armed conflict



Fausi, Nurul and Aulia are tired, exhausted after the long return flight from the Philippines to Aceh. But the excitement about their past few days still reflects on their faces. The three high-school students from Aceh just represented the youth of Indonesia at an international workshop in Manila aimed at developing recommendations on how to improve the situation for children affected by armed conflict. All together, 20 children from four countries participated in the workshop.

It was a great opportunity for these youngsters to

get a start into actively participating in peace building, in negotiations, in advocacy for peace, children and young people's insights, to gain new skills and enhance their ability to work as part of a team together with other children. From this workshop, it is hoped that participants will help prevent children from being involved in armed conflict and inspire children to believe that social change can be achieved through peaceful methods.

For three days, the children and teenagers from Indonesia, Burma, Cambodia, Philippines and Thailand exchanged their experiences and ideas, and drafted a common declaration (see following pages). As a next step, the participants will present the declaration to the government and NGOs in their respective countries and try to get their voices heard in the continuing process of peace-building.

UNICEF is helping the youths to present the declaration to the relevant stakeholders by facilitating the dissemination of the declaration and by assisting in conducting discussion groups on peace building in order to raise awareness among their peers.

The workshop was also a chance for the participants to share and learn from each other the situations in their respective communities and their experiences in peace-building.

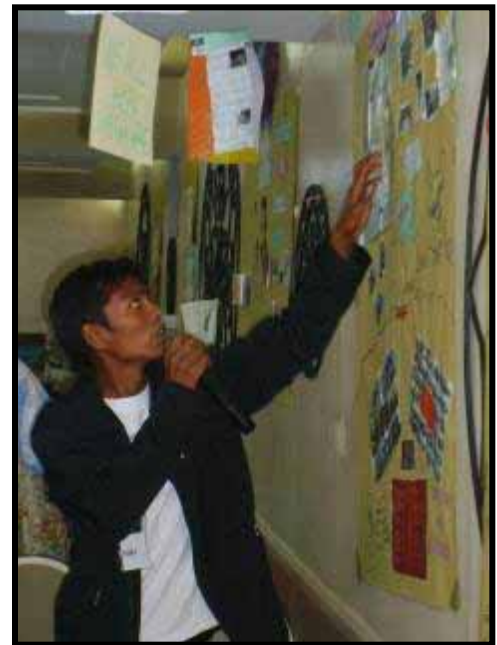
“Groups from each country had to do a presentation on the culture and history of their country, so we performed a traditional dance in traditional costumes, showed them maps of the province and also brought souvenirs for everyone”, says Nurul. “It was great! Everyone asked us so many questions about our history and culture, you could tell everyone really wanted to learn about each other and from each other!”

The selection of the participants was done in consultation with partner and network organizations in each country, that have been directly working with children from conflict areas through psycho-social healing projects, life-skills education, and community organizing.

The organizer of the workshop, Southeast Asia Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, requested UNICEF Indonesia to help select participants from conflict-affected areas who have been involved in peace-building activities. UNICEF then contacted local/ international organizations and government counterparts to select candidates.

Important issues indeed, as many children across the Province of Aceh were directly or indirectly affected by the 30-year-long conflict between the Government of Indonesia and GAM, the Acehese separation movement. After the signing of the peace agreement in August 2005, UNICEF and its partners have finally been able to access and start interventions to help the numerous children who have undergone traumatic experiences.

Fausi lives in a town about two hours away from Banda Aceh. One day a few years ago, Fausi was arrested by the Indonesian military because he was not wearing the ID card which was required during the martial law period. According to Fausi, the military assumed he was a member of the rebel movement and locked him up in jail. He was released from jail when the peace agreement was signed in August of 2005.



Fausi now goes back to school to finish his high school education, even though he is much older than his classmates. After his graduation, he plans to help other children that were affected by the conflict by setting up regular activities and discussion groups.

“I want to help other kids that have suffered, that could not go to school and learn a profession like me”, Fausi says.

Nurul has not been affected by the conflict, but she was touched by the experiences that the children in other regions had to go through. “I read about it in newspapers and saw it on TV, and when the peace agreement was signed, I thought, this is my chance to help! After all, we are the future of Aceh!”

Together with Aulia and a few other classmates, she founded her own organization called “Aneuk (Child) Love Peace International Organization.”

“Our mission is to make others aware of and appreciate peace by handing out information, holding meetings and organizing activities. We are the future of Aceh, and we must make sure we are informed.”



**“Strengthening Young People’s Participation in Peace Building”
December 8-10, 2006, West Gorordo Hotel, Cebu City**

Cebu Young People’s Declaration (2006)

We, as pro-active and concerned youth representatives from Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand to the “Strengthening of Young People’s Participation in Peace Building” held in Cebu City, Philippines from December 8 to 10, 2006 declare that:

The problem of one country in the ASEAN region is the problem of all member states and we are all responsible to address the issues faced by children and youth. These include the need for real peace and social justice and to address serious threats to child and youth development;

There is also a need for a regional commitment towards the protection and promotion of human rights and the strengthening of young people’s participation in peace building;

We are important members of society - with the power to improve and develop our communities and to promote a culture of peace.

In consideration of serious threats to child and youth development and of the lives and well-being of all children and youth in the region especially those affected by armed conflict, we bring the following recommendations to civil society and the ASEAN:

1. Prioritize the youth by recognizing their involvement and participation in every ASEAN decision making process;
2. Create an ASEAN youth organization for human rights and peace building;
3. Be concerned for children and youth through acting on the Singapore 2001 Declaration on the Commitments for Children in ASEAN and implementing the Vientiane Action Programme;
4. Call upon members states to enforce their national child and youth protection laws and honour their international obligations on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;
5. ASEAN should report annually on the progress in the implementation of the following:
 - Singapore 2001 Declaration on the Commitments for Children in ASEAN
 - Vientiane Action Programme
 - National laws towards the protection of the children and youth
 - Their obligations on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and on the issues faced by the youth;

We also call upon action on the following important issues faced by its member states:

BURMA:

- To prioritize and effectively address ending the use and recruitment of child soldiers in Burma by the military government and armed resistance groups.
- To immediately implement disarmament, demobilization, and social reintegration programs for child soldiers and allow non-government sectors and international community's cooperation.

CAMBODIA:

- To tie up and seek help from non-government organizations;

INDONESIA:

- To support peace process to conflict areas such as Aceh and Ambon;
- To provide assistance programs to these areas through rehabilitation and reintegration program in informal and formal sectors;

PHILIPPINES:

- To stop the recruitment and the use of child soldiers by the rebel armed groups;
- To stop discrimination and inequality towards the indigenous people in Philippines by effectively implementing the Indigenous People's Right Act of 1997;
- To stop political killings of politicians, journalists, activists and youth leaders in the Philippines;
- To address the issues and concerns with regards to the health and environmental hazards brought about by open-mining policy;
- To advocate mainstreaming of peace and development to honour traditional structures among Moro and indigenous communities in Mindanao;
- To promote information dissemination on the present status of peace negotiations between Government of the Republic of the Philippines and Moro Islamic Liberation Front at the grassroots level.

THAILAND:

- To be concerned and conduct a dialogue for a peace agreement and support peace building initiatives in Yala, Narathiwat and Pattani in the southern part of Thailand.

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Photos: Albert Dakhi, Anna K. Stechert, Rufina Pardosi, Steph Hornett, GTZ, Norm Van Hoff