

UNICEF NEWS

Aceh & Nias

April 2007



**UNICEF opens community-based
health center in Bitai**

“A heartfelt thanks to UNICEF”

The new community-based health centre opens in Bitai village



Pak Darwis A Madsid has been the village head of Bitai village for two years now. He took over the job after the previous village head was killed by the tsunami on 26 December 2004.

“The tsunami turned our village into a ghost town”, Pak Darwis remembers. Out of 1,200 people, only 310 survived. The deadly wave swept away virtually all homes, leaving only a few ruins.

After the tsunami, remaining residents struggled to receive housing assistance, as the area was deemed to become part of a no-building buffer zone. However, the plan of creating this zone never materialized, so that finally Bitai received temporary housing.

Life in the village took a turn for the better when the Turkish Red Crescent Society built 238 houses in the community. Now, almost 540 people are living in Bitai again, and numbers are expected to grow.

And now, the new UNICEF community-based health centre is open. The 75-square metre structure features an examination room, a delivery room, a waiting room, a sitting toilet and is accessible to people with disabilities, using an alternate construction method of a light steel frame building system. It is designed to withstand earthquakes up to 7.0 on the Richter scale.

Before the tsunami, the village health centre was a small wooden hut, only 3 by 4 metres big. It was furnished with a bed, a shelf and a chair – but no medical equipment.

“A heartfelt thanks to UNICEF for giving us this amazing centre”, says Pak Darwis. With this new, bigger and fully equipped facility, he is certain a more comprehensive and better service can be provided to Bitai village.

The centre will be run by Ida Yati, a 26-year-old midwife from neighbouring Ajun village. “I am very happy, and I am sure I can do good work here”, Ida says. Since November, she has been taking care of Bitai’s residents but had to use a small room in one of the village buildings. At the new centre, she will be providing general services to all families in the village, including check-ups and immunizations. As a midwife, she also has the expertise to assist the current nine pregnant women, monitor their pregnancies, assist with the births and monitor the condition of the infants. Overall, she says, the residents and their 40 or so children under 5 are healthy.





“I love assisting the community, helping babies, helping families”, Ida says.

Bitai is one of 227 community-based health centres in Aceh and Nias to be built by UNICEF. The project is planned to be completed by the end of 2008.

With its integrated health-centres project, UNICEF hopes to

- Assist community recovery, rehabilitation and development through improving maternal and early child health/development outcomes by reducing children under 1, children under 5, and maternal mortality rates.
- Increase access to basic primary care and prevention services, including Early Childhood Development through the construction of community based integrated structures.
- Improve the quality and coverage of services delivered through community based health systems and create a demand for better services.
- Support community integrated social welfare services.

Impressions of Bitai Polindes



7 Steps to proper hand washing

UNICEF organizes hygiene education event for children



Around 50 kids are piling into the Child Centre in Lhoknga, all of them between 6 and 12 years old. Quickly they sit down and look with anticipation at the Child Centre staff, who are already waiting for them.

“Do you guys want to become health promoters?” they ask the group. A collective loud “Yeeeeesss!!!!” is the answer.

Today, these 50 kids are learning how to wash their hands properly, how to separate trash and use the garbage bin. The activity has been organized by UNICEF’s implementing partner, Atlas, together with the Child Centre staff in Lhoknga.

“For generations, people in Aceh have been using incorrect hygiene behaviour”, says Dr. Julinar, who works at the Lhoknga Health Centre. She has come here today to talk to

the children about health and sanitation. “For example, do we wash our hands? Yes. But do we use soap? Mostly no. Do we use trash cans? Look around you - trash everywhere. All this needs to be changed to make hygiene effective in preventing illness and disease.”

What better age group to start with than the elementary school kids? Young enough and willing to learn and adopt new practices, the children can then in turn teach their families and communities by simply doing it right.

“Of course showing them one time won’t do the trick”, says Dr. Julinar. “The behaviour has to be reiterated in schools and health centres, so the children will use the correct method again and again until it becomes normal for them to wash their hands with soap, to throw the trash into the bin and not just on the floor, to cover up their food and not leave it out so the flies can attack it. We all need to work together on reinforcing correct hygiene behaviour.”



And so the kids are taught the seven steps of proper hand washing – seven different ways to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds-, the danger of diarrhoea, how to be healthier and cleaner. The young audience is listening attentively, repeating the messages just learned in a chorus. Afterwards, all the children get their turn in practicing to wash their hands properly with Dr. Julinar. Asra is one of them. Proudly she

demonstrates the seven steps of hand washing. “It is fun to be here, and I am learning a lot” the 6th-grader says.

Then the group discusses how to separate trash, why to use garbage bins and why not to burn it or throw it into rivers. As their last activity of the day, the children will plant flowers in the Child Centre front yard. In this way, the staff hope, the children will learn to enjoy caring for the environment.

Cadres for Early Childhood Development Centres better equipped

UNICEF provides training in Calang

Far away from the classroom, under the shade of a palm tree, a few women prepare a lesson. On this occasion they are not going to use paper or pens but instead they bring out stones, sand, fruit and vegetables. The aim is to show how to use the basic things from nature to improve learning.

“We hold this session outdoors in order for the cadres to realise that they don’t need expensive materials to create a good learning situation for children”, says Yusra Mayawati, one of the trainers from Banda Aceh.”



Soon the cadres arrive, and cooled by the gentle sea breezes, they sit down on mats and watch the trainer demonstrate how to make ‘maracas’ – a simple percussion instrument – by putting sand and stones in empty water bottles. They learn how easy it is to colour water, and how you can use fruit and vegetables to print on paper. The trainers are from Banda Aceh and seem to enjoy teaching the young women. They laugh as they work, give constructive feedback, and smile all the time.

45 participants take part in UNICEF’s training for Early Childhood Development. They are the first of a total of 90 participants from 15 villages in Aceh Jaya located on Aceh’s west coast. After the training, the participants will go back to their villages and set up Early Childhood Development (ECD) activities for children aged 3-6.

Research has shown that access to ECD services and early learning for young children in this age group will strongly influence their future physical and mental health and social development.

Therefore, ECD not only ensures a healthy start into a child's life but also means an investment into the development for future society.

“At this early age, it is important to stimulate a number of different skills”, says Eliza Mufti, UNICEF Assistant Education Officer. “But very few villages have pre-school or kindergartens available, and the awareness of the importance of ECD is low. However, after this training, the villagers know how to create activities that are cheap, simple and fun for children – but still effective”, she says.

The trainer continues to talk about songs and games that can be used to teach children, about arts



and crafts and how they are useful in shaping specific skills. Included in the training are also health issues, like the importance of immunization, breast feeding promotion, monitoring of growth and good nutrition.

“There is a strong demand for this training”, says Maria Bawubya, UNICEF Education Officer. “Several other districts have asked UNICEF if they can send participants to this training as well. We are now doing our best to meet this demand and are setting up an extra training for next month. If possible, we also hope to

bring these participants back for a second training later on this year to cover some other areas.”

The training continues as the women listen to songs and stories about the importance of washing hands. These ECD cadres will bring both important skills and joy back to the children and families in their rural villages.

270 ECD cadres have already been trained by UNICEF, receiving the skills, knowledge and practice required to work with young children and strengthening their skills associated with their respective developmental stage. The cadre training also includes lessons on providing parental education on ECD within the home environment



In addition to the training, UNICEF is providing playground equipment to 45 villages in five districts (Aceh Besar, Aceh Jaya, Aceh Timur, Aceh Tamiang and Nias). A full set of equipment includes a swing, slide, parabolic climber, merry-go-round, bop-up-and-down, octagonal climber, climbing net and bridge.

UNICEF plans to have reached 10,700 young children by 2008 with its ECD programme and to have parents (mothers, fathers, caregivers) of children, educators and ECD practitioners continuously using practices on ECD and early learning in the communities.

In addition to the 45 villages selected in 2006, ECD activities in 25 villages in the 5 districts of Banda Aceh, Bireun, Aceh Utara, Nagan Raya and Nias Selatan, will be implemented this year.

In order to provide proper and safe places for the activities, UNICEF will upgrade ten semi-permanent schools into community-based ECD centres and in 44 locations is planning to have ECD activities integrated into its posyandu-project.

NEWS FROM ACEH AND NIAS

UNICEF and KPA Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam launch HIV/AIDS campaign

UNICEF and KPA, the Aceh AIDS Commission, together launched the Global Campaign “UNITE FOR CHILDREN, UNITE AGAINST AIDS” in Jantho, Aceh Besar. The campaign focuses on HIV/AIDS prevention for children and adolescents; prevention of mother to child transmission; pediatric care; and protection for infected children.



UNICEF and the Provincial AIDS Commission of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam have been working closely together to support children affected by HIV/AIDS and to ensure that children are made a priority of the global HIV/AIDS prevention efforts.

The campaign will provide basic information on HIV/AIDS to children, parents and teachers and identify children’s needs relating to HIV/AIDS prevention or treatment. As part of the campaign, recommendations by the children will be drafted and two children will be elected to attend the National Global Campaign as Ambassadors for the Province of Aceh.

According to the Indonesian Ministry of Health, an estimated 169,000 to 216,000 people are infected with HIV in Indonesia. As of December 2006, there are six AIDS cases reported in Aceh Province.

Workshop to Create Child-Friendly Juvenile Justice Proceedings in Aceh

UNICEF supported a 2-day workshop and roundtable discussion on Diversion and Restorative Justice in collaboration with POLDA NAD and the Restorative Justice Working Group from 17-18 April. The workshop was aimed at increasing the protection of children from abuse,

exploitation and trafficking (AET) by identifying and promoting alternative procedures for children that are in conflict with the law. Religious, custom and formal leaders participated, as did government authorities at sub-district and district level; DINSOS and Biro PP; NGOs; AET focal points from Child Centres; police officers who deal with children in conflict with the law; judges; prosecutors and probation officers.

From this workshop UNICEF wanted to raise awareness and build commitment among community leaders, NGOs and local authorities on the issues of children in conflict with the law; and to identify the existing practices, opportunities and challenges of the implementation of diversion and restorative justice for the protection of children in conflict with the law at community level.

Nationwide, over 5,000 children are institutionalized in detention centres and prisons throughout the country. Imprisoned together with adult offenders, children have little access to education and health, no leisure, and are at high risk of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and trauma. The criminal age of responsibility - 8 years old - is very low in Indonesia, and children as young as 12 can be sentenced.

UNICEF is currently promoting a diversion and restorative justice system where sending a child to court, and possibly jail, is the last option. In 2006 UNICEF conducted two batches of training on the juvenile justice system for 70 judges, prosecutors and probation officers from all districts in NAD, and just recently in March 2007, UNICEF conducted a training of trainers (TOT) on Diversion and Restorative Justice for 28 Judges, Prosecutors and Probation Officers in Banda Aceh.

3 schools handed over on Aceh's west coast

SDN Alue Kuyun, Woyla timur Sub District

SDN Alue Kuyun was severely damaged by the earthquake on December 26, 2004. Some of its walls collapsed. Students continued to study in the remaining non-affected buildings. In October 2005, the 113 students and four teachers moved into a UNICEF semi permanent school. At the same time, UNICEF also committed to reconstruct SDN Alue Kuyun, and make it a child friendly and earthquake resistant school. Construction on SDN Alue Kuyun started in June 2006 and was completed in March 2007. Today, the 117 students study in a fully equipped, safe and spacious permanent school. UNICEF has also equipped students and teachers with materials such as books, pens, among many other materials.



SDN Alue Peudeung, Kaway XVI Sub District

This school was not affected by the tsunami or earthquake of December 26, 2004, but did not offer appropriate and needed facilities as it was a wooden school in poor condition. The Government of Indonesia asked UNICEF's support to provide a better learning environment for the 120 students and 7 teachers. In June 2006, all students, teachers and local community witnessed the start of construction of their new child friendly and earthquake resistant permanent school on a site located next to the original school. In April 2007, the students and teachers moved into the new buildings. UNICEF has also supplied this school with student and teacher materials.



SDN 4 Meulaboh, Johan Pahlawan Sub District

SDN 4 Meulaboh was heavily affected by the tsunami of December 26, 2004. Nine out of 278 students and three out from 9 teachers are died in the disaster. Because the school was too damaged to be deemed safe, students needed to be relocated. To ensure that learning could continue without too long an interruption, UNICEF immediately provided emergency school tents. Because many families were displaced after the tsunami, the student numbers decreased as kids were relocated to different schools. After identify a relocation area on May 2005, UNICEF built a semi permanent school in a nearby village. In January 2006, construction started on the new child friendly and earthquake resistant SDN 4, also in Lapang village. Since April, the 117 students and 9 teachers are enjoying their new school. Students and teachers have also received materials to improve the learning and teaching process.



Entomology Training for Malaria Prevention a success!

UNICEF and Aceh's Provincial Health Office hosted an entomology training in Banda Aceh attended by gohealth officers from all 21 districts of Aceh, with trainers from the Ministry of Health in Jakarta and the Parasitology Department of Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta.

Entomology is a method used to improve malaria prevention by identifying the mosquitoes carrying the disease. "Entomology is used to provide proper recommendations in the effort to eradicate malaria". Dr. Media Yulizar, Head of Communicable Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention Division in PHO explained. "It relies on field data regarding the vector-environment relationship between humans and animals."



Before the tsunami, malaria had been documented in many parts of the province but seldom in the city of Banda Aceh. Annual incidences in 2003 and 2004 were 4.94% and 3.2% respectively. But the damage to coastlines from the disaster left ground pools of brackish water that are excellent breeding places for mosquitoes and outbreaks of malaria and dengue fever have increased. The annual malaria incidence rate in 2005 was 6.95%.

"Through the training, it is hoped that the districts will conduct entomology assessments and provide recommendations for vector control. This action could ensure that pregnant women and children under five – two groups at a high risk if they catch malaria – are protected", said Dr. Tarek Hussein, Head of UNICEF's Health and Nutrition Section in Banda Aceh.



UNICEF also donated 22 Microscope Stereos and 22 Salinity Metres to the Communicable Diseases Unit (Malaria, Dengue, Rabies, and Avian Influenza), of the Provincial Health Office, which will be used in the districts to diagnose malaria.

Similar training will also be carried out for the District Health Officers in Asahan and PHO staff in North Sumatera.

Nias: progress made, challenges remain



Two years after a massive earthquake hit the North Sumatran Island of Nias, UNICEF continues its efforts to improve the lives of children and their families affected by the disaster that hit the island on 28 March 2005, killing almost 1,000 people and destroying much of its infrastructure.

More than 9,000 elementary students are now studying in 41 semi-permanent schools built by UNICEF which provide a safe learning environment until the completion of the permanent schools. More than 140,000 elementary students have already received much needed school materials such as notebooks and pens; and 139,000 textbooks were distributed. The first 25 child friendly and earthquake resistant permanent schools are under construction, out of a planned total of 160.

However, two years after the earthquake, the infrastructure is still largely damaged, and the lack of accessibility to sites, as well as the low capacity of local contractors continues to slow down the construction progress.

UNICEF has provided 23,000 bednets to protect children and their families against malaria, especially in the high-risk area of Nias Selatan. In 2007, UNICEF is expanding its campaign, distributing up to 150,000 more bednets. Many families, especially in remote areas, still do not have access to basic health facilities. To improve the situation, UNICEF is constructing up to 19 community-based health centres this year which will also offer psychosocial activities in two locations.



Child trafficking still poses a major risk to children from the mainly poor island. UNICEF supported the Nias government in establishing a district regulation to protect children from child trafficking. Child-friendly desks at police stations were also established and police officers trained in handling cases involving children.

“This is our chance to make the lives of the people better than they used to be even before the earthquake”, said Raoul de Torcy, Head of the UNICEF Nias sub-office. UNICEF has a long-term commitment to the people of Nias, and we will not leave before our work is accomplished.”

UNICEF opens its first four child centres in conflict-affected areas

UNICEF is supporting the Government of Indonesia in promoting psychosocial recovery and the re-integration of children and their families who were affected by the armed conflict between the separatist movement GAM and the Indonesian military in the district of Bener Mariah.



Villagers of Pantan Sinaku welcome the Deputy Bupati.

Together with district representatives and its implementing partner, Child Fund, UNICEF has opened its first four child centres in Bener Mariah, a district located in the middle of the province of Aceh, a six-hour drive away from Banda Aceh.

At the opening, the Deputy Bupati of Bener Mariah, Pak Sirwandi Laut Tawar, said: “It is wonderful to see everyone gathered together and working for the sake of children, making sure they have a peaceful existence.” These four child centres come in addition to the 21 child centres already established by UNICEF in Aceh and Nias after the tsunami.

As part of the overall programme, community members in 8 villages of Bener Mariah were trained and supervised by local tradesmen to build their jambo – a traditional hut of wood on a concrete base - in which to run the psychosocial and community activities. Each jambo costs approximately USD 1,500 to build. The first four are now ready to host activities, whilst the remaining four are scheduled to be completed by the end of June.



The communities of all eight villages gathered in Pantan Sinaku for the ceremony.

In addition, community facilitators have been selected from each community and child well being committees are being set up to run activities: monitoring and discussing key protection issues - separation, disability, sexual exploitation, abuse, trafficking and child labour; raising awareness and advocating key protection issues; mobilizing community groups - women, youth and religious leaders; and addressing risks and supporting vulnerable children, women and families.

The centres will also serve as a location for strengthening the role of youth in the re-integration process. Activities such as leadership training; forming community youth clubs and peer support groups; and designing peace building activities will be organized.

“Welcome to our new school!” UNICEF opens SDN Meunasah Teutong

The gate opens, and elementary students flood the courtyard. 185 young girls and boys, dressed in the customary red and white school uniforms, run into the new school grounds, push open doors, try the new water taps and check out their new classrooms.

Welcome to the new SDN Meunasah Teutong, located about 20 minutes outside the city of Banda Aceh. Featuring six classrooms, a teachers’ office, a library and separate toilets for boys and girls, this school is already the pride of teachers, parents and the community. Its reconstruction has been financed by the Netherlands Committee for UNICEF.



The two bright blue buildings also feature ramps and special toilets for disabled students and a big courtyard surrounded by plants. The wall between two of the classrooms can be removed to create a big multi-purpose hall.



In addition to its child-friendly features, SDN Meunasah Teutong is also earthquake-resistant, introducing safety standards completely new to Indonesia.

“Oh, we love this school”, the principal of SDN Meunasah Teutong, Ibu Darmiana says. “I love the classrooms and that the lighting is so nice. And I love the plants – in a few years they will provide nice shade for everyone.”

The original school was severely damaged by the earthquake that preceded the tsunami on 26 December 2004. Even so, classes continued to be held in the damaged building until it was finally torn down. From March 2006, the students studied in two semi-permanent school buildings provided by UNICEF.

Both the teachers and the students watched as the new school was being constructed, growing a bit more week by week. “It was great to watch the progress”, says the principal. And now that it is finished, she is thrilled that she can move in.

“The new school brings important improvements for my students and staff”, says Ibu Darmiana. “The old school did not have any facilities – no library, no multi-purpose hall, no fence to prevent trespassing. The toilets were in awful shape. All this has changed now!”

Ibu Darmiana already knows what to do next: “Now we have many more opportunities to offer additional projects here. The semi-permanent school buildings will be used for extra-curricular activities; and the old building will be removed, so that we can use the space for sports.”

To ensure that the buildings will be maintained properly, a person will be hired to look after and guard the school. Students already have to pick up all the trash every day and clean up their classroom every morning. ###

Impressions of SDN Meunasah Teutong

