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UNICEF NEWS

ACEH & NIAS

ALREADY 200 SCHOOLS
COMPLETED OR UNDER
CONSTRUCTION



3 YEARS AFTER THE TSUNAMI

UNICEF REACHES 200-SCHOOL-MILESTONE: 70 COMPLETED, 130 UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The opening of SDN 45 in Banda Aceh marked another milestone of UNICEF's school construction program: Aside from 70 completed schools, 130 are under construction, bringing the number to 200. An additional 121 are under tendering, only 25 are still under design. UNICEF is building 346 schools in Aceh and Nias.



Providing safe and childfriendly schools for all children in Aceh and Nias is one of UNICEF's priorities. But it is only one part of the reconstruction effort. That is why UNICEF is also working closely with the government to develop a sustainable and effective education policy.

UNICEF is also working closely with school officials, teachers, students and communities to create childfriendly learning spaces for children, which includes training on interactive teaching methods, school maintenance, peace education, hygiene promotion, to name just a few.



A typical UNICEF school has six spacious classrooms, a teacher's office, a library, separate toilets for boys and girls and a large courtyard, among many other childfriendly features and is earthquake resistant. The UN children's agency is planning to have all schools completed by the end of 2008.

The original SDN 45 was located closely to the shore and swept away by the tsunami, leaving only the foundations. After studying in UNICEF emergency tents, the over 120 students moved into a UNICEF semi permanent unit until the permanent facility was completed.

A new and safe school for Sri



For the first time in decades, children in a former war zone come to class without fear. Their temporary school isn't luxurious, but at least it is safe... Security is a rare commodity here in Panca, outside of Banda Aceh, an area that long suffered during fighting between Acehese rebels and the Indonesian military.

Ten-year-old Sri Rahmadani was once terrified to go to school. Her father was kidnapped during the conflict and remains missing. She says she was always worried someone would take her, too.

Soon, Sri Rahmadani and her fellow students will move into a new permanent school being built by UNICEF, to replace the original one that burned during the conflict. The new school is designed to be more earthquake-resistant, and features bigger classrooms, a large courtyard and separate toilets for boys and girls.

For Sri Rahmadani, the new school will be much more than a classroom.

"I want to have books, so we can read newspapers, the Koran; we also can eat our cakes there, we can drink, and we can come with friends that live far from the school."

UNICEF'S NEW DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VISITS ACEH



UNICEF's Deputy Executive Director Hilde F. Johnson visited Banda Aceh last month, taking a good look at the reconstruction progress and UNICEF's work in this tsunami-stricken province. Ms Johnson, who took office in August, saw several UNICEF projects in the area, including schools, the childfriendly juvenile court, water and sanitation facilities and a community-based health center. She met with teachers,

students, judges, police and families and attended a peace festival in the conflict-affected district of Aceh Besar. "The reconstruction effort is far more advanced than I had expected", Ms Johnson said at the end of her stay.

Ms Johnson continued: "I am pleasantly surprised and would like to congratulate everyone involved in the reconstruction process here". The Deputy Executive Director was accompanied by the UNICEF Representative in Indonesia, Dr. Gianfranco Rotigliano.



As part of her visit, Ms. Johnson also broke the ground for UNICEF's newest rural water system project. Four villages will be connected via pipeline to the local Bilui waterfall in Aceh Besar. Access to the waterfall in this area affected by the conflict was only possible after the signing of the peace agreement in August 2005.

3 YEARS AFTER THE TSUNAMI INTERVIEW WITH CHIEF FIELD OFFICER EDOUARD BEIGBEDER



Q: Three years after the tsunami – where are we at?

EB: We have successfully moved from an emergency relief effort through the rehabilitation, transition to long-term sustainable programming. Given the enormous scope of the disaster, we can be very proud to have achieved this so quickly and smoothly.

Now, we have moved on to focus more on policy development, for example with supporting the provincial multi-year education development plan, the establishment of the Child Protection secretariat, and the integration of hygiene promotion in the school curricula. That way, we can make sure that the government is taking ownership of the projects and will sustain them for generations to come.

Q: What are for you the main successes of the past three years?

EB: Our contribution to bringing peace to Aceh and the stabilization of peace in this province has been one of our major successes here. The conflict posed an additional challenge with complete different issues to tackle than the tsunami and earthquake did. With having peace in Aceh, we have been able to expand our programs into the former conflict areas, thus reaching out to the most vulnerable children and families.

Q: What was the biggest challenge?

EB: UNICEF is running its biggest construction program in Aceh and Nias, with the construction of 346 schools and 227 community-based integrated health centers. However, there was only little expertise on construction within UNICEF, and this is a massive undertaking. So we had to learn a lot on dealing with technical, legal and logistic issues and bring in expertise. And we did: Thanks to our strong commitment and motivation UNICEF now is THE reference on school construction – be it on quality, childfriendliness or earthquake-resistance.

Q: How long will UNICEF stay in Aceh?

EB: We are planning to have most of our projects completed and the tsunami funds spent by the end of 2008. Afterwards, the size of the office will be reduced, but we are proposing for UNICEF to be present in Aceh and Nias at least until 2010.

Q: What is UNICEF's priority for next year?

EB: Our program is very ambitious and continues to be next year, not only in terms of construction, but also regarding the capacity building of the government and the social policy development in the different sectors. It is our priority to complete our projects as planned by the end of 2008.

Q: What is UNICEF's main challenge for next year?

EB: One of our challenges will be to continue to expand and implement our programs in the former conflict area – building additional schools and health centers, working with youth to overcome their trauma, and providing more services for children and families in these remote areas which were virtually cut off from society for decades.

Q: A word about your staff...

EB: It is a great experience to lead such a large operation with such diverse staff. We have over 220 people working in Aceh and Nias, from over 30 different countries. Such diversity adds enormously to the atmosphere in this office. And I can say that without exception, they are very hard working and committed to our work and goals.

Q: Please give an example of a nice moment during your time here.

EB: I have been here since shortly after the tsunami, and I have had countless interactions and situations which would be worth mentioning here. It is very difficult for me to pick a particular moment – there are so many nice memories for me. But to give you one example, every time I open a school and watch how happy the kids are about their new classrooms and facilities, when they run around to discover their new school, it is a special moment for me.

3 YEARS AFTER: LISA, 11, TRYING TO MOVE ON

Almost three years after the massive tsunami hit Aceh province in 2004, Lisa is still struggling to cope with her new reality. The 11-year-old student of SDN 1 Peukan Bada in Aceh Besar district lost her parents, two brothers and one sister in the disaster that swept her family's house and changed her life. Now Lisa is living with her older cousin, Cut Suhaimi, and his wife, Fitria.



On the day of the tsunami, Lisa was at home with her mother and her siblings when the earthquake hit. Suhaimi remembers: "After the earthquake, I went to Lisa's house and persuaded her to go with me. I tried to take away her brothers and sister but they did not want to go. So I took Lisa on my motorbike and we fled. After I dropped her in a relative's house further inland, I rushed back, but it was already too late. I could not get through because the area was already under water."

"I saw the water coming to the land. It looked like a cobra attacking someone", Lisa recalls. "My mom said to go with my cousin, she would follow later. But then it was too late for her, and too late for my siblings." Her father, a fisherman, was on the sea when the tsunami came.

The bodies of Lisa's family were never found. Until July 2007, the little girl stayed with other relatives in another area before moving in with her favorite cousin in Peukan Bada.

The earthquake and the tsunami had not discouraged Suhaimi from living by the sea. "I'm not trying to challenge God, but I am not afraid of going back to the coastal area to rebuild our lives."

An Indonesian non-governmental organization built a small house for the new family in their old neighborhood, including only one room and a bathroom. As soon as Suhaimi had saved some extra money, he added one bedroom for Lisa, a kitchen and a terrace. Later on he built a small garden besides the house.



Lisa had to learn again not to be scared of the sea: "In the months right after the tsunami, I saw water everywhere where houses used to be – then I was scared."

Now, Lisa is a fifth year student at SDN 1 Peukan Bada. “I like this school, especially that I can play badminton here and study English”, Lisa says. Already, she has made many friends and is doing well in class. “Lisa is very active and understands quickly”, her teacher says.

Like her uncle, she wants to work for the police force when she has grown up. “Police women are courageous and they help people”, she says.

But some wounds don’t heal. Lisa often thinks about her parents and tries dealing with her sadness in her own way. “When I remember them, I go play, so the memories will go away,” she says tearfully. “I miss my mom because I could talk to her about anything.”

GIVING CHILDREN THEIR OWN VOICE: ACEH YOUTH PUBLISH MAGAZINE

Reza joined the youth magazine because he wanted to learn about writing. Maria joined because she has always liked to write. Meet two of the editors of Aceh’s new children’s magazine “Aneuk Atjeh” – Children of Aceh.

Reza is 17, a rather shy and polite young man. Regularly joining the activities at UNICEF’s child center in Punge, he soon found out about a training to be offered: Around 30 children in Aceh and Nias would have the opportunity to learn about writing and how to publish their own magazine.

The idea was born at Child Center Punge. “We had a radio station up and running already, and we had a wall-magazine here at the center”, explains Koko, a child center staff and coordinator of the youth media projects here. “Then we thought – how can we spread our messages even further, reaching more people with our stories? So we came up with the idea of a magazine, to which kids from the whole province and from Nias can contribute.”



Various partners – Pusaka and Muhammadiyah, the Social Ministry and a local NGO focusing on children and media – joined force to make this magazine cover as many children and districts as possible. Then they approached UNICEF with their idea.

“I thought this was a very good initiative which will allow children to speak for themselves”, says Communication Specialist Dwi Fatan Lilyana. “Very often we put children on the news, but very seldom we give them their own voice.”

An MOU between consortium members was drafted to make sure that responsibilities would be shared and commitments were made that all parties will put children’s interest as top priority. In May, a workshop organized by all partners was attended by 60 people from various organizations, government, NGOs, International Agencies and children to discuss children participation in media in Aceh.

This was the first workshop on children and media in Aceh and received great feedback from all participants. With the support from the provincial Ministries of Education and Family Affairs, the Local Broadcasting Committee and NGOs, this workshop was followed by a children workshop. More than 60 children from different UNICEF child centres in Aceh and Nias came to give their views and inputs.

The children workshop resulted in two fantastic projects, the bi-monthly children magazine and a weekly radio programme. Children themselves choose the name, the content and the management of those two media projects.

UNICEF supplies all equipment needed and committed to fund the initiatives for two years. UNICEF will also assist the consortium to be able to sustain the project and help finding financial support from other partners, in particular support from private sectors.

Maria is already a published author. The 15-year-old High School student even won a competition held after the tsunami, in which she wrote an article about the challenging living conditions in Aceh’s temporary shelters. Her article was published in Aceh’s largest newspaper *Serambi*.

Reza and Maria attended two trainings – an introductory one on writing skills and a second, more specific workshop teaching them the details of publishing a magazine. “It was a lot of discussion and game playing”, Reza remembers.

While Maria concentrates on poetry and short stories, Reza has been assigned to the tourism section. What exactly he writes about, which angle and structure his article takes, is up to the young author. In his first article, Reza decided to describe places of interest in the province capital Banda Aceh.

“First I did library research to find out more about the history and the facts about the various attractions, and then I went to each site and interviewed the people in charge”, he explains. He also took the photos and did the layout of his article.

After submitting their pieces, the *Consortium* – a panel composed of representatives of Muhammadiyah, Pusaka, DinSos and CMC – do the editing and layout before sending the final copy back to the young journalists for their final clearance. After printing, the magazine is distributed through UNICEF’s 21 child centers in Aceh and Nias.

Both Maria and Reza feel very proud to see their work published. “It is a very good feeling”, says Maria. “But of course we also welcome criticism. How else could we learn to improve our writing?”

The 40-page magazine is comprised of articles on history, science, Religion, tourism, technology, environment, a comic, short story and poetry. Three issues are planned for now, with 4.500 copies per issue.

The *Consortium* and UNICEF are currently trying to find ways to continue this project for the longterm. The children’s support is certain: “I don’t want to stop, I love writing”, says Reza. “I want to learn more”.

OTHER NEWS FROM ACEH AND NIAS



UNICEF Human Waste Treatment Plant in Banda Aceh Opened

UNICEF together with the Banda Aceh Deputy Mayor Ibu Illiza Sa’aduddin Djamal opened the new sludge treatment facility which will serve Banda Aceh city. The new plant cost USD 630,000 will treat twice as much sludge as the original plant – 60 cubic meters a day - and produce an environment-friendly final effluent. The original sludge treatment plant, located on the shore, was heavily damaged by the tsunami on 26 December 2004. Because only basic repairs were made to get the plant functioning again quickly, it only had a capacity of treating 30 cubic meters of human waste a day. The treatment process left the final effluent not fully treated and thus not environment-friendly.

After the tsunami, UNICEF assisted the Indonesian government to ensure that sealed septic tanks were part of the standard guidelines for the many new houses built. The waste from the septic tanks requires proper disposal, and the new treatment plant will allow this to happen.

The UNICEF plant processes the waste in different stages, producing a final effluent which is environmentally safe. At the first stage, biogas will get extracted from the waste. At the second stage, the sludge moves to sludge to drying beds to make compost. The compost can be sold and used for farming purposes. The remaining effluent is then put into an anaerobic reactor, through a gravel filter and led into a maturation pond. This results in a final outflow which can be safely discharged into the sea.

Workshop on Permanent School Construction in Nias Conducted



UNICEF held two workshops on school reconstruction in both districts of Nias. With the 1-day seminar UNICEF aims to inform district government, counterparts and school representatives on the progress and forecast of its comprehensive school construction program. Invitees included (for Nias and Nias Selatan respectively) representatives of the district government and parliament, BRR, Bappeda, Education Office,

schools and school committees.

UNICEF and its implementing partners updated the participants on the progress made so far, provided an overview of the “childfriendly school” concept and outlined the timeplan for the completion of schools. In addition, UNICEF shared challenges already encountered and invited the participants to work together on possible solutions and mainstreaming processes to quicken up construction. In all, UNICEF is planning to build 120 schools in Nias and Nias Selatan.

Annual Planning with Bappeda Completed



One of UNICEF ‘s roles is to strengthen the capacity of the local government to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate development programmes through providing support to quarterly, midyear and annual programme reviews, which are part of the programme planning, monitoring and evaluation cycle and ensure continuous dialogue among stakeholders and implementers of development programmes. On 13 and 14 November, BAPPEDA NAD (the provincial Planning Department), with the technical support of UNICEF’s Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Section, hosted the Annual Work Plan 2007 Review and Annual Work Plan 2008 Planning Workshop, in order to enable government officials and UNICEF Programme staff to discuss programme achievements, strengths and weaknesses in 2007, as well as actions that should be taken in 2008 to ensure programme effectiveness and efficiency. This workshop was unique, as it did not just consist of presentations from various sectors, but involved small group work on cross cutting issues to ensure programme convergence for maximum impact of interventions. During the workshop, the Five Year Strategic Plan of the government of NAD, as well as the UNICEF – GOI Country Programme Action Plan, were used as references for future planning.

Overall, there was a high level of attendance and participation from all related technical departments, with all participants actively engaged in each topic of discussion, as well as in the plenary sessions that were held throughout out the workshop. By the end of the two day workshop, UNICEF Programme staff and government counterparts had created a strong basis for future finalization of an effective Annual Workplan 2008, which will detail improved interventions to enhance the well being of Aceh’s children and women.

Program Orientation Workshops for Hygiene Promotion Projects Held

UNICEF's implementing partner Project Concern International (PCI) held two five-day program orientation workshops for two new UNICEF-funded Water and Environmental Sanitation (WES) projects in remote areas of Aceh.



The first workshop kicked off the *School and Community Hygiene Education, Water Supply, and Environmental Sanitation (SCHEWES)* project in Aceh Selatan and Aceh Barat Daya. The SCHEWES project will include twenty schools and communities in Susoh subdistrict, Aceh Barat Daya, and Bakongan and Bakongan Timur subdistricts, Aceh Selatan. Interventions will focus on school and family-based hygiene promotion, the construction or improvement of school and community water and sanitation facilities, and the promotion of latrine use and latrine construction.

The second workshop launched the *Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene in Communities, Schools, and Health Centers in Central Aceh (WASH)* project. The WASH project aims to improve the living standard and health conditions of people living in fourteen villages in Aceh Tengah and Bener Meriah districts, specifically by increasing access to clean water and sanitation facilities and improving personal hygiene behaviors.

Preliminary Results on UNICEF Child Center Study Released



UNICEF in cooperation with Aquila University (Italy) conducted the first scientific study ever on the psychosocial impact of both the tsunami and the conflict on children in Aceh. The data and the technical report coming from their analysis will be an action-oriented basis to assess the effectiveness of UNICEF – Social Ministry's psychosocial work, as well as further orientate social policies in the Province, by better understanding the concept of vulnerability and the most affected social groups in a rapidly post emergency changing environment.

243 NAD pre-adolescents (aged from 9 to 13 years old) were included in the study. 120 children benefited of UNICEF psychosocial intervention in Child Centers (UNICEF group: 61 males, 59 females) while 123 children have never benefited from any form of psychosocial intervention (Non UNICEF group: 64 males, 59 females).

The study found that overall UNICEF targeted the right scope of population, and provided the assistance to children required to cope with difficult situations". Results also include the following findings:

Regarding the social functioning of children (attitude and behaviour in school/ score, relationship with peers, interests in activities outside of school activities), children who do not attend UNICEF child centers show worse school behaviour compared to the UNICEF group.

Regarding the narrative abilities of children (verbal ability to tell stories, e.g. personal experiences), children of the UNICEF group also received higher scores than the children from the Non UNICEF group, using more frequently words related to thoughts and feelings, expressing more emotional involvement during the story telling and more frequently using a reflexive thought.

The final results of the study will be presented in 2008.

NEW AND SAFE SANITATION SYSTEMS FOR LAMKRUET

Mega smiles as she is standing in front of her house, looking at her plants which are growing in the sun. “I really like this project”, the 27-year-old law student says.



She is talking about UNICEF’s water and sanitation project which was recently completed in her village. Together with its implementing partner Atlas, UNICEF constructed environmentally friendly sanitation systems for 274 houses, newly built after the tsunami in Lamkruet sub-district, just outside Banda Aceh. UNICEF funded the installment of proper septic tanks that prevent waste leakage into the ground. This is especially important since groundwater is often used as drinking water via shallow wells. The outflow from the septic tank is instead filtered and used to fertilize plants and flowers. UNICEF is also a funding a piped clean water system for the houses in this area, which is now under construction.

Mega is planting papaya, among other things. In a one-day-workshop, she learned about the system, how to maintain it, and how to take care of the plants. Together with the outreach officer from Atlas, she decided the location and layout of her yard.

In addition, at a special event at the UNICEF child center here, the children of this village learned how to wash their hands properly, how to plant flowers and take care of the environment and how to prevent getting sick from dirty water.

Mega’s old house was completely washed away by the tsunami, as were most houses in this small community located right at the Indian Ocean about 15 minutes away from Banda Aceh. When asked



where her original house was located, she points to her feet. “You are standing on it”, she says. Mega lost her father and two brothers in the tsunami and after a year-long-stay in nearby temporary shelter, moved into the new house, together with her mother and her younger brother, last year.

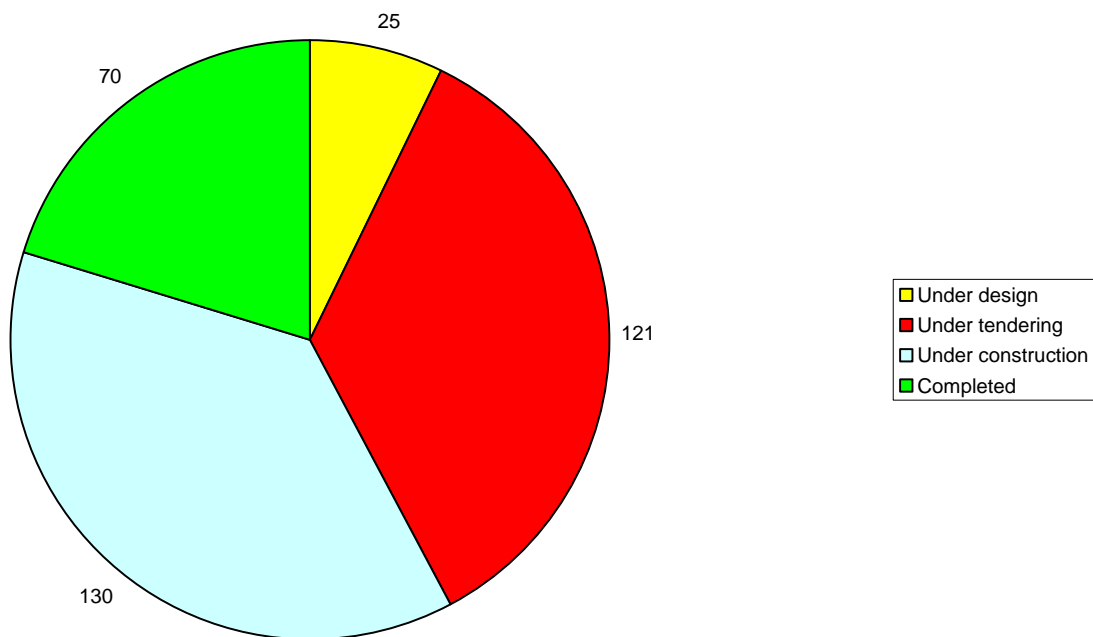
The strong young woman is one of roughly 1,000 villagers who is benefiting from this USD 280,000 project. Besides the sanitation system, UNICEF built solid waste disposal facilities in Lamkruet. The garbage is collected from each house three times a week in return for a small fee. At the newly-built waste facility outside the village, the organic waste is composted while the inorganic waste is separated for recycling and the non-recyclable waste is collected by the city cleanliness department. This reduces the volume of waste dumped in the city land fill by over 60 percent.

The village decided to establish a committee which is responsible for organizing the trash pick up. It also functions as the information center for the community on issues regarding the maintenance of the sanitation system and solid waste.

“This household-level solution for the liquid and solid waste minimises contamination of the environment and, most importantly, safeguards the residents’ health,” says Dara Johnston, head of UNICEF’s Water and Environmental Sanitation section, in Banda Aceh.

Text: Anna K. Stechert, Ivy Susanti, Jennifer Keane, Steve Nettleton
Photos: Anna K. Stechert, Ivy Susanti, Joshua Estey

Schools Construction progress
346 schools sites (376 schools units) as of 10 th December 2007



Aceh and Nias School construction project (2005-2008) as of 06 December 2006
367 schools units

