



United Nations Development Programme

PRESS RELEASE

India

TN Tsunami Resource Centre Opened

Chennai, August 4:

In the post-tsunami recovery phase, the Tamil Nadu Tsunami Resource Centre has been established in Chennai to facilitate a rehabilitation process that reduces peoples' vulnerability and increases their resilience to deal with future hazards. The centre is supported by the Government of Tamil Nadu, the UN System and several Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) including Oxfam, Save the Children, World Vision, Caritas India and Catholic Relief Services. The Centre was inaugurated by the Special Commissioner and Commissioner of Relief Administration, Mr. R Santhanam and the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in India, Dr. Maxine Olson, here today.

Highlighting the importance of the Resource Centre (www.tntrc.org) at the state level, Dr. Olson said that the Centre will help address needs in the recovery phase systematically, for a coherent disaster response in the affected communities. She expressed the hope that by connecting to a network of district resource centres to collect and disseminate information and resources, the centre would add an additional impetus to making the recovery effort and the post-tsunami response for the people on the ground more efficient and transparent.

Apart from the government and UN agencies, a large number of national and international NGOs are active in rehabilitation activities with affected communities. This requires a common rehabilitation strategy, exchange of knowledge and information as well as support mechanisms to optimize all available aid. The Centre aims to complement the efforts of the Government of Tamil Nadu for supporting recovery planning in Tamil Nadu by serving as a platform to connect government agencies and NGOs. The Centre will also liaise with national and international networks in order to facilitate access to relevant information, knowledge and know-how on disaster risk reduction response.

“By providing a forum for shared learning and working together, the Resource Centre will strengthen the joint efforts of all organizations to help poor people affected by the tsunami to rebuild their lives”, Oxfam Programme Manager, Ms. Claire Light said in a message.

The Director of Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme, Save the Children, Ms. Latha Caleb, said her organization supported the initiative of the establishment of the Resource Centre for enhancing knowledge networks and related partnerships and for a coordinated recovery planning.

The Resource Centre will provide information on research undertaken, relevant legislation, codes of conduct for responding agencies, training on minimum standards of response; updated government, NGO, multilateral and bilateral agency activity maps; basic data and needs assessments surveys. It will also act as an exchange forum for the government, NGOs, donors, the private sector and the UN, via a website, newsletters, mapping services as well as physical and virtual libraries.

"With a rehabilitation response of this magnitude timely and accurate information is critical. The establishment of the Tsunami Resource Centre will play a significant role in enabling the close cooperation between agencies necessary to ensure the delivery of a high standard of assistance for victims of Tsunami," said Alex Snary, Programme Director, World Vision, one of the partners NGOs in the initiative.

The centre is expected to contribute to greater cross-sectoral learning and better capacities among stakeholders on recovery approaches developed. The Centre will be steered by an Advisory Board, and will comprise of representatives from the Government of Tamil Nadu, UNDP and the main partner NGOs as well as invitees from civil society and the private sector.

The Resource Centre can be visited at No.5, (Old No.2), Sivaganga Road, Nungambakkam, Chennai -600034. Phone: UNDP Office 52303131; TNTRC- 28264141, 28265151, 28266161, www.tntrc.org. For further information, please contact, Ms. Surekha Subarwal, Assistant Resident Representative, Communications and Advocacy, UNDP India, at surekha.subarwal@undp.org.