



UPDATE of UNDP RESPONSE TO TSUNAMI DISASTERS IN SRI LANKA, 31 December 2004

On the fifth day after the devastating tsunami disasters that affected the coastal areas of most of Sri Lanka UNDP support to emergency operations has further intensified. UNDP continues to provide continuous secretariat support to the UNRC for the convening of daily briefing meetings for the international community, and in serving as the clearinghouse for up-to-date information on the status of needs and donor emergency relief efforts.

The Resident Coordinator visited the south and the north of the country to see firsthand the devastated areas. He has met several times with the President, and is in constant touch with top authorities overseeing the Government's relief efforts. He has also held discussions with the political leadership of the LTTE on the specific situation in the North and East.

In addition to the financial and coordination support provided during the first few days of the disaster, UNDP is providing the following support:

Technical support to the Center for National Operations (CNO) at the Presidential Secretariat.

- Technical infrastructure (computers, printers, other equipment)
- Coordination support to the day to day activities of the CNO
- Additional qualified human resources to assist the CNO. A Liaison Officer to coordinate the government and international efforts has been placed and three Specialist UNVs.
- Technical support in maintaining the official website on the relief requirements and operations

Sectoral Coordination Support

Daily coordination meetings are now being followed by sectoral coordination meetings and UNDP is providing secretariat support to them. Following sectoral coordination meetings have been initiated:

- Water and Sanitation (Lead agency UNICEF)
- Health (Lead agency WHO)

Coordination of Assessment Reports from the Field

UNDP is helping coordinate the needs assessment in the affected areas. As the assessment reports are coming in, UNDP is helping match needs with the offers of support with the bilateral agencies, NGOs, INGOs and other UN agencies

Mapping of ongoing relief operations

In collaboration with Map Action UINDP has initiated a “who is doing what and where” mapping of the relief operations. These maps are being provided to various humanitarian actors in order to enable them to coordinate their operations.

Identification of urgent and immediate needs and their incorporation in the Flash Appeal

The UNDP focus is in following main areas:

- Livelihood recovery
- Restoration of minor infrastructure
- Mine Action
- Strengthening of local organizations

Support to the coordination of relief efforts at the local level

UNDP redeployed UN Volunteers trained in disaster risk management to the affected districts. At present 10 UNVs are providing immediate support to the District Secretaries and helping to coordinate information on damage and emerging relief needs. Two additional UNVs will be deployed to other affected districts by 1 January.

Support to the UN Resident Coordinator: The UNDP CO is supporting the UNRC in preparing regular updates of the situation and in organizing daily coordination and information sharing meetings of all the national and international humanitarian actors present in Colombo.

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