



Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation

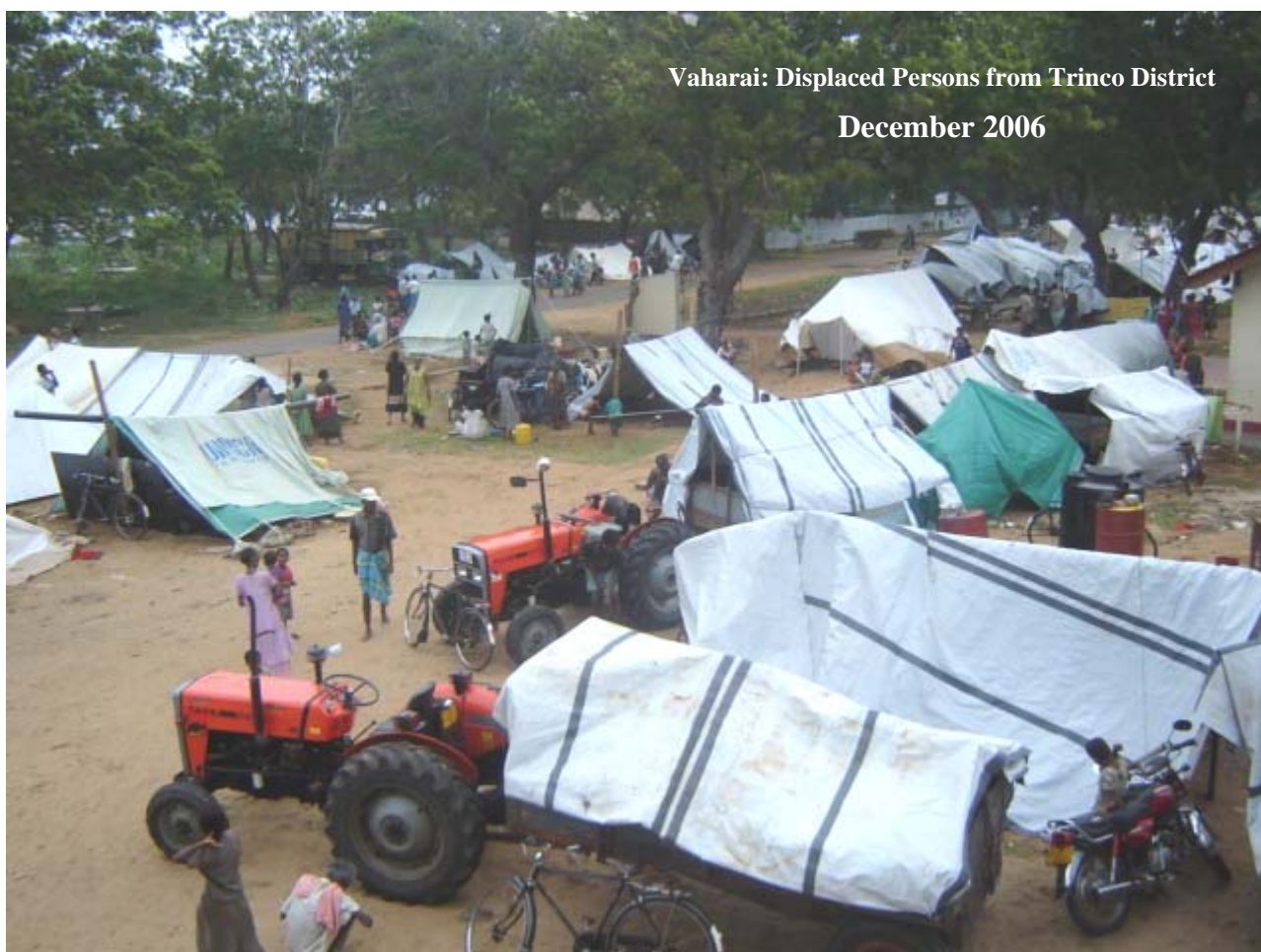
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Vaharai: Displaced Persons from Trinco District
December 2006

TSUNAMI: 2 YEARS ON

A REPORT from the TRO Board of Governors
KILINOCHCHI

26 December 2006



CURRENT SITUATION

Two years have passed since the Tsunami of 26 December 2004 and the worst natural disaster in Sri Lanka's recorded history. Almost 80% of the Tsunami displaced in some districts of the NorthEast of the island, which sustained 65% of the tsunami destruction and deaths, continue to languish in Temporary Shelter Camps or have been displaced once again due to military offensives, bombing, and shelling. There does not seem to be any end in sight to the suffering and deprivation that these persons have experienced, nor does there seem to be any chance that they will receive what they are due and achieve the levels of reconstruction and rehabilitation that the Tsunami affected of the south of Sri Lanka and other tsunami affected countries have already achieved.

The continuing lack of any significant response or pressure from the International Community regarding this situation is concerning for local organizations such as TRO. The situation will continue to spiral downward towards full scale war if the International Community does not step forward with a stronger response to the humanitarian catastrophe that is unfolding in the NorthEast.

The Tamils Rehabilitation Organization's (TRO) works throughout the NorthEast and is the only organization working in some of the most worst affected tsunami and war affected districts due to Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) restrictions on International NGOs (iNGOs), UN and ICRC access to these areas. TRO is the largest, most efficient and effective national NGO operating in the NorthEast, a fact recognized by many iNGOs, the UN, and foreign governments.

Though significant progress has been made by TRO and some iNGOs in the NorthEast in the two years since the tsunami (please visit the TRO website for the 82 page "[TRO 18 Month Tsunami Report](http://www.troonline.org/report.pdf)" www.troonline.org/report.pdf) the NorthEast continues to lag far behind the South of the island in all indicators of tsunami rehabilitation. In addition to the pre-existing conditions and attitudes in Sri Lanka towards the NorthEast that are the root causes of the 25 year conflict, there are a variety of other factors which have led to the "faster implementation progress, mainly in the south, compared with slower and less comprehensive progress in the north and east."¹ These range from: 1) the allocation of governmental resources by the GoSL, 2) the lack of a management structure (P-TOMS), 3) "political influence" and the lack of it, 4) the centralization of bureaucracy and decision making with the "Central Government" in Colombo, 5) the GoSL's "slower" rate of disbursement of funds to tsunami affected persons in the NorthEast, 6) the lesser number of iNGOs (per capita) working in the NorthEast (as opposed to the south) which resulted in less funds and other resources (per capita) being available in the NorthEast, 7) the difficulties that iNGOs and local NGOs have in working in the NorthEast due to GoSL restrictions, regulations and harassment. These issues are discussed in more detail below.

Reasons for slower and less comprehensive progress in the NorthEast:

1. Commitments and Allocation of funding. In its report, "*Approaches to Equity in Post-Tsunami Assistance, Sri Lanka*", the Office of the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery stated that, "The breakdown of regional figures suggests allocation shortfalls to the north. ...(with the) south and west collectively receiving approximately 20 percent more than required commitments compared with a similar *shortfall* of commitments for the north and east."²
2. The lack of an adequate "implementing structure" or "management structure" for the NorthEast such as the P-TOMS agreement that was never implemented. GoSL institutions, infrastructure, services and staffing in the NorthEast are far below par and are not funded to the level the rest of the country. The UN Special Envoy Report also states that, "The public service shortages in the north and east ...have significantly delayed the pace of recovery compared with other regions."³
3. The promised Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure for the North and East (P-TOMS) after being signed by the LTTE and GoSL, never materialized, a disappointment that followed the failure of two other post-Cease Fire Agreements (CFA) on development: SIHRN and NERF. The UN Special Envoy's report further states that, "The absence of P-TOMS implementation affected the context for recovery, especially in the north. Development partners withheld resources and activities in anticipation of the agreement, and some eventually withdrew some recovery commitments that hinged on P-TOMS."⁴

¹ Approaches to Equity in Post-Tsunami Assistance, Sri Lanka: A Case Study, Office of the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy For Tsunami Recovery, Mandeep Kaur Grewal, November 2006

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid



4. The UN Special Envoy's report further states, "...the stronger political influence of the south and west was ...a key reason why those regions have exhibited a faster rate of progress than the north and east, which make up two-thirds of tsunami affected areas."⁵ This political influencing in the allocation of resources has deprived the tsunami and war affected populations of the development and rehabilitation that was, and is, their right.
5. The centralized nature of the Sri Lankan political bureaucracy meant that the majority of policy and funding decisions as well as needed inspections, approvals and permit processes had to come from the central government in Colombo. This led to delays, inappropriate projects, misappropriation of government funds and a variety of other problems to the south over the NorthEast. The UN Special Envoy's Report states, "The post-tsunami period in Sri Lanka brought more sharply into focus the serious shortcomings of over-centralized policy development and implementation, although this has long been informally recognized as undermining the prospects for development in Sri Lanka."⁶
6. The GoSL was responsible for the disbursement of funds in installments for the construction of permanent housing under "house owner" driven programs. The UN report states that there was a slower rate of disbursement in the north and east which resulted in those areas experiencing "...a much slower rate of progress than the south and west."⁷
7. The report also states that surveys show "...all regions trailing in the wake of the south's much faster progress toward completion and handover of houses to families under the donor driven programme. What is particularly striking is the overprovision of house reconstruction in the south, which clearly indicates an inequitable allocation of resources from a national perspective"⁸
8. The UN report further states "...the government's policy, adopted in 2005, to allow families with housing grants to additionally access supplemental NGO support for house construction appears to have benefited southerners disproportionately. Research undertaken for the World Bank reported that over 76 percent of houses surveyed in the south and west had been cofinanced, compared with only 30 percent in the north and east. Having increased access to financial resources, supplies and technical advice from NGOs may have supported faster house construction in the south compared with other areas."
9. "Increasingly onerous checkpoint procedures have also delayed progress. One NGO reported that it took 12 weeks to transport building materials into LTTE-controlled areas; others reported that imports such as VHF radios and fibre glass boats also took a long time to import and in some cases were not released by state authorities, even though such items are not officially restricted. According to agencies, some contractors had reported being unwilling to work in the east as a result of these problems. In the meantime, local authorities were also dealing with the temporary IDP groups fleeing to escape the recent increases in violence."⁹

RECENT IDPs

Due to the security situation and the fact that no large scale "development work" can be performed in most areas, TRO is primarily focusing on providing emergency humanitarian relief to the 210,000 persons who have been displaced due to the outbreak of open warfare in the NorthEast over the past 8 months. The majority of these newly displaced are currently seeking refuge in the Vaharai area of Northern Batticaloa District and in the Vanni in the North. TRO has provided care for over 100,000 of these internally displaced persons (IDPs) over the past 6 months. These IDPs join the 330,000 IDPs still in Temporary Shelters two years after the tsunami.¹⁰ When these 540,000 tsunami and recent conflict affected IDPs are added to the 350,000 "long term" conflict affected IDPs, the extent and importance of addressing and bringing attention to the plight these long suffering IDPs can be grasped. The Government of Sri Lanka has severely restricted, and in some cases enforced a complete embargo, on humanitarian aid to IDPs who are fleeing the shelling and bombing.

FREEZING of TRO BANK ACCOUNTS

TRO Tsunami related projects are currently on hold due to the current "security situation" and the fact that the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) froze the TRO Sri Lanka Bank Accounts for 6 months "for investigation" on 28 August

⁵ Approaches to Equity in Post-Tsunami Assistance, Sri Lanka: A Case Study, Office of the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy For Tsunami Recovery, Mandeep Kaur Grewal, November 2006

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Oxfam International Tsunami Fund Second year report, December 2006 (<http://www.oxfam.ca/news-and-publications/publications-and-reports/oxfam-international-tsunami-fund-second-year-report/file>)



2006. Approximately, Rs. 80,000,000 (US\$ 800,000) was in the bank accounts at the time of freezing. These funds, 80% of which come from iNGOs, the UN, the GoSL, ADB, World Bank, and various other multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors, are all in “project specific accounts” destined for specific Tsunami Projects chosen by TRO’s donor/partners. As a result all work on these projects has ceased for lack of funds and the date of completion for the projects is unknown.

In the interest of transparency and accountability, TRO welcomes the investigation by the GoSL. As TRO is continuously answerable to the beneficiaries, the donors, governments, and the public, we are confident that there has been no wrong doing by TRO and that this “freezing” of the bank accounts is unwarranted. TRO has requested that the CBSL and the High Court of Colombo allow TRO to function “under supervision” so that the IDPs and others that TRO assists will continue to be served while the investigation continues.

PROBLEMS FACED by TRO and other Organizations

The most pressing issue currently is that of “access” to those most in need of humanitarian assistance. This issue arose months before the start of the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) offensives in August 2006. Prior to that time TRO and iNGOs had faced extreme difficulties in the implementation of their Tsunami Projects and their pre-CFA war affected IDP Projects. Many of the problems faced by TRO were, and are, unique but iNGOs, the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) also face some of the same constraints due to the actions of the GoSL.

Some of the constraints are outlined in the report from the Office of the UN Special Envoy:

“The transaction costs of working in parts of the north and east are much higher than in the south and west. This is mainly due to the limited access to sand banks, rubble and other reconstruction materials; high security zones; the relative paucity of skilled labour; and the limited access to reconstruction sites. In particular, certain LTTE-controlled areas have almost no tarmac roads and there are painstaking checkpoint procedures required for travel between the government and LTTE-controlled areas. These constraints may have caused the north, in particular, to attract fewer implementation partners and for implementers operational in the north and east to make slower and more limited progress.”¹¹

Some other constraints include:

1. Restriction of “access” to the NorthEast Tsunami and War affected IDPs by the GoSL achieved through a variety of laws, regulations, “unpublicized restrictions”, and an outright refusal by the government to allow humanitarian access and the flow of humanitarian relief, especially food and medicine, to the worst affected areas.

CARE International, supported by other UK based agencies, states that, “Only 10% of post-tsunami house reconstruction has been completed in the conflict-hit north of the island compared to nearly 90% in the relatively stable south...”¹² The press release continues, “Controlled and restricted access for aid agencies has caused serious delays to building projects with materials and workers unable to enter some areas. There is a growing disparity between the extent and progress of reconstruction in the north and south of the island.”¹³

Access is restricted in a variety of ways:

- a. **Work permit:** The institution of the “work permit” requirement for all “international staff” of NGOs (other than the UN & ICRC). This work permit was an additional procedure that was instituted by the Ministry of Defence despite the fact that all these persons already had “work visas”. Thus far no work permits have been approved for the LTTE controlled areas and as a result iNGOs are not able to access some of the most severely affected IDPs. Most organizations withdrew their international staff from ALL of the NorthEast until they received their work permits, while some work permits have been granted, most have not or have been made for specific districts and are very limiting.
- b. **Unpublicized Restrictions:** Refusal by GoSL checkpoint personnel to allow access or transportation of building materials. These GoSL security forces personnel would state that a “permit” was required from “Colombo” when questioned; authorities in Colombo would deny that such permits were required.

¹¹ Approaches to Equity in Post-Tsunami Assistance, Sri Lanka: A Case Study, Office of the UN Secretary General’s Special Envoy For Tsunami Recovery, Mandeep Kaur Grewal, November 2006

¹² CARE International Press Release: “Sri Lanka’s ignored conflict threatens tsunami reconstruction” 12 December 2006 (Supported by the following UK based agencies ActionAid, CAFOD, CARE International, Merlin, Save the Children, Tearfund, WorldVision)

<http://www.careinternational.org.uk/Sri+Lanka%E2%80%99s+ignored+conflict+threatens+tsunami+reconstruction++8203.twl>

¹³ Ibid.



- c. **Closure of “borders”/roads/checkpoints:** The GoSL has closed the A9 and A15 highways and thus denied access to over a million civilians in desperate need of humanitarian relief: food, medicine and non-food relief items. Convoys are only allowed to proceed under special circumstances and even then do not carry adequate quantities to meet the needs of the population. An example of this is the last convoy that was allowed to travel to Vaharai where 45,000 IDPs are stranded. On 29 November the GoSL allowed a UN/ICRC convoy to cross the border, but 30 truck loads of food were not allowed to proceed by the GoSL thus the expected “one week supply” was 40% short of the requirement.¹⁴ As of 26 December 2006 no other convoy has been allowed into Vaharai.
2. “(Sri Lanka) Army restrictions on the movement of building materials have had a severe impact on construction projects, which had already been delayed by changes in government regulations and a lack of suitable land. Employees of international agencies have been targeted and in one instance, 17 Sri Lankans (16 Tamils and 1 Muslim) working for a French NGO were shot dead.”¹⁵

Please see **Appendix II** for a full list of some of the other problems TRO and other iNGOs faced in the post-tsunami period.

ATTACKS ON TRO

There have been 19 major attacks, and numerous minor attacks, on TRO aid workers, offices or projects over the past two years. (*Please see Appendix I for a list of attacks on TRO staff offices and projects*) These attacks have forced TRO to take extra security measures to ensure staff and beneficiary safety. TRO aid workers in some areas have been intimidated, threatened, harassed, assaulted, and “disappeared” by the GoSL security forces and paramilitary forces. TRO projects and IDP camps have been bombed and shelled by the GoSL and hand grenades have been thrown into the Batticaloa and Jaffna offices with the latter also being burnt to the ground. These attacks and the attackers have sought to intimidate TRO staff and restrict the delivery of humanitarian relief and development to the war and tsunami affected communities of the NorthEast.

The most recent atrocities were the shelling by GoSL forces of clearly designated TRO IDP camps in the Vaharai area. On 8 November 2006 in Karhiraveli, Vaharai 47 IDPs were killed and 136 injured by GoSL shelling. The TRO Children’s Home was damaged and 12 children were injured. On 10 December 2006 a similar incident occurred when the GoSL shelled 3 TRO IDP camps in Palchchenai, Kandalady, and Vammivadduvan. 40 IDPs were killed and 100 injured in this incident.

In January 2006 seven (7) TRO aid workers were abducted by armed paramilitary gunmen. One of these persons, Mr. Ganeshalingam, was a member of TRO’s Board of Governors, while the others were Pre School administrative staff and the Batticaloa Chief Accountant, Ms. Premini, and her team of accountants. These people remain “disappeared” with no real investigation having taken place by the responsible authorities.

The TRO Batticaloa office has been attacked 3 times on: 7 August 2003, 13 June 2005, and 27 September 2005 by paramilitaries with grenades and machine guns. A TRO Security Guard was killed during the 27 September attack and 2 Staffers injured & 5 vehicles destroyed during 13 June attack. TRO closed the Batticaloa Office soon after the September attack due to the inability of the GoSL security forces to stop attacks and ensure the safety of humanitarian workers.

In August 2006, the *Vadamarachchi East TRO Boatyard* and the *Eachchilampattu TRO Boatyard*, 2 of the 6 Boat building facilities that TRO constructed as part of tsunami livelihood projects, were destroyed by the Sri Lanka Air Force.

Other tsunami reconstruction projects have also been damaged or destroyed by shelling or bombing. The “Rebuild Kalladi Village” in Eachchilampattu is such an example. The donor, Operation USA, provided US\$1 million and TRO had completed 100 of the planned 136 permanent houses for the tsunami affected village. A pre school, community center and a Primary Health Care Center had been completed. But this area is south of Muttur and Sampoor and north of Vaharai and is thus in a virtual “no man’s land”. Many of the structures that had been completed are now damaged or completely destroyed and the entire population of the village, along with the people from Sampoor and parts of Muttur East, displaced to Vaharai in September. The current status of the village is unknown.

¹⁴ UN Press Release 30 Nov. 2006: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/HMYT-6W2N95?OpenDocument>

¹⁵ Oxfam International Tsunami Fund Second year report, December 2006 (<http://www.oxfam.ca/news-and-publications/publications-and-reports/oxfam-international-tsunami-fund-second-year-report/file>)



EQUITY

A major source of concern in the post tsunami era has been the large number of iNGOs, international agencies, foreign governments and individual donors refusing to work in the NorthEast or providing token, nominal aid while focusing the majority of their resources in the “South” of the island. This discrimination is also seen within the NorthEast between the GoSL and LTTE controlled areas with certain “humanitarian agencies” refusing to work in the LTTE controlled areas due to a variety of factors. This has created inequities between tsunami affected persons within the tsunami affected population itself and between the tsunami affected and war affected populations.

The report from the Office of the UN Secretary General’s Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery stated that:

“Within the tsunami IDP group, affected communities in the east and, particularly, the north have experienced a slower pace of progress than those in the south and west of the country. This pattern is, again, partially related to practical constraints, many arising from the more difficult conflict context constraining delivery in the north and east, while stronger infrastructure and private sector support has favored faster delivery in the south.”¹⁶

Throughout the past year TRO has continued to take extra precautions to ensure that the war affected communities in the NorthEast have not been neglected or overshadowed due to the worldwide attention on the Tsunami affected. There are currently over 350,000 war affected IDPs still living in temporary shelters or with friends or relatives. Some of these families have been displaced up to 10 times as a result of the war and some were displaced once again by the tsunami. Many international NGOs were not able to work with these populations due to donor requirements that their funds be targeted to tsunami affected persons only. This has led to the creation of two classes of IDPs with tsunami IDPs having more access to relief and aid. The situation in the NorthEast is unlike that in other tsunami districts in the south, or other tsunami affected countries, as communities affected by the war and/or tsunami live side by side and issues of equity arise when one group has more donor resources available to it than the other. TRO has worked with the war affected population for the past 21 years and will continue to work with all communities that are in need of assistance. TRO will continue to assist all communities until such point as external assistance is no longer required. This includes all three communities living in the NorthEast: Tamils, Muslims, and Sinhalese.

- ◆ TRO views all people as being equal and will provide relief, rehabilitation and development without regard to language, religion, geographical area, gender, caste or any other category that is used to discriminate or disenfranchise beneficiaries.
- ◆ All people should have equal rights and access to: aid, development, education and medical treatment
- ◆ TRO works in the GoSL and LTTE areas with ALL 3 ethnic groups (Sinhala, Muslim & Tamil)
 - Sinhala Pre School being constructed in the Trincomalee District by TRO
 - TRO is rebuilding a Muslim village, Punochchimunai, in the Batticaloa District
 - TRO has built temporary shelters and is now constructing permanent Water & Sanitation facilities in Muslim villages in the Kinniya Division.

Highlights of Tsunami Related Projects

Please visit the TRO website for the 82 page, “*TRO 18 Month Tsunami Report*”(www.troonline.org/report.pdf)

- 836 Permanent houses
- 6 Boatyards
- 9,095 Temporary Shelters
- 1,000 Boats, Nets, Engines
- Emergency Shelter for over 22,977 IDP families (200,000 persons),
- Food for over 100,000 people each day. In total during the emergency phase TRO provided over 18.3 million “days” worth of food
- 242 Emergency Welfare Centres
- Food, water and clothing to over 200,000 people
- 2 “cooler” vehicles to transport fish to market
- 64 temporary pre schools
- 57 pre schools
- 9 day care centers / children’s parks
- 5 primary schools built / repaired
- 4 Primary Health Care Centers

¹⁶ Approaches to Equity in Post-Tsunami Assistance, Sri Lanka: A Case Study, Office of the UN Secretary General’s Special Envoy For Tsunami Recovery, Mandeep Kaur Grewal, November 2006



- 5 Nutrition Centers
- 6 Multi-Purpose Community Halls
- 2,800 Wells
- 2,800 Toilets
- 154 Containers Of Tsunami Relief From Donors Throughout The World.
- Toy Distribution
- Back To School Packages
- Medical Teams, Psychosocial Staff Trained, Medicine Sent to Camps in first few months
- 39 Teams Of Volunteer Medical Health Professionals during Emergency Phase
- 40 Mobile Medical Units during Emergency Phase
- 12 Mini Clinics In Emergency And Transitional Welfare
- Livelihood development:
 - “Cash For Work”
 - Apprenticeship programs for carpenters, masons, and other skilled labourers,
 - Cash grants and equipment to start small businesses such as bicycle repair shops, barber shops, laundries, food processing/drying, stone crushing, brick making, sewing, weaving, and animal husbandry.
- Children's Homes: There are 17 “TRO Children's Homes” throughout the NorthEast caring for the needs of 1,875 children who have been orphaned, lost one parent, or whose parents are not able to care for them due to poverty or health problems. TRO accepted 265 children into its Children's Homes as a result of the tsunami and is constructing 2 additional children’s homes in order to alleviate crowding.

Ongoing Non-Tsunami Projects & Programs

The tsunami that devastated the NorthEast struck an area that had been brutalized by 25 years of war and years of neglect prior to the war. TRO has been working for the past 21 years (1985 - 2006) with the war affected populations and has programs and projects in all sectors of relief, reconstruction, and development. In addition to the tsunami related projects and programs outlined in this report, TRO also continued to serve the war affected populations. New projects were created and ongoing ones expanded to provide relief, rehabilitation and development to these persons.



**APPENDIX I:
Attacks on TRO aid workers, projects and offices
2003 - December 2006**

- I. 10 December 2006**
- a) 40 people killed and 100 injured when GOSL forces shelled 3 TRO IDP camps in Palchenai, Kandalady and Vammivadduvan
- II. 8 November 2006**
- a) Kathiraveli 47 people killed and 136 injured when GOSL forces shelled a TRO IDP camp and TRO Sonobo Children's Home was damaged with 12 children injured.
- III. August 2006**
- a) TRO boat making yard in Eachchilampattu shelled by the Sri Lanka Air Force
 - i) Details not known due to lack of access. Eachchilampattu is currently a no man's land.
- IV. 23 August 2006**
- a) TRO Jaffna office destroyed
 - i) The TRO Jaffna office is on a main road and is surrounded by international NGOs and UN agencies.
 - ii) There are also GoSL army checkpoints at both ends of the road.
 - iii) At the time of the attack Jaffna was under a strict curfew with absolutely no travel allowed by anyone other than GoSL security forces.
 - iv) Heavily armed men in military fatigues arrived at the TRO office at 23:00h and destroyed the computers and the furniture and then burnt the building and the storeroom
- V. 19 August 2006**
- a) A boat making yard built by TRO to repair and re-supply tsunami affected fishermen with boats was bombed by the Sri Lanka Air Force.
 - b) All boats under construction (or finished) were destroyed as was the store room and the main building.
- VI. 15 August 2006**
- a) Amparai TRO/NECORD office attacked - shooting & grenade thrown
- VII. 31 July 2006**
- a) Punochochimunai, Muslim Village, "Rebuild a Village Project" funded by EMERGENCY (Italy). The storeroom at the work site was broken into and over 200 bags of cement were stolen.
 - b) The staff and security guard working on the project had resigned or "stayed home" from work due to intimidation by alleged Karuna Group representatives who threaten the workers with death if they continued working for TRO.
- VIII. 15 July 2006**
- a) Grenade attack on TRO Jaffna office
 - i) One grenade thrown into compound during daylight hours within 100 meters of a GoSL army checkpoint.
- IX. 13 July 2006**
- a) Cement being transported to a tsunami "Rebuild a Village Project" being implemented in Vaharai, Batticaloa District with funding from TRO Switzerland was hijacked in Valaichennai by paramilitary forces. The truck & cement have yet to be recovered.
- X. 29 June 2006**
- a) TRO is reconstructing a tsunami affected Muslim Village in the Batticaloa District – Punochochimunai. This is funded by EMERGENCY (an Italian NGO).
 - b) Boat engines for boats that TRO was providing to the fishermen of the village were being transported from Trincomalee to Punochochimunai in a truck when they were stopped by Police in Polonaruwa. The driver and truck were held for 3 days. They were only released after TRO petitioned the police and provided proof that the recipients were tsunami affected fishermen.
- XI. 26 April 2006**
- a) GoSL forces shelled and bombed civilian areas of the Trincomalee District
 - i) TRO Santhosam Children's Home (40 orphans live in the home) damaged by a Kfir bomb



- ii) TRO's office at Kadakarachenai damaged by bombing/shelling
- iii) TRO Muttur / Eachchilampattu office attacked/bombed – food store damaged

XII. 29 & 30 January 2006

- a) Abduction of 7 staffers in Welikanda area – still missing/disappeared
 - i) 10 persons were abducted: 2 persons were held for one day, 1 for 3 days and the remaining 7 have not been heard from or seen since then
 - ii) these events were reported and official requests for investigation were made to the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL), the Sri Lankan Police, the Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission (HRC), the ICRC, the SLMM, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances
 - iii) TRO did not receive any reports (either written or verbal) of investigations (if any) conducted by ANY of the organizations above.
 - iv) TRO took their case to the media in an effort to have the employees released, to no avail and the 7 remain “disappeared”. This impunity has contributed to the current situation that humanitarian agencies find themselves in – the horrible tragedy of the recent execution of the 17 Action Contre La Faim staff members is a case in point.
 - v) The vehicles that the disappeared were traveling in were later discovered in a “Karuna Camp”

XIII. 7 August 2003, 13 June 2005, 27 September 2005

- a) Three grenade & machine gun attacks on TRO Batticaloa Office
 - i) Security Guard killed in 27 September attack, TRO closed the Batticaloa Office soon after this attack due to the inability of the GoSL security forces stop attacks.
 - ii) 2 Staffers injured & 5 vehicles destroyed during 13 June attack



APPENDIX II: Difficulties faced by TRO when implementing Tsunami Relief

These difficulties existed prior to the resurgence in fighting in August 2006 and continue to this day.

Most tsunami related projects have been on hold since the outbreak of fighting in August 2006.

- I.** TRO has faced great difficulties clearing humanitarian relief items through the Sri Lanka Ports and Airport Customs and transferring these items to the affected areas.
 - a) In the months after the tsunami TRO received over 150 40' foot containers
 - b) TRO had great difficulty in clearing much of this humanitarian aid through customs and was forced by the GoSL to pay a variety of "taxes" on the humanitarian aid
 - c) Some items were NEVER released to TRO by the GoSL Customs Department:
 - i) Boat making equipment
 - ii) Fishing equipment
 - iii) Fire fighting equipment
 - iv) Snake anti-venom
- II.** There also exist publicized and un-publicized security related controls, restrictions, embargoes and a total denial of access to some areas of the NorthEast.
 - a) This has deprived the tsunami and war affected IDPs of desperately needed humanitarian relief, building materials and staff.
 - b) The GoSL has denied access to the iNGOs and UN agencies also
- III.** Lack of an institutional mechanism for dispersal of available tsunami related donor funds – PTOMS was never implemented
- IV.** Inequity
 - a) between the NorthEast & the South
 - b) between the tsunami affected & the war affected
 - c) between tsunami affected communities in the NorthEast
- V.** 25 years of war have resulted in the infrastructure and capacity of the NorthEast lagging far behind the rest of the country
 - a) The lack of infrastructure and capacity made immediate post-tsunami relief more difficult and continues to hinder development. This inequity will have to be addressed if there is to be any real development that will bring the NorthEast's socioeconomic indicators up to the level of the rest of the country.
- VI.** Decision-making and power with regard to the overall design and structure of humanitarian aid is overly "Colombo based" and as a result is not always in line with the needs of the beneficiaries "in the field". As a result many decisions are made in Colombo without much consultation with the local authorities or the beneficiaries.
- VII.** Centralized controls of the flow of tsunami funds and GoSL assistance has ensured the perpetuation of some of the problems that existed prior to the tsunami.
- VIII.** The lack of competency, excessive control, corruption and politicization of the government bureaucracy are significant detractors to progress of the tsunami affected areas of the NorthEast.
- IX.** The NorthEast has historically had some of the worst socioeconomic indicators in the country and this has hindered the tsunami recovery of the area. There continues to be a shortage of teachers, doctors and other skilled personnel in all sectors.