

THE TSUNAMI RECOVERY NETWORK

Press release

The Tsunami Recovery Network is pleased to announce the launch of a new independent website dedicated to exchanging information on tsunami recovery and reconstruction activities following the Asian tsunami disaster. The Network will lobby for the implementation of policies which respect the expressed needs of the communities directly affected, particularly the poor and most vulnerable.

Please log on to www.tsunami-recovery.net for information on what is happening, concerns over emerging problems and ideas for sustainable and locally acceptable solutions.

The website is managed by a network of professionals representing universities, consultancy practices, NGOS and professional institutes. The Network was established at a meeting in London in January 2005 to address concerns that the funds, so generously contributed by individuals and governments, should be expended in ways that meet the real needs and rights of the people most severely affected. Membership of the Network is open to organisations and individuals working in, or with relevant experience of, the region affected by the tsunami or issues relating to post-disaster management and reconstruction. The four major UK professional Institutes (ICE, RIBA, RICS and RTPI) have already signed up.

Discussions among a range of individuals and representatives led to agreement on three principles to which it was agreed all reconstruction efforts should conform and against which they should be evaluated. These are:

1. ***Rehabilitation should be driven by the wishes and needs of local communities affected by the tsunami and their right to return should be recognized.***
2. ***The reconstruction process should be transparent and ensure financial accountability, with funds distributed to the lowest practical level.***
3. ***Rehabilitation should be comprehensive and long-term and rebuild lives and livelihoods, not just houses and infrastructure.***

The operational aim of the Network is to:

- provide support, contacts and information to all who share its principles;
- promote participatory and accountable approaches to rehabilitation and reconstruction that will have a long term impact on development;
- monitor post-tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction policies, programmes and projects and provide criteria with which to evaluate them.

The website provides information from locally associated networks on what is happening throughout the region and depends on Network members to keep them up to date. Information or ideas from those in the region or with specialist experience elsewhere on issues relating to post-disaster reconstruction are welcomed.

The tragedy of the Asian tsunami has provided a high-profile window of opportunity to bring the world's attention to the need for socially just, effective and efficient ways of addressing poverty and sharing development. We invite you to visit the website www.tsunami-recovery.net and sign up to its principles.

