

BOX: Aid Delivery as Seen by Tsunami-Affected Communities

1. Aid provided during the first 48 hours was overwhelmingly local; citizens played a critical role.

In the recollections of the tsunami-affected people, the aid provided during the first 48 hours was mostly from private individuals or the local community. In Indonesia, 91% of the rescue services were provided by local individuals.

2. Satisfaction with the services provided during the first 48 hours varied widely; at the 60-day mark, satisfaction levels across countries were more similar.

There was wide variation across countries in satisfaction with the immediate rescue and relief services provided. Overall, beneficiaries in India were most satisfied with the services provided in the first 48 hours. Their counterparts in Indonesia were the least satisfied. After the first 60 days, surveys indicated that there was less variation in satisfaction of services provided than was initially the case.

3. Nine months later life was far from normal: there were sharp decreases in household income in all the tsunami-affected areas.

Among India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka, the proportion of losses in income was greatest in Indonesia where an astounding 83% lost more than 50% of their income. In Sri Lanka and India, 59% and 47%, respectively, of those surveyed reported more than a 50% drop in income.

4. Livelihood restoration programs did not get high satisfaction scores.

In all three countries, multiple programs to restore livelihoods were implemented. Overall, these programs were not well-rated by beneficiaries.

5. Permanent shelter was the most significant continuing challenge.

Nine months after the tsunami the issue of permanent shelter continued to be mired in controversy. Safety and land were key issues. The great majority of affected families were still living in camps or temporary shelters nine months after the disaster. This hampered a return to normal lives and kept the disaster in the forefront of the minds of those affected.

6. Efforts to restore shelter were recognized.

Beneficiaries recognized that efforts were being made to restore shelter. Asked about the services supplied, beneficiaries expressed the greatest satisfaction with international NGOs.

7. Psychosocial support, not widely provided, was seen as a critical service.

Many aid providers supplied psycho-social support, including counseling. Services provided by international NGOs tended to rate the most highly.

8. Excellence in aid delivery was recognized.

In Indonesia, international NGOs were seen as the best aid providers. In Sri Lanka, several local NGOs rated highly. In India, the central and state governments were seen as responsive, organized, and visible.

SOURCE: Adapted from Fritz Institute report (2005).