

SAACID



Summary Information

Title:	Adale Tsunami Finalization Report
Country and Location:	Adale District, Middle Shabelle Region, Somalia
Donor:	Mennonite Central Committee (USA)
Name of implementing agency:	SAACID
Start Date:	March 2005
End Date:	April 2005

Background

The tsunami that caused such devastation in South-East Asia also caused considerable damage on the other side of the Indian Ocean along the African coast. Several hundred people were reported killed along the Somali coast; and an equivalent amount of social and economic disruption was also catalogued.

Adale District (Adale Town lies some 160 kilometres north of Mogadishu) did not have any reported deaths; but had considerable reports of loss of boats and equipment amongst the minority subsistence fishermen.

Adale is a sleepy backwater in Somalia, which has missed all of the clan conflict that has riven much of the rest of the country. The small district has the estimated population of 28,000. The topography is all semi-arid and arid, with the communities in the district involved in subsistence agro-pastoralism and fishing. The district is comprised of Adale Town, 15 major and 13 minor villages.

About 85% of the inhabitants of the district practice fishing as a means of living and the Tsunami disaster has hit and devastated the fishing equipments of many families. Since the civil strife of 1991 this district has never experienced a disaster with such a magnitude like the Tsunami. SAACID now estimated that nearly 50 vulnerable families usually considered insignificant in the community have been hard hit and need immediate assistance.

Immediately, SAACID's health team in the district of Adale visited a number of families and discovered there is an acute food shortages and emergence of malnutrition symptoms among the children, women and the elderly. SAACID Mogadishu office forwarded the handy information to WFP, UNICEF and WHO requesting them provision of nutritional food (porridge) and urgent medical supplies to the area.

SAACID taking into consideration the needs and the incurred damage by the shocking quake in the district of Adale proposes and suggests the following interventions to assist the affected communities:

Activities

1. Provision of one month's food supply to the affected community and its immediate distribution.
2. Provision of fishing equipment as a start up for the resumption of their fishing occupation.
3. Provision of medical supplies to exclude possible endemic diseases as an aftermath to the tsunami disaster.

Plan Details

The primary goal was to rehabilitate the livelihoods of the tsunami affected people in Adale District through the provision of food grants and fishing equipment. The targeted outputs were all successfully achieved. All tsunami affected communities in Adale District have now begun their former fishing activities.

Forty-six people - including 7 women-headed households - received boats, fishing nets, shark nets, fish hooks, fish floats and various other materials. Furthermore, 54 people - 80% of whom were women - received one month's emergency food rations.

Outcome indicators were all excellent. The fishing activities of all the people affected by the tsunami had all resumed. Many families that had been displaced to adjacent areas returned to the district after the reception of the fishing equipment and food aid. The provision of the fishing equipment and the food aid generated a new positive atmosphere of life expectation, where previously, many of the community had developed a phobia of the sea as a result of the tsunami. Nonetheless, the fish catch of the affected communities is historically down because of unaccounted for fish scarcity reported in the Indian Ocean coastal areas - including Adale Town.

One hundred people who were food insecure were the direct recipients of the food aid. Eighty percent of those receiving the food provision were from women-headed household. Each person received half a quintal of flour (50 kilos), 50 kilos of rice, 10 kilos of beans and 3 kilos of vegetable oil. This food distribution has critically augmented the food security of the targeted population, giving them more time to recover and prepare for the resumption of fishing activities. The beneficiaries of the food rations also included their children – average 7 children per recipient. The morale of all those targeted has escalated with the provision of the humanitarian assistance donated by MCC.

Prior to the implementation of the programme, the affected communities were assessed for 'greatest need' and divided into 2 categories – food security recipients and new boat recipients. One hundred people falling in the category of 'most vulnerable' food recipients (please see 1.4. for clarification) received the food aid; and 46 people – 7 of which were women-headed households received one boat each, 1 shark net, 1 fishing net, two anchors, a set of hooks, a set of floats and different sets of fishing rods.

SAACID, together with the district authority of the district, and the traditional and community elders were in charge of the food distribution. Effectively, this group jointly carried out the distribution. There were no deviations reported from the agreed food distribution. There was no provision of seed and tools included in the requirement of the project.

SAACID – Australia had donated a large amount of second-hand clothing. This was also distributed to those designated as ‘most needy’ in the district.

Usually, implementing agencies encounter many constraints during their emergency food aid distribution activities. SAACID staff engaged in the tsunami emergency project observed and appreciated how well organized the community reacted to the distribution effort. The district authorities and the traditional and community elders showed accountability in selecting the most vulnerable people; and clearly demonstrated a high degree of transparency in assuring that they did not personally benefit from the economic recovery program.

Capacity Building

Since this was the first time SAACID had come into direct contact with the fishing communities in Adale District, SAACID observed that the fishing community is very civilized, organized and peaceful. Generally, the fishing community is not involved in the civil war and has no lust for gun acquisition. In reality, they are the people more adept for provision of assistance. Through the implementation of this project, SAACID has already developed new ideas for assisting fishing communities in Adale and adjacent coastal areas like Warsheikh.

SAACID is a local NGO lacking recurrent funds to launch humanitarian projects of its own; MCC provided the required resources crucial for the implementation of the emergency relief program. This stride enhanced the morale of affected people living in Adale District, while it increased the capacity and workmanship of the agency staff. This will work as a positive feature in all the anticipated programs where the community and MCC as a partner would offer trustworthy responses to SAACID’s future activities in the area.

Tsunami Stories

Story One

Mr. Ali Osman (nicknamed Ali Rooti) was born and brought up in Adale. He is 67 years of age and originally comes from a fishing family. His father (also a fisherman) died in an accident while travelling with a truck. Unfortunately, his mother died while he was only 3 years of age. His grandfather, who was a famous fisherman, brought him up. The family has always been dependant on fishing and had no other resources for living. Mr. Ali started his fishing experience at 7 years of age, when he was employed as cook for older fishermen. The fishing sites were between Adale Town and an area called Kudkudaaley - north of Adale Town. He started training on paddling (Oars) the wooden fishing boats when he was 15. Furthermore, he was given training in net setting and hauling. He absorbed all lessons and had attained the requisite amount of expertise in the field of fishing by the time he was 18.

Mr. Ali married and had 12 children - of whom 4 died. Four of the remaining eight children are male – all of whom are engaged in the fishing industry.

He had his worst experience in fishing when his boat capsized in the middle of the Indian Ocean. One of his close friends met his demise as a result of the action and Mr. Ali was badly injured in the neck, and developed a large mass –or growth) on his neck. He still has that mass on his neck.

On another occasion, a whale splashed a huge amount of seawater into their boat - capsizing it. According to his version of the story, this was the most dangerous experience he had ever had while engaged in fishing. The milestone of any fisherman's life experience is full of different occurrences comprising of both happy and sorrowful incidents.

According to his experience, the happiest incident he ever encountered was when he caught three large sharks yielding him enough cash to allow the marriage of 2 of his boys.

Mr. Ali then related his experiences of the tsunami that hit Adale on the 26th of December 2004. Strong unprecedented tidal waves swept the shores of all the coastal towns along the Indian Ocean. The tsunami waves, which were so high, destroyed all the fishing equipment of the community - including boats and other pertinent fishing materials. Since his house was situated right at the seashore, he was engaged in evacuating his family and then the remaining belongings that he could grab from the disastrous waves. He lost all his fishing gear, including the only boat he had. In addition, he developed a psychological trauma that wouldn't allow him to go near the sea. He asserts that he remained destitute for a long period after having lost all things of value related to his livelihood.

The arrival of SAACID's assessment team to evaluate the effects of the tsunami revived his morale and life expectations.

Mr. Ali declared that he and his family, including four experienced male youngsters, received a well built fishing boat, a shark net, a fishing net, hooks, anchors, floats and different types fishing ropes donated from MCC in public ceremony held for that purpose. Before this donation arrived, all his family was living in abject destitution. 'This donation from MCC enhanced our livelihood', he said, not only for his family but also for all those affected by the tsunami waves. He remains extremely grateful to MCC, and gives his thanks for their benevolence from so far away. He claims that the future of his family as a whole is now very bright and shining.

Story two

Mr. Abdullahi Ali Bassey, a married fisherman aged 52 years, had 11 children, of whom 5 have died. He comes from a family totally dependant on fishing. His mother died while he was a child. He could not live with his stepmother, who had accused him of naughtiness. He escaped from his father's house and started living with other fishermen. From that time onwards his life depended on the fishing occupation. Mr. Abdullahi's life was endangered many times throughout his lifelong experience in fishing. On one occasion, the boat he was occupying capsized killing all other crew except him. That was before his marriage. The worst experience was when he and 3 other fishermen went to the sea. Unfortunately, one of the crew had not enough swimming training. He tried to salvage the inexperienced fisherman and could not succeed. Finally, he was forced to save himself. Amazingly enough, the family of the drowned fisherman accused him of omitting and neglecting the salvage of the other fisherman.

Mr. Abdullahi originated from a lower unarmed Somali clan (*Jaji*); the drowned man came from a stronger clan. He was accused of negligence and was forced to pay the blood money of the deceased. He refused to accept accountability for the demise of the dead fisherman but he and his family were successively attacked. As a matter of fact he was compelled to flee the town and seek refuge in another settlement, leaving his family parentless until the case had been solved.

Mr. Abdullahi further asserted that the sea was throwing out many types of dead fish. He actually does not know the actual reason; rumours in the area say that some large multi-national companies are dropping nuclear waste and other industrial products in the sea nearby. There is no official government that patrols our coast. This has in fact jeopardized our capacity to fish, since some clients shun buying fish unless they are sure they are not the dead ones. Worse than all, the recent tsunami hazard added fuel to the fire. All the fishing gear of the community was swept away by the high tidal waves leaving the people idle and completely destitute in this remote corner of the country, where nobody came to their rescue. Furthermore, the fishing community developed a phobia from going near the sea.

Consequently, the tsunami aftermath caused another humorous incidence. The sea brought different things to the shore of Adale district. This included prefab houses, a refrigerator, plywood, clothing bags, dead human bodies and currency of different countries at the other side of the Indian Ocean (he claims that he has Indonesian money). As a result, Adale people started getting up early in the morning running to the seashore to be the first to catch the new riches from the sea.

Luckily, he was on of the recipient list for MCC fishing equipment. He received a boat together with all other needed items. Although he has developed psychological stress whenever he feels winds coming from the sea, he is happy to have received the assistance provided by MCC. He is sure that his life and that of his family will change for the better. He openly thanked MCC for their kindness, and invited them to visit in the future so that he can show how their gift has resurrected the life possibilities of his family.