

FROM **DISASTER** TO **DEVELOPMENT**

How older people recovered from the Asian tsunami



HELP THE AGED

WE WILL

Working together to improve
the lives of disadvantaged
older people around the world

HelpAge
International

Leading global action on ageing

PHOTOGRAPHERS

SHAHIDUL ALAM

was born in 1955 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. He studied and taught chemistry in London, then started photography in 1980. He was nominated best photographer of the year by the Arts Council in London in 1983. He became the president of the Bangladesh Photographic Society and in 1989 set up the Drik Picture Library and Pathshala, the South Asian Institute of Photography. He is also director of Chobi Mela, the festival of photography in Asia.

Alam has been a jury member of numerous competitions including the World Press Photographic Awards and has received several awards himself for his contribution to photography. He is on the advisory board for the Eugene Smith Memorial Fund and the National Geographic Society. He is also visiting professor at Sunderland University in the UK and Regent's Lecturer at UCLA in the USA.

PETER CATON

has been a professional photographer since 1998 both in the UK and overseas. He completed his Bachelor's degree in photography in Middlesbrough, where he gained first-hand experience on the hardships of working-class life in northern England. His upbringing in Scarborough, where his parents were involved in childcare work, has influenced his awareness of, and sensitivity to, social issues and his connection to nature.

After several trips to Asia, in January of 2006 Caton committed himself to live out of two rucksacks and to work on the road in India as a freelance professional. A notable amount of his work has been commissioned by NGOs, including the HIV/AIDS Alliance, LEPR, Tearfund and the British Red Cross.

JOHN COBB

is a photojournalist based in the UK. An early part of his career was spent running a wildlife park in northern Zambia. This inspired his long-standing commitment to photographic work in the less developed world. He began working as an agency photographer in the mid-1990s, first in Yorkshire, then based in London.

He works for a range of clients, including national newspapers, NGOs, environmental organisations and the not-for-profit sector. Assignments for HelpAge International and Help the Aged have included work in Bangladesh, India, Tanzania, DRC, Rwanda, Kenya and Ethiopia, dealing with issues ranging from HIV and AIDS to food security and natural disasters. Most recently, Cobb returned to Bangladesh to document the devastating impact of Cyclone Sidr.

PENNY TWEEDIE

has worked for countless magazines, including the *National Geographic*, *Sunday Times*, *Newsweek* and *Time* as well as numerous NGOs, including Help the Aged, HelpAge International, Oxfam, Save the Children and Christian Aid. She has worked in 75 countries.

Through her photography, Tweedie attempts to shed light on the terrible predicaments of people all over the world, including those affected by floods and famine and people living with disabilities and HIV. She photographed homeless people for the launch of Shelter and thalidomide victims for a national campaign on their behalf. Tweedie has also focused her camera on the conflicts in Northern Ireland, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Middle East, Sudan and East Timor. She is currently based in the UK.

INTRODUCTION



MICHAEL LAKE



RICHARD BLEWITT

The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami affected 11 countries. It left nearly 230,000 people dead and over 1½ million people displaced from their homes.

Jane Fearnley-Whittingstall, author and Help the Aged ambassador, visited some of our post-tsunami projects in India in 2007. She says: *'I had braced myself to encounter serious poverty and to hear heart-rending personal stories, and we found both. Some of the men and women we met had lost family members as well as their homes and livelihood. Nobody with an ounce of compassion could fail to be moved by their plight.'*

At Help the Aged and HelpAge International we aim to assist older people to overcome the daily problems they face, including providing support following a natural disaster, such as a tsunami. Millions of older people across the world are ignored in disasters – pushed aside when aid is distributed; isolated when their families flee; or left to die by the wayside if they cannot make it to safety. Older people need all the help they can get in emergencies, but are often the very ones who miss out.

Thanks to public donations we can ensure older people in the worst-affected areas are helped. Help the Aged and HelpAge International received £8 million from the British public as part of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) appeal. With this money we assisted over 200,000 people in India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia so they could rebuild their lives.

In the immediate aftermath, our local partners provided survivors with food, clothing, shelter and kitchen equipment as well as offering first-aid care. In the medium term, we provided health care and helped set up older people's associations so that older people could learn new trades and receive counselling to help them get over the traumas they had suffered. And in the long term we provided cash grants and loans so that older people could set up new businesses.



Jane Fearnley-Whittingstall meets 85-year-old Mrs Mottaiaama, who is receiving a visit from a social worker from HelpAge India

© Penny Tweedie/Help the Aged

In effect, we helped older people and their communities go from disaster to development by providing them with the three Rs: relief, recovery and rehabilitation. However, it is important to note that we did not do this on our own. We did this with older people, as older people themselves have a wealth of experience they can share and are best equipped to know what they need to rebuild their lives in the face of disaster. Now we are delighted to share this journey with you through a series of photographs illustrating the post-tsunami relief, recovery and rehabilitation work of Help the Aged and HelpAge International.

We hope that you will continue to support us so that together we can ensure that older people around the world maintain the independence, dignity, voice and social standing that enables them to lead active and fulfilling lives. As Jane Fearnley-Whittingstall reports, *'Alongside tragedy, we found great optimism. Many have successfully reconstructed their lives, and their courage and dignity are truly inspiring.'*

We hope that their photos and stories will inspire you too.

Michael Lake CBE
Director General, Help the Aged

Richard Blewitt
Chief Executive Officer,
HelpAge International

DISASTER

On 26 December 2004, the tsunami that struck India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia resulted in unprecedented fatalities and widespread destruction to property and infrastructure.

- In Sri Lanka the tsunami killed more than 35,000 people and left almost ½ million homeless. All but two of Sri Lanka's 15 coastal districts were submerged by the tidal wave.
- In India the tsunami caused mammoth waves to crash down on the coastal provinces of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh, where 90 per cent of the affected communities relied on fishing. Not only did this result in the loss of thousands of human lives, but also the destruction of fish and livestock, thus destroying invaluable sources of food and income.
- In Indonesia the tsunami struck the west coast of Aceh province and Nias Island, both part of northern Sumatra. An estimated 167,000 people died and at least another ½ million lost everything they owned.

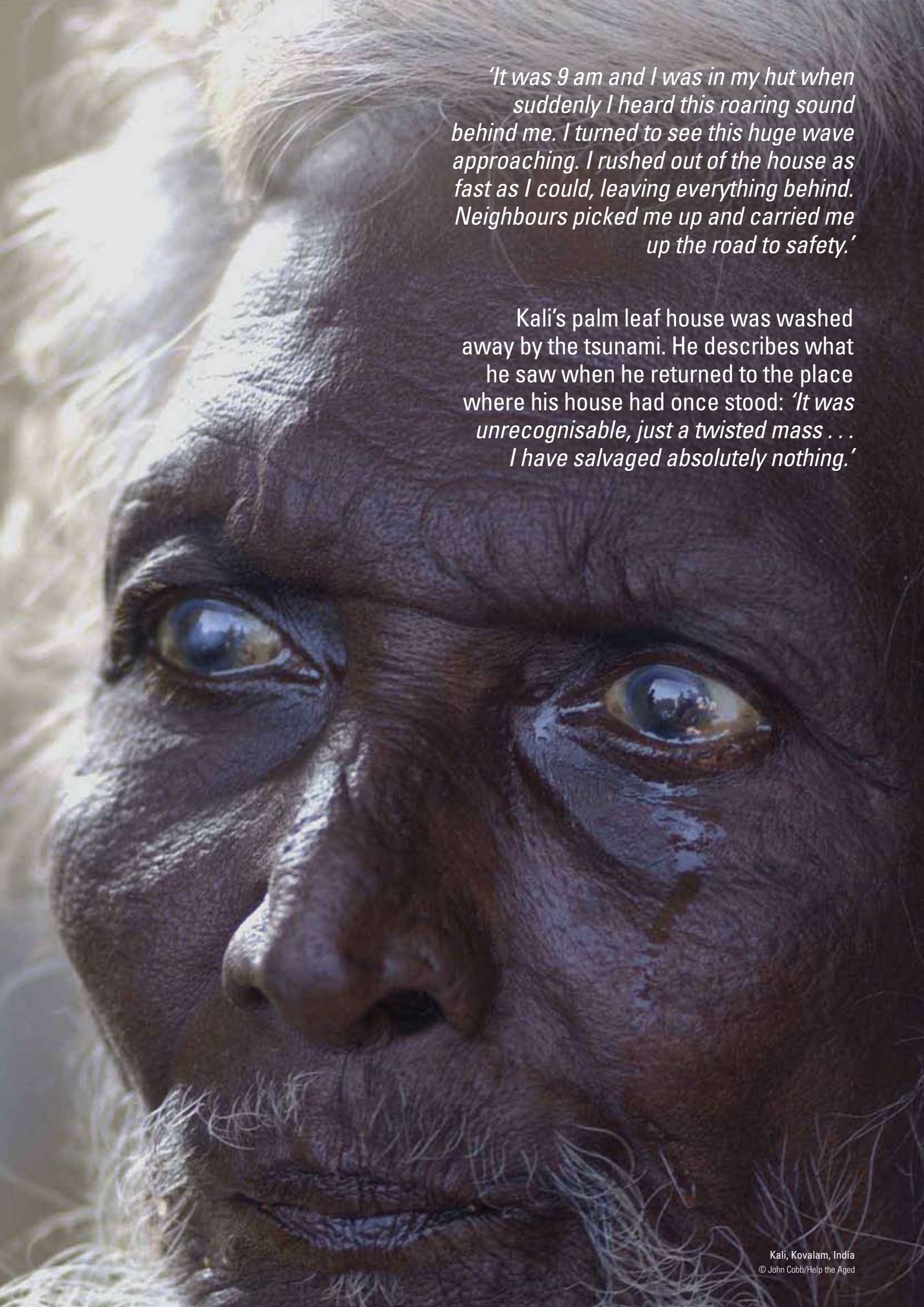
In emergency situations caused by natural disasters, older people are particularly vulnerable. They are often unable to access relief assistance through isolation, lack of mobility or family support, or because they are overlooked in the response by both government and non-governmental organisations.

When relief supplies are available, they may be inappropriately packaged for older people to handle or the food may be difficult to chew and digest. Older people are at greater risk from diarrhoea and respiratory diseases, which are often prevalent following natural disasters. Chronic age-related health problems, often unaddressed, can further hamper the ability of older people to play a role in their own recovery as well as the recovery of their community.

At the same time, older people in developing countries play a crucial role in caring for children, especially those orphaned by illness or conflict or whose parents have migrated in search of work. Older people caring for grandchildren need help to buy food and pay for school fees. They can barely afford to look after themselves, so when they need to look after others as well the financial, physical and psychological strain is almost unbearable. If they were provided with home visitors and a social pension, this would drastically improve both their own chances of survival and the health, nutritional and educational situation of children in their care.

In the wake of a disaster the needs of older people are often ignored. After the tsunami, we tackled the invisibility of older people by ensuring that the most vulnerable older people, their immediate carers, dependants and families were identified and registered, their health needs attended to, and appropriate relief provided. We ensured that older people were treated with dignity and respect; guaranteed security in old age through the provision of cash grants or loans; and better equipped to withstand and respond to future disasters. By liaising directly with local partners on the ground and working closely with older people and their organisations, we developed appropriate and effective programmes to assist over 200,000 people in India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia.

Disasters cannot be prevented, but we can ensure that older people have as good a chance as anyone else of reducing the risks to themselves; sharing their knowledge and coping mechanisms; being assisted on an equal basis; and having the standing and power to reduce their vulnerability and increase their ability to withstand future shocks. Older people often have the wisdom and experience to help themselves and their communities. More disaster relief and development programmes must recognise this fact.



'It was 9 am and I was in my hut when suddenly I heard this roaring sound behind me. I turned to see this huge wave approaching. I rushed out of the house as fast as I could, leaving everything behind. Neighbours picked me up and carried me up the road to safety.'

Kali's palm leaf house was washed away by the tsunami. He describes what he saw when he returned to the place where his house had once stood: *'It was unrecognisable, just a twisted mass . . . I have salvaged absolutely nothing.'*

Sixty-year-old Ariyamala lost her house and all her possessions in the tsunami. She supports her disabled husband, son, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren. Ariyamala said: *'I got news that a big wave was coming. I grabbed my husband and, with my son's help, we dragged him to safety.'*

Ariyamala sifts through the rubbish in the shattered port at Nagapattinam. From 5am until 12pm every day she collects bits of plastic. She then takes them to an intermediary to sell. On a good day she can earn 60 rupees (75 pence). After buying food, she returns home at 3pm to cook the evening meal with her daughter-in-law. Despite all she does for the family, her son sometimes beats her if he feels she has not earned enough money.







Fatima and Mohammad, Banda Aceh, Indonesia
 © John Cobb/Help the Aged

Many people – including development agencies and government authorities – believe that if disaster strikes, older people will be cared for by their families. But this is a myth. Older people themselves are often the unacknowledged carers for children and other vulnerable adults.

Photographer John Cobb went to Banda Aceh, Indonesia, in January 2005. This is his report.

Like any small boy recovering in hospital, Mohammad Idha loves his grandmother to read stories to him. But whenever Fatima Hassan tries to move away from her 5-year-old grandson's bed, he clings to her shawl and lets out an agonised scream. As Mohammad has barely raised a murmur since he was found clinging to a coconut tree after the great wave surged through his village ten days previously, no one can be certain what runs through this hauntingly beautiful child's mind at such moments.

When 70-year-old Mrs Hassan tells me her grandson's harrowing story, however, the reason he is so desperate for her reassuring presence immediately becomes clear. Seeing the tsunami approach, his widowed mother, Fauziah, had gathered Mohammad into her arms. But the boy was prised from his mother's grasp, and while he managed to grab the tree's overhanging branches, Fauziah was swept away. She is now one of the 56,000 people from the Sumatran town of Banda Aceh and its outlying villages to be officially listed as dead or missing.

Mrs Hassan also lost two other children and four grandchildren. And now, already virtually destitute and suffering from crippling 'elephant's foot disease', she has been left to care for the orphaned Mohammad. In other cultures, she might choose to have him adopted by parents with the means to raise him, but when I gently suggest this her tired old eyes blaze with pride. 'No! I am his granny, his own blood,' she says. 'I would never give him away. God will provide.'



Ramasamy, Tamil Nadu, India
© John Cobb/Help the Aged

▲ The tsunami claimed the lives of 75-year-old Ramasamy's daughter, son-in-law and two of his grandchildren. He is now looking after his two remaining grandchildren, 13-year-old Amaran and 4-year-old Brindha.

Living at a relief camp on Nagapattinam train station, Ramasamy asks, *'What is life now? Everything is over. I just don't know what to do. I have nowhere to go and I don't know where the next food is coming from. If there is no alternative, I will beg on the streets.'*



◀ *'I was sleeping in my house when I was woken by the noise of crashing waves. It sounded just like thunder. I ran out of my house and screamed for someone to help me. I was afraid that it was the end . . . If I was twenty years younger, I could have run without any help. Now I can hardly walk.'*

Seventy-year-old Kullapattu lost her home and all her possessions. She said, *'When I saw my house, I realised I had nothing left . . . I am still terrified of the sea . . . If I close my eyes, I have nightmares.'*

Kullapattu is not alone. Seventy-year-old Cheliappan, from Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu, India, had been a fisherman all his life. But he had not anticipated the waves. Now he says, *'Everyone is afraid of dying at sea. Until the day I die, I will not go out in a boat again.'*

Kullapattu, Soolerikattuppam, India
© John Cobb/Help the Aged

RELIEF



© John Cobb/Help the Aged

▲ Distribution of emergency relief immediately following a disaster can be chaotic, as illustrated in Cuddalore, southern India. Older people are sometimes pushed aside. Sri Lankan Perumal, aged 75, did not bother to queue. He said: *'I have been pushed out on earlier occasions and have fallen on the ground. I know I will get nothing this time round too . . . The fastest get the food, the strongest wins. Older people and the injured don't get anything.'*



© John Cobb/Help the Aged

▲ When offering disaster relief, local government and non-governmental organisations must remember that some people may not be able to stand for long periods. Older people and those with mobility problems may miss out on invaluable aid if seats are not provided for those queuing or if alternative distribution systems are not devised. At this relief point in southern India, older people have to stand for hours on end in the scorching heat.

HelpAge India organised a separate distribution of emergency relief for older people. Older people were given a token to bring to the collection point, which they then exchanged for a relief package. Seating was provided while they waited and easy-access transport arranged to and from collection points. ▼



© John Cobb/Help the Aged



© John Cobb/Help the Aged

▲ Emergency food rations and their packaging must be designed so they can be easily carried and opened. The contents must take into account the difficulty that older people may have in chewing, digesting and absorbing nutrients.

HelpAge India designed a relief package that was appropriate for the dietary requirements of older people. It also ensured that the water container and cooking pot being distributed were made of lightweight materials, so they could be easily carried.

The taste of seawater was the first that 100-year-old Aiysha knew of the tsunami. Blind and disabled, she was seated as usual in the doorway of her home in Chennai, India when a wall of water surged up the beach and slammed into her home. As she struggled to her feet, using the doorframe as a brace, Aiysha was immediately whipped up in the swell and carried off down the street.

When she was found, her two children carried their semi-conscious mother to the local hospital. Traumatized and suffering from the effects of swallowing so much seawater, Aiysha could not speak for three days. But she is gradually recovering. She is receiving regular medical assistance from a HelpAge India mobile medicare unit (MMU). The MMU comes to her village once a week to treat her for high blood pressure and an eye infection ►



RECOVERY





◀ When older people are housebound or immobile, they may be unable to access resources and entitlements. However, networks of older people can provide support: by providing basic necessities, such as food and water, or by addressing members' psychological needs.

HelpAge India supports the Meals on Wheels service in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. The service is run by older people themselves. It was set up in 1981 to deliver meals to older people in their own homes. It now provides meals to 242 older people. When the tsunami came, the records of each recipient were invaluable in being able to reach the most vulnerable quickly.

In Indonesia, 70-year-old Sakyan's home was partially destroyed by the tsunami. She used to earn a living by making traditional thatched roofs for her neighbours and the local market. But when homes were rebuilt with tiled roofs she lost her job.

After carrying out a survey in the area to study the impact of post-tsunami damage, we set up a Livelihoods Development Programme for older people. Through this, Sakyan received a cash grant, with which she purchased four goats. The goats provide milk to drink and to sell. And once they breed, Sakyan will be able to sell one of the kids to support herself. ▼



© Peter Caton/Help the Aged



© Shahidul Alam/Help the Aged

▲ Immediately following a disaster, health services must focus on first aid, but in the medium term health services need to respond to the ongoing needs of older people. Walking sticks and frames, hearing aids and glasses can make all the difference in enabling older people to reach distribution points, access assistance, prepare food, or collect firewood for cooking or heating. In Sri Lanka we distributed hearing aids to those who needed them, so recipients could not only communicate but also participate in community life.

In Cuddalore, India, we helped set up a free cardiology screening camp. Housed in a giant wedding hall, the unit brought together five top cardiology surgeons, six junior doctors, four hospital administration staff, two pharmacists and a large number of volunteers and assistants. It is only open between 9am and 2pm, but in that time the team sees 2,500 people. Patients come from all over Cuddalore to receive a free cardiology health check. HelpAge India goes to great lengths to advertise the camp by placing posters in villages and spreading the news through older people's associations. ►



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In Aceh, Indonesia, our partner the Bireuen District Health Office (DHO) had been trying to improve health care for older people before the tsunami struck. It was struggling to do so, due to limited capacity and lack of funds. However, following the tsunami we supported the Bireuen DHO to start a community-based healthcare programme for older people.

We provided technical training to 17 sub-district health offices. Health workers and volunteer health promoters – who are older people themselves – could then offer outreach services in the local area. Dr Mursyidah from the Bireuen DHO says: *'It was such a great opportunity to bring our plans into action. With the collaboration of our partners, things have been functioning very well. Older people can access healthcare services more easily.'*



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REHABILITATION





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◀ Older people often require just small amounts of money to start new ventures. Providing seed capital or access to credit enables older people to re-establish their livelihoods. These funds can be administered by local older people's associations (OPAs), which identify those most in need and whether they should be given a grant or low-interest loan.

In Kandakadu, India, Lakshmi and her husband owned a small plot of land by the river on which they grew crops to feed themselves. When the tsunami struck, the waves washed away the crops and tools and the salty seawater meant nothing could grow until the land was desalinated. Lakshmi needed an instant way to make money so she could feed her family.

HelpAge India gave her a cow, which later produced a calf. From selling the milk she was able to buy onion seeds, grass and bhindi so she could start farming once the land had been desalinated. Three years on, with income from the cow, her calf and the crops, Lakshmi says she and her family have never been happier.

▲ Replacing tools for older people who were working before disaster struck enables them to get back on their feet quickly. In the longer term, facilitating access to credit – often denied to older people by banks – means they can set up businesses again.

If older people can support themselves, they gain independence and respect rather than pity. Others will engage with them rather than resenting them. With a little financial independence they are able to purchase specific goods (such as food) and services (utilities, health care and transport) that enable them to invest their funds in an income-generating activity or for the benefit of children or other dependants in their care.

When the tsunami struck the basket-weaving community of Velipalayam, India, it washed away all the tools, baskets and bamboo. The villagers organised themselves into the Bhavartham Elders' Self-Help Group (ESHG), then applied for grants from HelpAge India so they could restock. The village is now back in business.



© Peter Caton/Help the Aged

▲ Disasters take a heavy psychological toll on older people. Having considered themselves to be active citizens before a disaster, older people can be made to feel 'old' after one. Counselling and community-based activities must include older people and encourage them to actively participate and contribute their experience and skills. Being active can assist the recovery of older people.

Following the tsunami, the Bireuen District Health Office (DHO) expanded its community-based health programme into two further districts in the worst-affected areas in Aceh, Indonesia. Dr Mursyidah from Bireuen's DHO said: *'My dream is to see older people care for themselves and have a happy life with their families.'*

Every month, a mobile health unit provides basic medical check-ups and exercise practice for older people in 170 villages in Bireuen. Following a disaster and the loss of so much, many people lack energy and feel depressed. Encouraging activity can help to improve older people's mental well-being as well as their physical well-being.

Following the tsunami, we helped set up older people's associations (OPAs), providing older people with a place to meet and gain support from each other. The OPAs also run livelihood programmes, providing cash grants and offering advice on how to set up new businesses. OPAs offer older people not just a place where they can be involved in community decision-making, but also a place to meet, which can reduce their isolation and enable them to make new friends and contacts.

Sutrisno, aged 71, is a facilitator of OPAs in Indonesia. He says that before the tsunami, older people rarely gathered together, staying at home to look after grandchildren or going out to earn a living. But *'nowadays, older people have a chance to meet at least once a month, talking about OPA activities and sharing information about their daily lives. It's good to link older people together.'* ►



© Penny Tweedie/Help the Aged

◀ The tsunami washed away most of the businesses in VNC Street, India. The women in the community set up the Mahatma Gandhi Elders' Self-Help Group (ESHG), then applied for a loan from HelpAge India. The women now all run their own businesses – from dairies to dhosa-making, pickles and incense production. Their children and grandchildren depend on this income.

The ESHG is not just a place from which to run a business: all the members have known each other for over 20 years, so they offer mutual support to each other to help them recover from the psychological impact of the tsunami.

But the ESHG does not only help itself: it also funds development projects in the village. Despite the pain and trauma of the tsunami and the terrifying memories with which they will always live, the people have hope. The treasurer of the Mahatma Gandhi ESHG, Panana, said, *'When you have experienced what we have experienced, you lose your fear of death.'*



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DEVELOPMENT



When the tsunami struck Palpanacherry in India, it washed away all the crops, tools and pots as well as destroying the irrigation system. The land was completely saturated with sea water so no crops could grow. With support from HelpAge India, the desalination process began. It took six months to desalinate the land, but three years on the rice crop is almost as productive as it was pre-tsunami.



In Indonesia, 70-year-old Salvia used to run a shop with her husband, but the tsunami changed all that. The huge wave swept away both her husband and her shop. She spent five months in hospital recovering from her injuries. When she returned home, her granddaughter gave her some tarpaulin sheets and bamboo so she could set up a new stall. But Salvia had no money to buy new products.

Then Salvia heard about our cash grant programme via the local older people's association. She received 1.5 million Indonesian rupiah (£80), with which she bought drinks, sweets, nuts, local snacks, eggs, herbs and toiletries. Now she can make a living and has established invaluable friendships with her regular customers. ►



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▲ Balakrishnan, aged 56 (on the far right of the photo), is the leader of the Elders' Self-Help Group in Thalangua, India. The tsunami destroyed his boat, and with it the source of his family's income.

Help the Aged and HelpAge International provided him with a loan so that he could buy a new fishing boat. He now earns enough money from fishing to support his family. Not only can he feed and clothe them, but he can also cover their medical needs when necessary.



© Penny Tweedie/Help the Aged

▲ Older people's associations (OPAs) and Elders' Self-Help Groups (ESHGs) offer older people support to counter loneliness and isolation, gain access to entitlements and have a voice. OPAs may be formed to address particular issues, such as providing credit or building community grain stores; then progress to other matters that interest them, so older people end up campaigning for pensions and free healthcare or lobbying banks for access to savings and loans. They are proving to be a powerful force for change.

In Palpanacherry, India, Lakshmi joined an ESHG so she could meet other people and get a loan. Not only did she replace the stock that had been washed away in the tsunami, but she was able to expand her shop and support her daughter and two grandchildren.



◀ The Mahatma Gandhi Self-Help Group in VNC Street, India, set up new businesses with a grant from HelpAge India and its members can now support their families again. Jane Fearnley-Whittingstall says: *'After the elders' meeting, we drifted down to the beach and the women stood with the waves lapping at the hems of their saris, laughing, joking and splashing one another. Remembering what havoc the sea had wrought in their lives, I couldn't hold back the tears, but one of them, seeing my distress, grasped my hand and raised it, saying with a smile, "Be happy!"'*

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FROM DISASTER TO DEVELOPMENT

After the tsunami struck, we achieved a great deal for more than 200,000 older people in India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. This vital and invaluable work includes:

- providing food and temporary shelter for those who lost their homes and sources of income;
- assisting older people to diversify their sources of income so they could achieve greater financial independence;
- offering rights training for older people to help them access social pensions and other entitlements;
- treating more than 80,000 older people in India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia through our mobile Medicare units (MMUs);
- strengthening older people's associations (OPAs) and Elders' Self-Help Groups (ESHGs) so that older people could come together, share information and support strategies, and set up local savings and loans schemes;
- providing small business loans and credit to 10,000 older people, managed and distributed via OPAs and ESHGs;
- ensuring that local authorities, national governments, international relief organisations and voluntary organisations understand and incorporate the needs of older people into their emergency relief, recovery and rehabilitation work, as well as their long-term development projects.

Over the past decade, approximately 26 million older people have been affected by natural disasters every year. The changing climate, resulting in extremes of temperature and adverse weather conditions, claims disproportionate numbers of older people's lives. Older people are poorly served in such situations, and far more needs to be done to tackle the false assumptions

and discrimination that blight their chances of survival and recovery.

To reduce older people's vulnerability, Help the Aged and HelpAge International involve them at all levels to ensure that their requirements, potential and contributions are appreciated and addressed. This means we can supply direct relief appropriate to older people's needs when disaster strikes.

We can also ensure that our day-to-day work informs and educates other agencies and authorities so that they plan and provide for this growing sector of the population. By 2050 the number of people over 60 years of age worldwide is expected to triple to 1.9 billion. Most of the increase will be in low-income countries, where 80 per cent of older people have no regular income. While increased life expectancy across the world must be celebrated, most older people in developing countries still live on or below the poverty line and face a future of deprivation. Both the needs of older people and their contributions to society deserve a much higher place on the policy agenda.

Our experience of supporting the recovery of older tsunami survivors demonstrates the importance of integrating older people into humanitarian efforts in order to reduce their vulnerability in emergency situations. Our ongoing work allows them to secure a basic income and appropriate housing, and helps them to recover psychologically. As a result, they also gain dignity, a voice and social standing and can contribute to rebuilding their own lives and that of their communities. Ultimately, they are much better equipped to cope with future emergencies.

With your support, we can continue to provide the world's older generations with the means to help themselves – to move from disaster to development.

The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) is the emergency funding mechanism for 13 of the UK's leading aid and relief agencies. The DEC comes together when there is a pressing need for co-ordinated action, when the members have the ability to make a real difference and when there is sufficient public awareness to assume an appeal would succeed. For further information, visit www.dec.org.uk

Help the Aged has a vision of a future where older people are free from the disadvantages of poverty, isolation and neglect, so they can live with dignity as valued, respected and involved members of society. For further information, visit www.helptheaged.org.uk

HelpAge International has a vision of a world in which all older people can lead active, dignified, healthy and secure lives. We work with our partners around the world to ensure that people everywhere understand how much older people contribute to society and must enjoy their rights to healthcare and social services and the economic and physical security they need. For further information, visit www.helpage.org



Help the Aged works in partnership with HelpAge International during times of international emergencies which threaten the lives and livelihoods of older people. Help the Aged is part of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC). The DEC brings together 15 of the UK's lead aid agencies, and other supporters, to launch national appeals during times of major international humanitarian disasters.