

# Mainstreaming age-friendliness

A recapitulation of the collaborative efforts between  
HelpAge International and the British Red Cross Society in Aceh, Indonesia



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## Foreword

Older people have particular needs and capacities and this is often forgotten when implementing recovery programmes. That older people do have the capacity to contribute to, and participate in, recovery programmes is the clear message and experience of HelpAge International and the BRCS partnership documented in this report.

The partnership between the BRCS and HelpAge International in their Indonesia Tsunami Recovery Programme succeeded developing a project approach whereby 91% of households with older people received livelihood grants - with the older person being the main grantee. With the help of HelpAge International staff seconded to the BRCS project offices older people were identified by project teams, their capacities acknowledged and grants made that built on their ability to participate in their communities recovery efforts.

The story of this partnership also shows that whilst organisations may have their own ways of working sufficient common ground can be found to enable project goals to be met. Our partnership was not always easy, but it was successful; it is hoped that the strategies and lessons learned documented in this report will encourage others to forge similar partnerships. This partnership has brought new thinking to our approach to vulnerability and older people and will certainly inform our future recovery programmes.

The positive environment created by capable professionals in the BRCS and HelpAge International was crucial in taking this successful collaboration forward.

Last but not least, one special piece of learning has been that for older people the rebuilding of social capital and social cohesion is as important as the rebuilding of livelihoods. I hope that you will join us in mainstreaming age-friendliness in recovery programmes and that you too will experience and release the power of older people.

David Mathers  
Head of Programmes  
Tsunami Recovery Programme, Indonesia  
British Red Cross Society

Eduardo Klien  
Regional Representative  
HelpAge International  
Asia/Pacific

## Chapter 1: Introduction

In the early hours of December 26, 2004, a Tsunami of giant proportions hit the coasts around the Indian Ocean in one of the worst natural disasters in recent human history.

About 200,000 people perished in Indonesia. Aceh, a province in the northern tip of the Sumatra Island, was one of the worst hit areas. In the provincial capital city of Banda Aceh alone, an estimated 60,000 people lost their lives or were declared missing. The impact was so far-reaching that even after 3 years since the disaster, vast areas of ruined houses and innumerable traces of lost settlements along the coastal line of Aceh are still visible.

Over 400 International Non-governmental Organisations (INGOs) rushed to Banda Aceh to provide immediate relief such as food, water, sanitation, temporary shelter, clothing, and health care. The main interventions for the subsequent rehabilitation stage ranged from providing support to restart income-generating activities and restoring health care and education services to reconstructing houses, roads, schools, bridges, and communication links.

The overwhelming influx of funds and resources brought both hope and concern. The hope, summed up in the BRR slogan<sup>1</sup> “Build Back Better” was shadowed by the concern that the funds were immensely large for agencies to spend in the available timeframe. Large complex multi-sectoral projects had to be implemented within the scope of huge pressure to deliver more in a short time.

In this context, only a few agencies managed to collaborate and complement each other in a productive manner, avoiding wasteful duplications. Why was the cooperation not widespread? Many agencies and NGOs came not only with substantial budgets but also with their own vision, priorities and approaches to handle the emergency situation. It is also fair to say that all agencies faced huge pressure for quick delivery of tangible results making it virtually impossible to devote time to enhance collaboration and form alliances.

Amidst this difficult environment for partnerships to emerge, a successful collaboration took place between HelpAge International and the British Red Cross Society. This collaboration presents one example of partnership where both organisations agreed to collaborate around shared, concrete objectives.

This report documents the story of this unique collaboration, detailing the need for collaboration, and the process in which this was achieved. It details the mode of implementation, components of its planned activities, and the nature of outcomes. The report concludes with comments around the institutional challenges that lie ahead, the replicability of the collaborative process elsewhere as well as with some hints on the direction that the programme should take in the future.

<sup>1</sup> Agency of the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction for the Region and Community of Aceh and Nias (BRR)

## Chapter 2: Forging the alliance

HelpAge International (HAI) is a global network of not-for-profit organisations with a mission to work with and for disadvantaged older people worldwide to achieve a lasting improvement in the quality of their lives. The initial surveys conducted by HelpAge International<sup>2</sup> and UNESCAP<sup>3</sup> in the aftermath of the tsunami confirmed that the tragedy had a particular impact on older people, and that although in general older people were considered as beneficiaries in all relief and rehabilitation programmes, their specific vulnerabilities, needs and capabilities were not recognised and addressed by the emergency operations that followed. It was found that this ignorance and neglect of older peoples' rights in emergencies stemmed from the lack of understanding and expertise of institutions about older peoples' needs and capabilities.

Moreover, in its influential advocacy publication titled "Older people in Aceh, Indonesia, 18 Months After the Tsunami", HelpAge International brought out the ground-level reality of the extent of neglect of older people in the emergency programmes in Indonesia. The same view was echoed in the Disaster Emergency Committee's evaluation report<sup>4</sup>. Largely unnoticed by the responding agencies, older people however continued to be extremely resilient in rebuilding their lives and inconspicuously contributed to the rehabilitation of the communities.

Therefore, HelpAge International decided to launch an advocacy programme, aiming to influence, capacitate and support institutions working on tsunami rehabilitation, with a focus on Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) agencies, to promote age sensitivity and ensure the inclusion of older people in partners' programmes. Thus, HAI-BAO sought partners in Aceh to realise its aim by approaching various DEC-funded agencies and other organisations and sensitising them on age-friendliness.

The British Red Cross Society (BRCS) is a member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and is working for the relief and rehabilitation of people and communities affected by the tsunami through shelter, livelihood, social protection and DRR programmes. The BRCS, in its first phase of activity that began in March 2005, launched a cash grants programme under which beneficiaries were each offered grants of IDR 10 million (approximately US \$ 1000) to re-establish their livelihoods. Extra cash grants were offered to orphans and single-parent families based on participatory vulnerability identification. The BRCS programme was aimed at "kick-starting" and re-establishing income-generating activities. In about 19 months, the BRCS disbursed cash grants to about 6,500 households to start small businesses or create small assets for animal husbandry, agriculture or fishing activities. The focus of the programme was to support tsunami affected families without giving specific focus to vulnerable groups or individuals.

However, the BRCS's approach gained a new perspective from the review report of the first phase of its cash grant programme. The review report pointed out that "the poor, the disabled, the elderly and those whose lands have been severely damaged form 50 percent of the vulnerable population. Special attention needs to be given to these categories in the future<sup>5</sup>." The report further stated: "many vulnerable groups such as Women, Aged and Disabled could not use the grants effectively in the absence of targeted support which is required by such groups." This prompted the BRCS to rehabilitate communities with a special focus on vulnerable groups such as disabled, older people and women in the next phase of the project. Thus, the BRCS started looking for specific technical knowledge on targeting and working with the recommended vulnerable groups. Learning about HAI-BAO's programme, the BRCS realised that HelpAge International's expertise on working with older people could be used as part of their intention to include older people. Therefore, rather than reinventing the wheel, they decided to accept the proposal for collaboration made by HAI and use its technical support on the inclusion of older people.

**2** *Impact of Asian Tsunami on Older people in Indonesia: A case study on older people on Nias Island*, Prof. Nugroho Abikusno, InResAge, Jakarta. Funded by HelpAge International

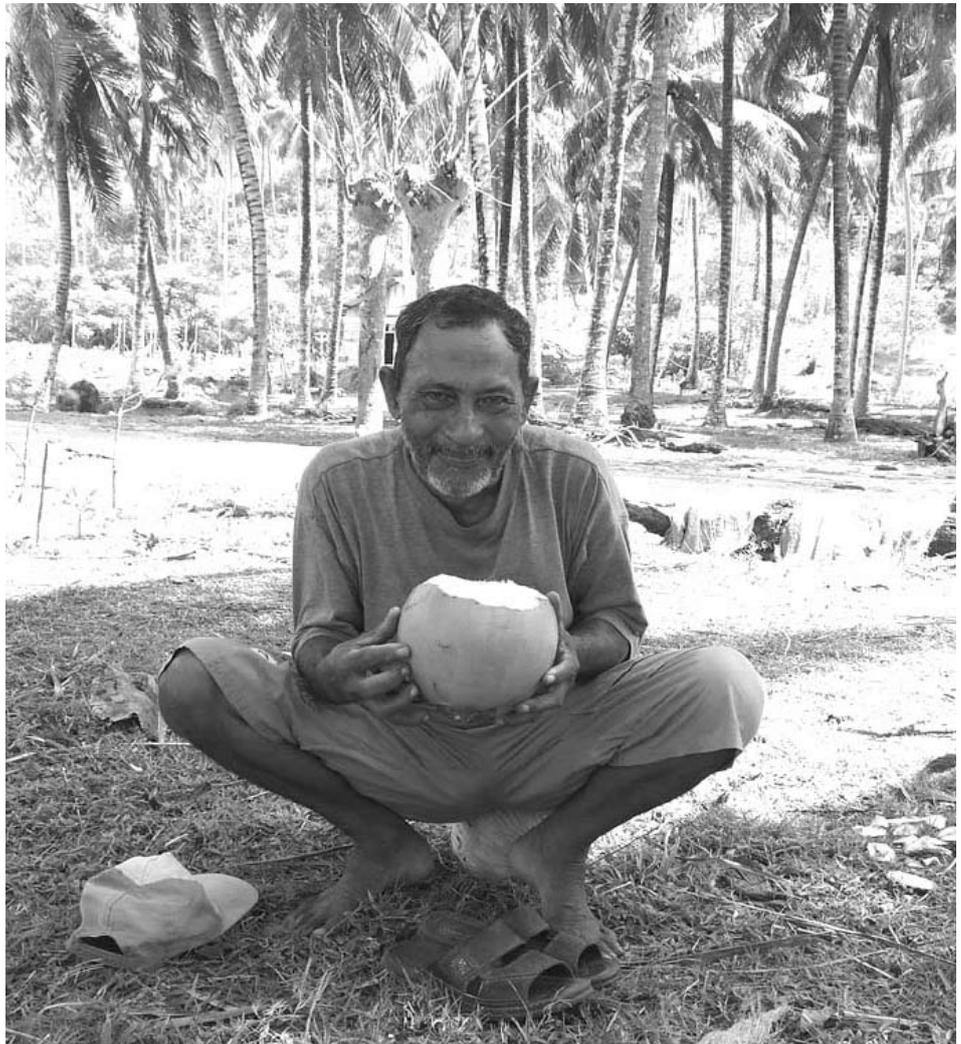
**3** *A study of affected people in Banda Aceh*, by Eva A.J. Sabdono (YEL) and Lilis Heir (University of Indonesia). Funded by UNESCAP's research in Indonesia.

**4** *Independent Evaluation of the DEC tsunami Crisis Response*, Disasters Emergency Committee (2005)

**5** *Review of the Cash Grants Programme of the BRCS Indonesia Tsunami Recovery Programme*, October 2006 (emphasis added)

After a series of preliminary consultations it became clear that the goals, interests and mindsets of the two organisations converged. While the BRCS was looking for technical help to include older people in their programme at the grassroots level, HelpAge International was seeking partners to collaborate with and to provide technical advice to ensure that older people are treated as legitimate stakeholders in development. The mutual interests of the organisations, their openness to innovation, and the regular meetings of the organisation's management resulted in the formation of an alliance to work together on the BRCS livelihood programme, followed by the BRCS' shelter and DRR programmes. Thereafter, the story of a unique partnership began to unfold.

'The tsunami severely damaged my land and covered it with debris and dirt. I own 4 hectares of land, and I cleaned it all myself!'



**Bukhari KU (73) has used the BRCS Livelihood Grant to buy seeds and build a fence around his land where he grows coconuts. Deudap village, Pulo Nasi island, Aceh Besar.**

## Chapter 3: Working together for the welfare of older people

Both HelpAge International (HAI-BAO) and the British Red Cross Society (BRCS) agreed that in order for age-friendliness to be mainstreamed in the programme, the partnership should take place at all levels and at all stages of the programme cycle. Even before a formal cooperation agreement was signed, HAI-BAO was already working with the BRCS on age-friendly project design. Throughout the project, regular meetings took place between the management of both organisations to discuss any issues related to older people.

But the partnership was not limited to providing technical advice and orientation to the senior management of the BRCS Livelihood Programme. To ensure the genuine inclusion of older people in the programme, it was deemed essential for HelpAge International to have a presence at field level as well. Therefore, it was agreed that three HelpAge International field coordinators would work full time with the BRCS in the field. This chapter provides an overview of the different phases of collaboration between the BRCS and HAI-BAO.

### Phase I: Recognition of the vulnerabilities and capacities of older people

As outlined above, the BRCS had resolved to focus the next phase of its tsunami rehabilitation programme on assisting women and older people. The organisation called upon HAI-BAO to recommend the best strategies to do so. Initially, while the BRCS livelihoods strategy was still being developed, it was considered that older people would be better off receiving a “social grant”, which would be a single cash injection, to support their special needs.

However, HelpAge International’s worldwide experience clearly demonstrates that older people have the capacity and willingness to initiate or restart livelihoods after a disaster. This is no different in post-tsunami Aceh. HAI-BAO’s livelihood research conducted in Aceh in 2006 revealed that before the tsunami a large proportion of older people were engaged in income generating activities. Owing to the lack of support for older people in post-tsunami recovery work, many of them engaged themselves in trading, followed by farming and livestock rearing. The research further concludes: “Many older people feel that others don’t recognise the contribution they make to the family both in terms of reproduction and production activities; they are frequently disappointed, frustrated and isolated.”<sup>6</sup>

During several strategic planning meetings with the BRCS, HAI-BAO made presentations on the needs, vulnerabilities and specific contribution of older people to the livelihood of their families. This helped the BRCS to finalise a strategy which included older people as a specific vulnerable group to receive livelihood grants. However, for those older people who were unable or unwilling to take up any livelihood activity, a social grant would be available.

<sup>6</sup> *Livelihood and Older People in Aceh: A need for inclusion in rehabilitation*, (March 2007)

## **Older People in Aceh, Indonesia - 18 months after the Tsunami: Issues and recommendations**

- In emergencies, older people find that the problems they face are compounded by the devastation to their families and communities. This may include the loss of the support mechanisms on which they had relied.
- The tsunami in Aceh had a profound impact on older people. In addition to the dramatic loss of life and assets, HelpAge International's research discovered a pronounced loss of vitality amongst many older people – as if their attitude towards life had changed.
- Many older people expressed a strong desire to go back to work, especially because the tsunami had pushed their family deeper into poverty. In fact, the lack of a sustainable livelihood is the main concern of older people who have lost family members that previously supported them.
- It was frequently observed that older people had little or no knowledge about the rehabilitation options for livelihoods being implemented in their community.
- The relief and rehabilitation operations failed to consider older people as actors for rehabilitation and development. As a result, older people remained passive recipients of relief and unable to rehabilitate their livelihoods.
- The needs and capabilities of older people affected by emergencies warrant special attention from the humanitarian agencies providing assistance. However, such special attention has rarely been given. Most organisations rely on a 'blanket approach' that assumes older people benefit from their interventions and thus direct targeting is not required.
- As has often been cited, the tsunami rehabilitation effort is a chance to 'build back better'. This also applies to the situation of older people. It provides an opportunity to support and build up the capabilities of older people to lift themselves out of poverty.
- Supporting older people as legitimate actors in development will not only help reduce poverty levels (at individual and household levels) but it also enables older people to make decisions on issues that affect their daily lives.
- Experience shows that targeting older people as direct beneficiaries is a very effective way to make older people's needs and capacities more visible, promote intergenerational solidarity and empower older people.

## Phase II: Age-friendly data collection

Age-friendly project design starts with including and consulting older people in data collection. Disaggregated data about older people must be included in any data collection and assessment. Therefore, the BRCS invited HAI-BAO to ensure the age-friendliness of their data collection tools.

HAI-BAO strengthened the BRCS data collection tools to ensure that during the collection of baseline data, segregation between 60+ and 70+ occurred. Furthermore, HAI-BAO urged that separate Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with older people should be held in every village. The FGDs serve to give the older people a clear forum through which to articulate their needs to the BRCS. It also gave the BRCS staff an opportunity to meet with the older people and understand their specific concerns and vulnerabilities.

### Principles of Good Practice

1. Data collection and assessment: Older people must be included in data collection and assessments: a) basic data needs to be collected and disaggregated by age and gender as the basis for evidence-based interventions and b) assessments must highlight the specific needs, vulnerabilities, capacities and priorities of older people.
2. Older people are legitimate stakeholders for development: At all stages of a project cycle, older people must be informed, consulted, encouraged to participate and provided enabling conditions for their empowerment. It is important to recognise older people as active participants in, for example, livelihood initiatives, social protection approaches and disaster preparedness planning.
3. Older people need to be specifically targeted: Humanitarian organisations need to provide specialised interventions for older people as a specific target group and to promote and integrate age-friendly modalities and components into all their interventions.
4. Mainstream ageing: Ageing issues need to be integrated into organisational policies and practices. This requires more awareness of the particular problems and obstacles that older people encounter, changes in attitudes amongst humanitarian workers, increased knowledge and skills in addressing issues of ageing, developing age-friendly policies and allocating resources.

Source: *"Older People in Aceh, Indonesia, 18 Months After the Tsunami, Issues and Recommendations."*  
HelpAge International, 2006.

HAI-BAO also emphasised that the voices of people with mobility problems who are unable to attend the FGD should not be left out. Individual interviews should be held with those people. Due to time constraints faced by the BRCS, the HAI-BAO field coordinators were asked to conduct the FGDs and individual interviews with older people. This was done in all 33 villages of the BRCS project area. The results of the FGDs and personal interviews were discussed in the weekly the BRCS meetings at field level, and shared to incorporate in the BRCS baseline assessment.



Fatimah Abbas (58) is living in Jambo Masie village, Aceh Jaya and has started up a business of traditional handicraft with the help of the BRCS Livelihood Grant. "I sell my handicraft every week at Lamno market, it's good business!"

## What is age-friendly data-collection?

1. Age-specific data: When collecting demographic data of the project area, differentiate not only between the old and the young, but also between the 'young-old' and the 'old-old.'
2. Focus Group Discussions (FGD): With older people (separate meetings for men and women, depending on the cultural context) to understand their specific needs and concerns.
3. Individual interviews: With older people who are unable to attend FGD.

*Note: see Annex 1 for examples of age-friendly data collection formats*

## Phase III: Including older people in representative bodies

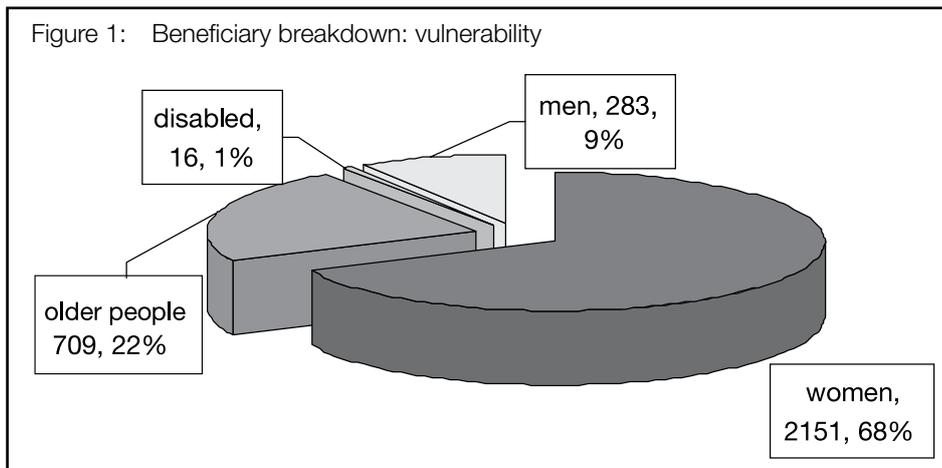
The Village Development Forums have been formed by the BRCS in every project village to ensure the consent and participation of the community in each and every project intervention. Since the project was focusing on older people, the BRCS deemed it important that older people were also represented in these bodies. Even with limited time to work on ascertaining adequate representation of older people, 45% of the VDFs have older people as committee members.

## Phase IV: Working together at the field level

### a. Individual livelihood programme

The BRCS grants programme consisted of three components: individual livelihood grants, group livelihood grants and community grants. The individual livelihood grants programme was primarily targeted at women and older people. These groups were invited to develop proposals to recover their livelihoods.

Three HAI-BAO field coordinators worked directly with the BRCS in the field to assist them in including older people in the livelihood programme. They supported the BRCS in several ways. First, during training of the BRCS staff about the implementation of the livelihood programme, HelpAge International field coordinators provided orientation to all the BRCS field staff and volunteers on ageing. Second, they were involved in motivating older people to re-establish their livelihoods, and supported them in preparing their livelihood proposals. Third, HelpAge International field coordinators acted as a focal point for older people's issues and provided linkages between the BRCS staff and older people. For example, the BRCS staff consulted HelpAge International field coordinators when they were not sure about the livelihood options for an older person. Moreover, HelpAge International field coordinators contributed in identifying barriers to the smooth implementation of the programme for older people. For instance, they discovered that opening bank accounts and withdrawing money posed a significant problem for many older people. Subsequently, they provided extra assistance to older people to go to the bank and withdraw money.



### b. Group Grant Programme

After the process of collecting and approving individual cash grants was completed, the BRCS started the Group Grant Programme. The BRCS supported the people to form new groups or reinvigorate existing groups for income generating activities. Group grant projects were for the collective benefit of group members and the profits of group activity could either be shared among the group members or reinvested in group activity.

Initially, the participation of older people in the groups was very limited. One important reason was that the older people who had already received individual livelihood support were often less interested in pursuing another livelihood activity. Another issue was that a lot of the group activities were physically demanding, such as fishing and rice cultivation. There were also institutional barriers towards the participation of older people in the groups. Field staff were less focused on including older people in this part of the programme, and also within the community there was sometimes resistance towards including older people in groups.

Subsequently, strategies to include older people in the livelihood groups were developed and implemented. HelpAge International field coordinators and BRCS staff increased their efforts to include older people in the Group Grants Programme. Moreover, older people were encouraged to form groups consisting of only older people, pursuing activities that were specifically suited to them. As a result, the membership of older people in the groups increased, and three groups consisting exclusively of older people were formed.



Group of older people jointly discussing their Group Grant Proposal, Lhuet village, Aceh Jaya.

### Older people jointly producing patchouli oil

In Lhuet Village in Aceh Jaya district, three groups consisting solely of older people have been formed to take part in the BRCS livelihood programme. All these groups will focus on producing patchouli oil. The area is traditionally famous for producing this oil.

HelpAge International 's involvement has been instrumental in forming these groups. Tgk. Rasali, the leader of one of the groups, explained: "We are very happy that Yudi [field coordinator, HAI-BAO] came to our village to explain us that we could form groups and receive assistance from the BRCS. Before he came to us, we didn't know about this." Others indicated that they knew about it, but they had understood that they would not be eligible for it since they had already received an individual grant from the BRCS.

The groups consist of around 18 people each. In each group there are some people who have experience with producing patchouli oil. "But we want to enhance their skills to enable them to sell the oil for a high price to the big commercial market. This is why we will also provide trainings to the groups," Mr. Cipto, BRCS Area Coordinator explained.

Some of the people in the groups are very old, and many suffer from weakness and health problems. They are not able to do the hard work on the land. These people have agreed with their younger family members to work on the land for them. So, although the groups consist only of older people, the younger community members are also involved in the activity. These arrangements reinforce the bonds between generations, and stimulate the children to look after their parents.

"I have been growing patchouli for a long time. Now I will be able to use this experience in the BRCS Group Grant project. Also, I will be able to share my knowledge with my son and teach him how to make patchouli oil. I am already 80 years old and not able to work on the land in the hills anymore. So I have agreed with my son that he will assist me in working on the land. After the oil is sold, I will share the profit with my son." said Nyak Sandang, 77 years old, Treasurer of Sentosa Livelihood Group.



Three Livelihood Groups  
exclusively for older people,  
Lhuet Village, Aceh Jaya.

## Phase V: Working together on DRR

A further element introduced in the BRCS programme was the integration of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) with the livelihood programme. The aim of the DRR programme was to build resilience within communities against disaster impacts through an integrated approach of community-based disaster preparedness, disaster mitigation and disaster response mechanisms. DRR also aims at empowering the local community to minimise the effect of disasters such as floods, earthquakes and tsunamis. Its activities include building of evacuation routes, supply of first aid kits and food containers, growing of coastal plantations and developing Community Based Action Teams (CBAT).

Older people are more vulnerable when a disaster strikes, and therefore need special consideration in disaster preparedness planning. But rather surprisingly, they are not listed as a vulnerable group in most DRR programmes. Most organisations assume that only women and children require special assistance in case of an emergency. HelpAge International strives for the inclusion of older people as vulnerable groups in the DRR programmes of its partners. In continuation of the agreement signed between the BRCS and HAI-BAO to work together on livelihoods, the two organisations formally agreed to cooperate on DRR as well. Under this agreement, HAI-BAO provided technical support to the DRR programme to ensure the effective participation and integration of older people, making sure that their specific needs are recognised and addressed at all stages of the programme cycle.

Accordingly, HAI-BAO provided support encouraging the representation of older people in the CBATs. A training programme focusing on the vulnerability of older people and other vulnerable groups was designed, which was delivered to all CBATs. This training oriented the CBAT members on the concept of vulnerability and the need to acknowledge older people as vulnerable.

In the DRR planning by the BRCS, the village mapping plan specifically defines older people as a vulnerable group. This means that houses where older people live will be marked as such, and that the names of all older people will be listed. These maps and lists will be updated at least once a year. Within each CBAT, one person will be designated as responsible for evacuating the older people in case of an emergency.

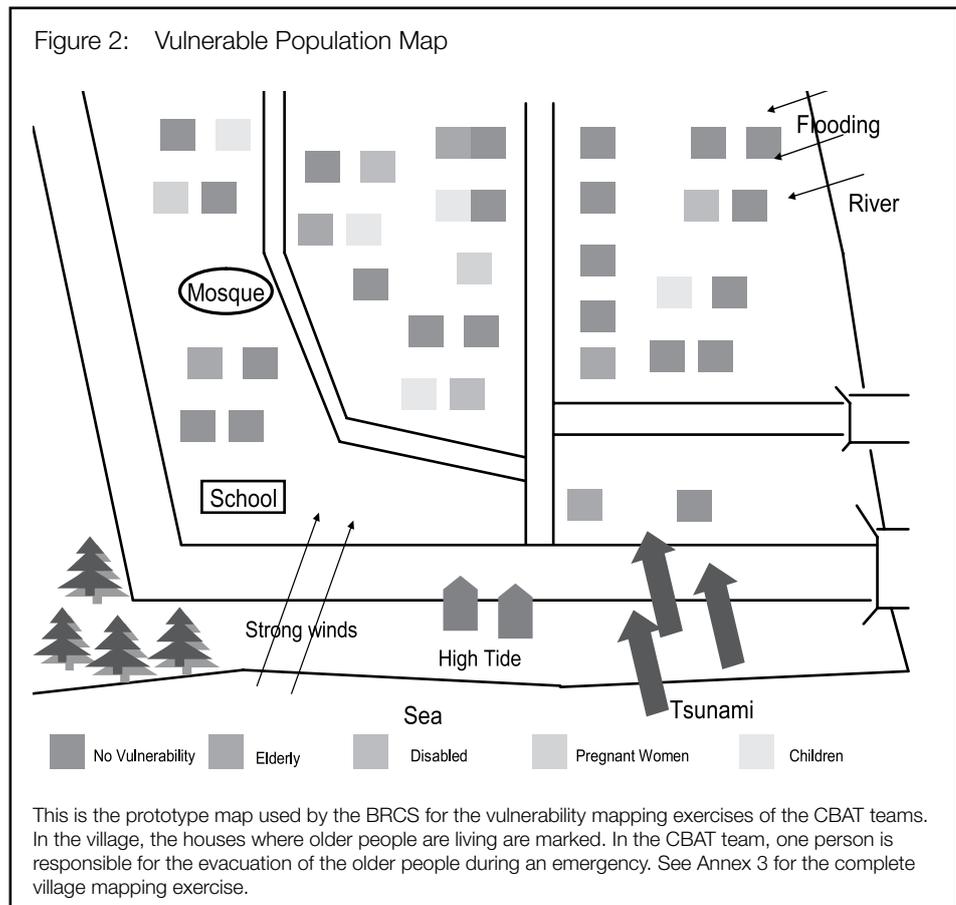
The DRR plan outlined above has already been implemented by the BRCS in a few villages. The response from the CBAT members to the DRR plan has been very positive, and as this document is being written, the implementation of the DRR plan is underway in the rest of the targeted villages.



Aisyah Utolya (76) and Fatimah Bintimakam (58) both suffer from health problems and are not able to work on the land. Still they are members of one of the groups making patchouli oil.

‘I made an agreement with my cousin, he will do the work on the land for me, and after the oil is sold, we will share the profit.’

*Aisyah, 76 years old*



### Phase VI: A focus on age-friendly shelter

Most of the villages of the BRCS project area were largely destroyed by the tsunami. By now, the majority of the people who have lost their homes have been provided with a new house. However, older people have reported some problems in their new living environment. Some aspects of the new houses have been found to be not age-friendly. For instance, older people complained about the staircase that was built in some of the new houses, which was steep and slippery. In August 2007, the BRCS and HAI-BAO sought to assist the tsunami-affected older people in improving the quality of their lives by assisting them to improve their housing conditions. The target beneficiaries were older people in 37 villages where the BRCS was working.

To assist the BRCS, HAI-BAO prepared an assessment of houses that were already constructed and handed over to tsunami victims. The survey has not assessed the design or quality of the new houses, but has used the experience of old people as a point of reference instead. The older people have reported several problems in terms of access to their houses, lack of adequate cooking facilities and kitchens, and access to safe drinking water. On the basis of the findings of this report, a technical assessment will be conducted to determine what interventions are required.

## Age Friendly shelter

H. Ali is 75 years old and lives with his wife in a new house which is built on the fundamentals of their old house, which was destroyed by the tsunami. Asked whether they are living comfortably in this new house, his wife laughed pensively. "Tear it down, and build us a good house", she exclaimed. Ali scratched a bit on the woodwork near the door, and showed us a hand full of pulverised wood. Even though this house is less than two years old, the woodwork is already disintegrating.

The assessment of age-friendly housing carried out by HAI-BAO has revealed that low quality of the housing is not the only issue in Jangeut village. Access to clean drinking water also poses a problem for the older people in this village. Generally, the water from the well has a rusty colour. People are reluctant to even use the water to wash themselves. Some people have resorted to buying drinking water. Others, especially older people who have generally less financial means, have no option but to drink the dirty water.

H. Ali has come up with an inventive solution: he has created a rainwater harvesting system himself. He attached a pipe that collects rainwater to his roof. The water is directed to the water reservoir in the bathroom. "This provides us with enough water during the rainy season. Now only in the dry season sometimes we need to use the dirty water from the well," said H. Ali.

## Impact

The partnership between HelpAge International and the BRCS stemmed from the need to reach out to older people whose lives were severely affected by the tsunami. Thus, the partnership has far reaching impacts on the lives of the older people of Aceh province as many of them were able to step in and benefit from the BRCS's livelihood and DRR programmes. Without the partnership, this would not have happened to such a great extent. The partnership has also left an impact on the two organisations as it demonstrated a deeper level of advocacy and collaboration and has shown the way for future collaborations.

At the institutional level, the partnership has created greater sensitivity within the BRCS on ageing and has provided interesting insights to HelpAge International on working with older people. Following the sensitisation of the BRCS, the process of needs-assessment for the community has been more age-friendly; the needs and vulnerabilities of older people have been better recognised; and the management of the BRCS has greater understanding about the issues of older people. The partnership has also created a prototype for future replication.

The older people affected by the tsunami were as much in need of support from relief and rehabilitation programmes as other vulnerable groups. In addition, the older people were also in need of specialised care specific to their needs. Through the partnership between HAI and the BRCS, age-sensitivity was adopted into the BRCS's livelihood programmes, and thus more older people could be covered by this programme. The BRCS analysis states that after the partnership took effect there was an increase in the total number of older people covered by the BRCS's livelihood programme (from 9% to 22%). The analysis further says that 91% of the households with older people have been covered by the livelihood programme, with older people as main grantees. Thus, the programme has clearly shown that older people have the required interest and capacity to be a part of the livelihood programme. Similarly, the incorporation of older people's opinions and needs in the DRR planning of the BRCS has resulted in an age-friendly DRR programme.



This house has been newly built after the tsunami in traditional Acenese style. With its steep stairs it is difficult for older people to enter.

### **Impact from the collaboration between HAI-BAO and the BRCS**

- (1) The needs and vulnerabilities of older people were recognised and prioritised in one of the biggest livelihood programmes in the tsunami rehabilitation programme in Aceh.
- (2) The BRCS' assessment process became age-friendly.
- (3) Targeted management and staff members of the BRCS have a better understanding of issues related to older people as evidenced by their attempt to include older people in their programmes.
- (4) These programmes also reflect the interest and the needs of the older people, more so for the cash grant programmes.
- (5) 91% of the older people in the households that have registered with the BRCS have received livelihood support, reinforcing their capacities to contribute to the community.
- (6) The vulnerabilities of older people during emergencies have been recognised in the DRR planning in 17 villages
- (7) The partnership has created a model for mainstreaming ageing into relief and rehabilitation programmes.
- (8) The partnership has created a clear option for strengthening the collaboration between the two institutions, at central and country levels.
- (9) The partnership has provided additional insights on working with older people in livelihood programmes to HelpAge International.
- (10) The partnership has created a prototype for HelpAge International on mainstreaming age-friendliness into partners' programmes and has paved the way for collaborations between the BRCS and other INGOs.

## Chapter 4: The Collaboration and its lessons

The partnership between the British Red Cross Society (BRCS) and HelpAge International (HAI-BAO) in Aceh, Indonesia has been one of a kind. It gave an opportunity to share and learn from each other on the various aspects of the collaboration. While it brought out challenges, it also led to the emergence of certain good practices that can be followed in future collaborations.

### A. Challenges

In every project there are challenges which have to be overcome. Since this collaboration was new for both partners, there were specific challenges which were new to both organisations. Timely recognition of these challenges and finding ways to counter most of these was one of the factors in making the partnership a success.

#### Institutional challenges

##### Fitting into the scheme of things

HelpAge International set up its office in Banda Aceh with an overarching goal for advocating and ensuring the inclusion of older people in the programmes of various INGOs working on the tsunami rehabilitation phase. Therefore, for HAI-BAO, it was of paramount importance to achieve the goal of mainstreaming age-friendliness into partners' programmes. However, for the BRCS mainstreaming age-friendliness was just a part of a larger programme i.e. livelihood grants for vulnerable groups. Therefore, for HAI-BAO, in the initial phase of the programme, it was very important to ensure that its goal was properly internalised and met by the BRCS, otherwise the very purpose behind HAI's presence in Aceh would have failed. Thanks to the BRCS's cooperation and sensitive dealings, HAI-BAO could accomplish its goal, but the pressure of successful advocacy on singular issues in large multi-faceted programmes can pose a challenge for any similar partnership.

##### Defining roles and responsibilities

As a result of numerous meetings between the senior management of the two organisations, there was a clear understanding between them about their respective roles and responsibilities. But in subsequent months it became a challenge to create clear understanding at the field level about the exact nature of HAI-BAO's role.

For instance, HAI and the BRCS management were in agreement that the role of HAI-BAO field coordinators should be facilitating and advisory rather than implementing. HelpAge International staff were to act as resource persons on older people's issues, supporting the BRCS in targeting older people in their programme. Their tasks were diverse and changed quickly during the subsequent phases of the programme. Communicating the exact roles and responsibilities of HAI field coordinators to the field level turned out to be a challenge, resulting in confusion amongst the BRCS field staff about what exactly to expect from HAI-BAO.

To create clear understanding among all stakeholders about the role of HelpAge International in the BRCS programme, a number of discussions were organised at field level. Based on these discussions, clear job descriptions of HAI staff working with the BRCS were prepared and circulated among all stakeholders. Extra care was taken to ensure that decisions taken at management level were communicated to the field level.

'During the first months of the collaboration, we did not really know what exactly the role of HelpAge International staff at our field office was. But later on we figured it out together and the support we received from the staff in working with older people proved to be very helpful.'

Mr. Cipto, Area Coordinator  
BRCS, Aceh Jaya.

‘The support of HAI Staff has been instrumental in bringing in the focus on older people. But I think we would have benefited even more if we had received more training on the needs and capabilities of older people, and how to work with them’

Ms. Rustinah,  
Area Coordinator BRCS

### Coordination

As part of the collaboration, three field coordinators from HAI-BAO worked full time with the BRCS in the field as part of the livelihood programme. This arrangement brought with it challenges in coordination and communication. At first, HAI staff were only reporting to HelpAge International management and there were no systems for information sharing in place. In order to create maximum transparency and accountability, reporting lines were adjusted. It was decided that HelpAge International staff working with the BRCS would communicate and discuss its work plans and progress reports with both their line manager at HAI-BAO and the regional coordinators at the BRCS. Furthermore, it was agreed to have regular management meetings for coordination and information sharing.

### Sensitising field staff

As outlined above, HAI-BAO field coordinators provided orientation on ageing to BRCS field staff at the early stages of the programme. This orientation was helpful in increasing the understanding of the BRCS field staff about the focus of this programme and the collaboration with HAI-BAO. But the experience of the following months showed that their understanding about the special needs and capacities of older people was still limited.

### Programmatic Challenges

#### Appropriateness of livelihood support for the very old

The BRCS programme has proven once more that older people are both able and willing to pursue livelihood activities and therefore should always be included in any livelihood programme. But although almost all older people in the project area have received livelihood support, in some cases the question arose whether this kind of support was most suitable for them. Some of the very old and fragile might have benefited more from some kind of social grant rather than livelihood support.

#### Is livelihood support always appropriate for older people?

Nek Maram, 80 years old, is a widow and lives alone in Mukhan Village in Aceh Jaya. She has 3 married sons who live in the neighbouring Banda Aceh. Even before the tsunami, she had been weak and it was her husband who took care of her. But her husband was killed by the tsunami.

Nek Maram is skilled in handicrafts and makes articles such as baskets, carpets, and bags from natural materials. However, she is not using her skills to earn a regular income because she needs others' support to fetch raw materials and to sell her products. When the BRCS staff came to identify her livelihood needs and offered to support her with individual grant, her initial response was, "I would rather like to get some money to buy food and medicines. I don't have much time left. Now is the time for praying and devotion."



The BRCS Field Officer asked for the advice of HAI-BAO's field coordinator. The latter suggested preparing a proposal with Nek Maram that would enable her to take up her handicraft as a livelihood activity. The local community agreed to sell the products on her behalf. Nek Maram was now very happy to have become one of the grant beneficiaries of BRCS. Now that she had become one of the beneficiaries to receive the grant from BRCS, she said: "I am happy with the support that I will receive." But still, Nek Maram kept wondering: "Who can help me to get a mattress to sleep on?"

### Membership of older people in representative bodies

The BRCS has set up two community based bodies: the Village Development Forum (VDF) and the Community Based Action Teams (CBAT). Unfortunately, membership of older people in both these institutions has remained low. Time constraints and work pressure within the BRCS and HAI-BAO are important reasons for the lack of inclusion of older people in these community based organisations.

Older people often need a bit more encouragement to step forward and become a member of an organisation. In the future, more care should be taken to ensure that older people receive that extra attention and stimulation.

### Supporting (older) people with no identity cards

In post-conflict and post-tsunami Aceh many people do not have identity cards, or possess identity cards with incorrect personal data. One of the eligibility criteria for support from the BRCS was that people should have valid identity cards. Older people especially had difficulty meeting this criteria. In the future for similar projects, providing extra assistance to people in obtaining the needed documents from government agencies could be considered.

## B. Good Practices

The collaboration between HAI-BAO and the BRCS has been based on certain strategies that have evolved as good practices over time. These good practices are handy tips that can be applied by organisations aiming at similar collaborations as occurred between HAI-BAO and the BRCS.

The good practices have been divided into two parts: institution building and programme building. Institution building focuses on the good practices for forging partnership in the context in which the partnership between HelpAge International and the BRCS was formed. Programme building recapitulates the good practices to incorporate older people within the scope of programmatic intervention, namely livelihood and DRR.

### Institution Building

#### Sensitising an organisation and building a relationship

- In building a relationship with an organisation and sensitising it, the point of contact should be properly identified. Ideally, the head of programmes and the subject specialist delegates should be approached first, with a proper introduction in which both organisations get a clear understanding about each other.
- There should be meetings involving the relevant staff members from both organisations. In these meetings, presentations on the issues concerning partnership and knowledge should be shared. These presentations give a good opportunity to provide and disseminate information from research that has been conducted on the concerned issues.
- While building the relationship, avenues for mutually complementing each other should be sought rather than making each other feel at fault for not incorporating strategies earlier on the issues around which the partnership is to be built.
- To give adequate effect to the efforts of sensitisation, the information from both organisations must percolate to all levels of management.
- The basis of the partnership should fit properly into the programmes of both partners.

### Communication

- There should be a core group of people involved in communication and coordination so that the process of partnership is institutionalised and is not person-specific.
- The roles and responsibilities of both the partners should be clarified and documented at the outset.
- It is important to stay patient throughout the process of the partnership as the pressure of work on both partners can be tremendous, leading to delays in carrying out tasks.
- Transparent systems of information sharing between both partners based on mutual trust that the information shared between partners will not be misused should be in place.
- Regular review meetings should be conducted between both partners so that progress is reviewed in a timely fashion.

### Coordination

- Staff at field level can be placed alongside the partner's staff so that there is a proper and consistent channel for providing technical assistance to the partner organisation.
- Placing staff alongside partner's staff at the field level also helps the trickling down of information and proper implementation of tasks.
- It is important to recruit competent staff who will be placed with partner's staff. The staff should properly understand the objectives and components of the partnership so that there is no scope for confusion and misgivings.
- A proper system of accountability should be in place so that the reporting line for all the staff involved in the partnership is clear.

### Legacy

- The process of partnership, its achievements and lessons learned should be properly documented and circulated so that the partnership is institutionalised and leaves a legacy with both partners.
- The impact on the target groups should be appropriately documented so that both partners and other organisations see the difference that such a partnership can make to the concerned issue.

## Programme Building for Older People

### Assessment

- A thorough assessment of the status of older people in the target community is needed so that older people can be incorporated in particular programmes.
- In the assessment, one should distinguish between the "young-old" and "old-old" so that the needs and vulnerabilities of these two groups can be assessed more precisely and accurately.
- Ensure that focus group discussions are conducted with older people and personal interviews with older people that have mobility problems
- The views of older people with disability or mobility problems should be incorporated.
- Ensure the adequate representation and participation of older women in the process.

### Livelihood

- Older people often need additional attention and encouragement to overcome their specific barriers and participate in livelihood programmes. Thus, specific attention and encouragement should be given to older people, otherwise they may not be able to properly participate.
- Older people have specific choices in livelihood options. These choices must be recognised and acknowledged while designing livelihood programmes.
- Older people also need attention and assistance at various levels of implementation of a livelihood project. For instance, they need help with paperwork, opening bank accounts, familiarisation with processes such as ATM card, and so forth. Therefore, provision should be made to assist older people with various factors as listed above.

### Disaster Risk Reduction

- All vulnerable groups, including older people, should be included in the mapping exercises.
- It is imperative to have the representation of older people in the Community Based Action Teams that are specially trained in DRR interventions.
- The CBAT (or any such community based team) members should be properly oriented and sensitised about the needs and the vulnerabilities of older people.
- It is a good practice to have specific volunteers in charge of a particularly vulnerable person so that during crises volunteers know whom to assist.
- The list of vulnerable groups from a particular community should be updated on a regular basis.

‘When you work with older people, you need to take more time explain them exactly what the programme is about. This is especially important for motivating women to take part in the programme.’

Yudi, field coordinator  
Aceh, Indonesia



HelpAge International field coordinator, Yudi, facilitates a group discussion about the BRCS group grant programme

## Chapter 5: Future directions

The partnership that unfolded in Aceh between HAI-BAO and the BRCS has not only been successful in mainstreaming age-friendliness into the BRCS's programme but has also paved the way for future collaborations. This partnership has also been instrumental in setting the ball rolling for further advocacy to mainstream ageing at various institutional levels. The following are recommendations for future directions:

**At the local level:** In the specific context of Aceh, where the collaboration started, the strategies from this partnership can be further implemented in other government and non-government projects. The process of age-friendly data collection or needs assessment and mainstreaming of ageing are two aspects that can be adopted or internalised by different NGOs/INGOs and government agencies working in Aceh. This partnership can be further replicated elsewhere.

In the general context of working at local level, the model for this collaboration (as explained in Part III) and the good practices (Part IV) can be replicated in any country where the scope for such a partnership as this one exists. However, country specific dynamics must be considered before venturing into a partnership.

**At the international level:** This partnership calls for greater advocacy at the international level so that the good practices that have emerged from this collaboration reach a larger audience. Both HelpAge International and the BRCS can consult further to set up a system for mainstreaming age-friendliness into the BRCS's overall programme interventions. At the same time, HelpAge International can take the good practices from this partnership to other international humanitarian agencies or international NGOs so that ageing can be mainstreamed into their programmes as well. It is hoped that in the future, strategies to include older people will be readily available with humanitarian agencies working on disaster preparedness and disaster management.

**At the programmatic level:** The process of the partnership and the interventions have provided both organisations with key insights into improving the quality of their activities. While for HelpAge International a key area of learning has been to promote age-specific livelihood options, for the BRCS targeting older people in their programme has opened their eyes to the vulnerabilities and capacities of this particular group. Therefore, this collaboration can build a road map for improving the quality of interventions, such as HelpAge International further exploring the issue of age-specific livelihood options, and the BRCS exploring strategies to reach out to older people better in their targeted communities. In future programmes, attempts to sensitise the overall communities on issues related to ageing can also be made, so that there is greater intergenerational harmony and more respect for older people in society.

## Annex 1: Age friendly data collection

### 1. Format for guiding and analysing focus group discussion with older people

NO	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS	TOTAL NUMBER		%	COMMENT
			M	F		
1.	How many participants are engaged in livelihood activities?					
2.	What are the sources of livelihood?					
3.	What are the assets they hold and their pattern use?					
4.	What are the barriers of OP to raising Livelihood?	1. health 2. community barriers 3. family 4. no access to land 5. other				
5.	How many are primary bread earners?					
6.	What is the support they provide to family and community other than income	1. advisor 2. speaker 3. committee (leader of farming)				
7.	How many OP have been consulted or not been consulted by staff from INGOs/NGOs	1. meeting 2. decision maker 3. other				
8.	What kind of support have they received for raising Livelihood	1. cash transfer 2. livestock 3. other				
9.	What are the most necessary support which no organisation has taken of until now?	1. money/fund 2. wheelchair 3. eye glasses 4. other				
10.	How many are Immobile/homebound people?					
11.	What kind of social support do they need?	1. social pension 2. other				
12.	How will they want to resolve their problems?	1. self help group 2. meeting 3. other				
13.	General Comments					

## 2. Format for interview with older people with mobility problems (village name \_\_\_\_\_)

### 1. Personal information

Name		Gender		Age	
Family members	Males		Females		Children

### 2. Living standard

House	Temporary		Permanent		Number of rooms	
TV		Motorbike		Car		AC
Toilet facilities			Drinking water			

### 3. Health problems

Breathing		Digestion		Knee/joint pain	
Loss of memory		Sleeping		Significant weight loss	
Visual (cataract)		Hearing		Diabetes	
Arthritis		Imbalance		Elimination	

### 4. Mobility problems (need assistance in:)

Washing, bathing and dressing		Using latrine		Use walking stick/crutches	
Going to nearest health post		Cooking and going to market		Eating food	
Comment : (what they do every day)					

**2. Resources**

Land	Hectare (ha)	Fishing equipment	Nets		Boat/motor	
Livestock	Chickens, hens and ducks		Goats		Buffaloes and cows	

**3. Sources of livelihood**

Household support		Support from other family members	
Support from relatives		Other sources	

**4. Any other needs****5. Who do they go to receive support?****6. What activity or support can strengthen their living conditions?**

## Annex 2: Slides to orient INGOs/NGOs for the inclusion of older people in programmes

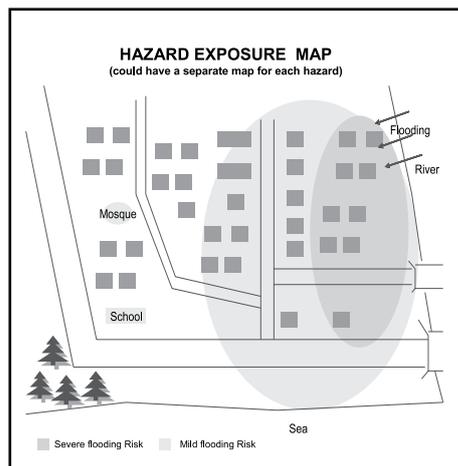
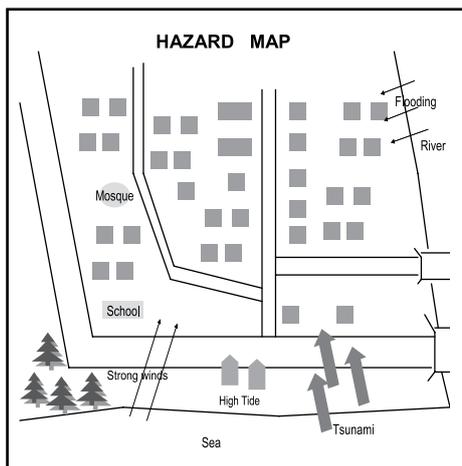
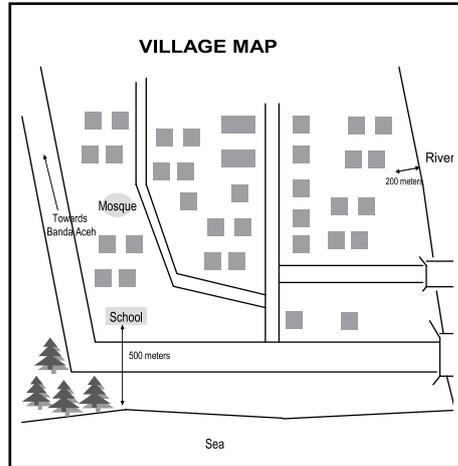
<p>Valuing older people in your programme</p> <p>HelpAge International Banda Aceh Indonesia</p>	<p>Vulnerabilities of older people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally poor</li> <li>• Lesser capabilities</li> <li>• Specific needs</li> <li>• Minimum care received</li> <li>• Very little social protection measures</li> <li>• Excluded by development projects</li> </ul>
<p>What are the gaps and biases?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is good to support a child or women, than an older person.</li> <li>• Older people are part of the extended family and any intervention benefiting the family has its effect on them.</li> <li>• They are not vulnerable.</li> <li>• They cannot raise their livelihood.</li> </ul>	<p>More gaps and biases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The population of older people is much less.</li> <li>• We can bring development in the communities.</li> <li>• Support to older people is not very productive</li> <li>• Supporting one livelihood is sufficient for a family</li> <li>• Older people don't want to contribute anymore</li> <li>• Older people are not bankable</li> </ul>
<p>Roles of INGOs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider older people as a vulnerable group and design specialized programs for them</li> <li>• Consider older people as legitimate stakeholder for development</li> <li>• Mainstreaming ageing into organizational policies and practices</li> <li>• Promotion and integration of age-friendly modalities and components</li> <li>• Collection of disaggregated information in any data collection and assessment</li> <li>• Recognize OP as legitimate stakeholders for development and ensure their active participation in planning and execution of programs</li> </ul>	<p>What can be done?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the involvement of older people in all aspects of development process-like DM and livelihood activities</li> <li>• Home care for immobile people</li> <li>• Secondary livelihood</li> <li>• Cash transfers and bank-ability</li> <li>• Health care</li> </ul>
<p>How can HAI support?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building of the partner staff on age-sensitive livelihood, DM and health care</li> <li>• Organising Older People in partners' target villages</li> <li>• Identifying older people with specific livelihood needs</li> <li>• Trainings of volunteers on home-care</li> <li>• Support in designing social pension programs from cash-transfer programs</li> <li>• Technical assistance in joint research, need assessment, monitoring and evaluations</li> </ul>	<p>Let's work together to include older people in our programmes</p> <p><i>Terima Kasih</i></p>

## Annex 3: Slides on age-friendly disaster risk reduction planning

Village Mapping

- Name of village:
- Sub-district:
- Village population:

Community Based Action Team (CBAT)  
*(add names of members)*

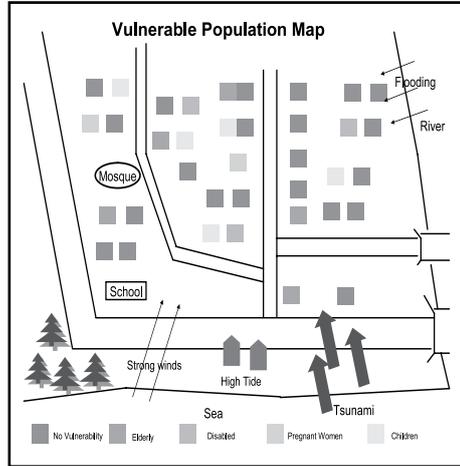


**Hazard Mapping**

Hazard	Season	Frequency	Past Impact	Current Level of Threat	Disaster Management Strategy	CBAT Incharge
Tsunami						
Earthquake						
Flooding						
Strong winds						
High tides						
Landslide						
Drought						
Forest fires						

**Disaster Risk Reduction**

Type of hazard	Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy
Strong winds	Coastal plantation Strong house construction
Tsunami	Good local alarm system Evacuation route identified by community
...etc..	

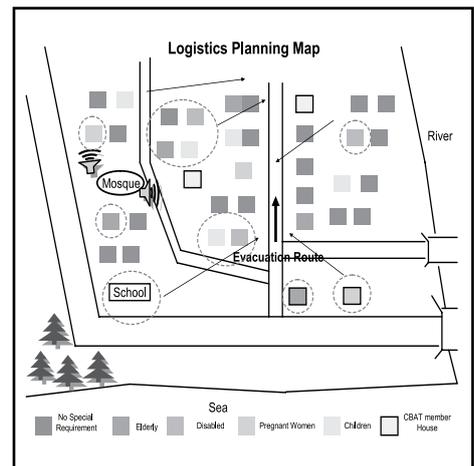


### Vulnerability List

Name	Address	Vulnerability Type			
		Elderly (Age)	Disabled (type)	Pregnant Women	Children

### Special Requirements for Vulnerable Individuals

Name	Type of Vulnerability	Special Requirement	CBAT Responsible
xxxxxx	Crippled	Crutches, assistance during evacuation	
...etc...			



### Logistical Planning and Responsibility (Tsunami Evacuation)

Task	Responsibility
Alarm system	
Elderly	
Disabled	
Pregnant women	
Children/school	
First aid	
Search and rescue	
Emergency supplies	

## Selected resources

### **Older people's associations in community disaster risk reduction: A resource book on good practice**

This resource book aims to strengthen the capacity of organisations working with older people in planning and implementing age-sensitive responses to disasters. It highlights good practice in utilising Older People's Associations for community-based disaster risk reduction

### **The impact of the Indian Ocean tsunami on older people: Issues and recommendations**

This report describes the impact of the Indian Ocean tsunami on older people in four severely affected countries - India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The report is based on a rapid-assessment survey carried out during the initial relief phase following the tsunami.

### **Older people in Aceh, Indonesia 18 months after the tsunami: Issues and recommendations**

This publication centres on the situation of older people in Aceh, Indonesia, and provides a selective assessment of ongoing rehabilitation programmes regarding the inclusion of older people over the first 18-month period of crisis intervention.

### **Age-friendly community health services in Aceh, Indonesia**

This publication focuses on the status of older people in Aceh, Indonesia in the context of rehabilitation programmes carried out during the two years following the tsunami disaster, and on opportunities to improve health care for them through community-based services.

### **Life after the tsunami: Older people surviving and rebuilding their lives**

This DVD examines the impact of the Indian Ocean tsunami on older people in severely affected countries.

### **Older people in disasters and humanitarian crisis: Guidelines for best practice**

In 1997 HelpAge International collaborated with the United Nations and European Community Humanitarian Office to publish guidelines which aimed to identify key approaches and actions that could help the humanitarian community reduce the vulnerability of older people in emergencies, and build on their contribution.

### **Age and security: How social pensions can deliver effective aid to poor older people and their families**

This report makes a strong case for providing universal non-contributory pensions or "social pensions" to older people in developing countries. It describes how social pensions effectively target aid, reducing the poverty of older people and the families that they so often support.

### **AgeNews Asia/Pacific**

This regional newsletter aims to highlight issues of ageing and the rights of older people in Asia/Pacific as well as sharing experience in working with and for older people. It is published every four months.

### **[www.helpage.org](http://www.helpage.org)**

Visit our website for key facts on ageing, regularly updated news features, policy, research and programme information and details of all publications including translations, with many texts available to view on screen and download.



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#### **The British Red Cross Society – Indonesia**

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Darul Imarah – Aceh Besar  
NAD, Indonesia 23353  
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Two organizations working in Aceh, Indonesia, initiated a unique partnership. HelpAge International has provided technical support to the tsunami rehabilitation programme of the British Red Cross Society to ensure that older people are included in the interventions and receive appropriate support.

This report documents the story of the collaboration between HelpAge International and the British Red Cross Society. It is hoped that the strategies, tools, and lessons learned from this collaboration will be useful in furthering age-friendliness in future programmes.