

Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED)

Title of initiative:	Indian Ocean Tsunami Early Warning System – Preparedness and Response
Countries primarily supported:	India
Duration:	From 1 May 2005 to 31 December 2006

Objectives

- The primary objective of the initiative was better informed preparedness and mitigation policy through objective evidence on risk factors following the tsunami.
- The secondary objective was an evidence base for the global disaster risk reduction community on the direct human impact of the disaster.
- The initiative consisted of a study on risk factors for mortality and injury in Tamil Nadu, India, associated missions, meetings and dissemination of the study result.
- The overall goal of the study was to reduce mortality and morbidity resulting from natural disasters and to learn lessons for this purpose from the recent tsunami-earth quake disaster.

Achievements

- **A study report “Risk Factors for Mortality and Injury: Post-Tsunami Epidemiological Findings from Tamil Nadu”**

The study was completed based on the field survey in the 25 most-severely tsunami affected hamlets in Nagapattinam District, Tamil Nadu, India. Data from 651 households (out of 660 randomly selected households) and 3131 individuals was collected and validated for statistical analyses.

The results of the study suggest that the vulnerability of coastal populations could be reduced in a number of ways including promotion and provision of swimming lessons amongst women, improvements in local housing and other infrastructure such as multi-purpose emergency shelters and development of effective message dissemination methods of early warning systems in conjunction with community disaster preparedness and awareness programmes.⁷⁴

- **Regional Workshop, “The Human Impact of Tsunami and Disaster Risk Reduction: Linking Research to Policy” (16-17 June 2006, Bangkok)**

The CRED, jointly with UN/ISDR, UNU-EHS, organized a regional workshop on “Human Impact of Tsunami and Disaster Risk Reduction” 16-17 June 2006 in Bangkok, Thailand. The results of the study and its policy implications were presented in the workshop.

A total of 53 researchers, policy-makers, and disaster management experts shared their research findings and experiences in tsunami-affected countries as a means of strengthening information exchange between the disciplines. The workshop also identified national and regional needs and priorities for future research and policy initiatives in order to sustain long-term disaster risk reduction work in the region.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ <http://www.em-dat.net/documents/publication/RiskFactorsMortalityInjury.pdf>

<http://www.cred.be/docs/publications/Tamil.pdf>

<http://www.cred.be/docs/publications/Hindi.pdf>

⁷⁵ http://www.unisdr.org/ppew/tsunami/pdf/Workshop_outcome_report.pdf

➤ **A side-event on tsunami early warning in the Indian Ocean at the Third International Conference on Early Warning (EWC III), Bonn, Germany, 27-29 March 2006**

The CRED presented the early-warning related findings of the study at a side event jointly organized with UN/ISDR secretariat, UNESCO/IOC and UNU-EHS.

➤ **Distribution of the Study Findings**

In addition to the presentation at the above-mentioned conferences, the findings of this study have been reported and widely distributed through a number of other channels including:

- ✓ Publication and international distribution of the full study report in English, Tamil and Hindi. Approximately 700 English, 500 Tamil and 500 Hindi hard copies have been distributed.
- ✓ Links to the report through various websites (Tsunami Evaluation Coalition⁷⁶)
- ✓ Distribution of 5-page summaries of the main research findings to conference participants, UN Conference Centre, Bangkok
- ✓ UN press release, 28 January 2006⁷⁷
- ✓ Newspaper article on study findings published in the Times of India, 7 August 2006



Photo 15: Field survey in Nagapattinam District



Photo 16: Survey Training session, Nagapattinam District

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⁷⁶ <http://www.tsunami-evaluation.org/Other+Evaluations+and+Reviews/Surveys+and+Impact+Studies.htm>

⁷⁷ <http://www.em-dat.net/documents/TsunamiTamilNaduSurveyPressRelease.pdf>