



Honouring the victims: Thevi Ampi says prayers for those lost in the tsunami at a remembrance service at a Hindu temple in Richmond Hill, Ontario.

such public donations to qualified aid groups. CIDA will receive proposals for the use of this money in the coming weeks and months.

Some individuals have felt compelled to go well beyond writing cheques, from organizing memorials and myriad events including school toonie drives, church suppers and benefit concerts in support of tsunami relief to heading to the region with organizations to lend a hand.

Mark Evans, an engineer with CBCL Limited, a consulting engineering company in Halifax, travelled to the Maldives to help Oxfam International rebuild water supplies contaminated by salt water. Evans's firm granted him a three-month paid leave of absence to do the job. "It was an opportunity

that Mark did not want to pass up, and we were glad to support him on behalf of the company and of Canada," says Doug Brownrigg, the firm's Manager of Municipal Engineering.

The international community is now looking ahead to the next phase of support for affected communities in Asia: rehabilitation and long-term reconstruction.

Oxfam International, for example, is working closely with local partners in the region to design appropriate strategies for rebuilding livelihoods—everything from restoring bicycles to small-scale fishmongers to offering credit to households newly headed by women. "The bottom line is that the people affected should be in the driver's seat," says Rex Fyles, who manages Oxfam Canada's humanitarian assistance program.

The Government of Canada is working to identify the best ways for Canada to support long-term reconstruction. A team from Environment Canada, Natural Resources Canada and CIDA has assessed the environmental impact of the tsunami and how to support more sustainable development of coastal communities. And scientists for Environment Canada are working on helping

countries such as India to develop tsunami early warning systems.

Canadians recognize the need for long-term commitment to the region, says Bob Johnston, coordinator of the tsunami disaster response for CIDA, adding that government agencies in affected countries have already worked with the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and others to assess reconstruction needs. "CIDA has been in close contact with these organizations and will develop programs accordingly, responding to priorities established by affected governments themselves."

Mary Heather White says that the focus of her vocational program's work has entirely shifted to long-term rehabilitation, with the carpentry, welding, masonry and plumbing it teaches needed badly in the time ahead.

"It's important to remember that local people were the first to respond using the capacity they had," she says. "We're going to continue to build on those skills so that people are better able to recover from this and any future disasters." ❁

Visit the Government of Canada tsunami response Web site at www.gc.ca/tsunami.

Helping hands and hearts

When Jill Sampson, a semi-retired veterinarian from Qualicum Beach, British Columbia, saw images of the tsunami on television, she knew she had to help. Sampson, who runs a small non-governmental organization called Poco a Poco that supports health and education in Guatemala, hooked up with a team from British Columbia's Children's Hospital and headed to Sri Lanka.

Once in Kalmunai, one of the country's hardest hit districts, Sampson put her medical knowledge to work by helping set up a pharmacy. But like everyone involved, she pitched in wherever she could, working alongside members of

Canada's Disaster Assistance Response Team who were stationed nearby to build temporary shelters for refugees—with some help from back home.

"UNICEF provided some tarps, but we needed tools and other supplies to actually get the shelters in place," she says. Just as she was about to buy \$5,000 worth of equipment herself, the town council of Qualicum Beach put up the funds to purchase saws, hammers, wood and twine for the job.

"The entire Qualicum Beach community got behind the project," says Sampson, who stayed in Sri Lanka for three weeks and has been replaced by another member of her community to continue organizing the building of housing in Kalmunai. "We want this to be the start of a long-term relationship."



photo: courtesy of Jill Sampson

Long-term relationship: Jill Sampson and her community of Qualicum Beach, British Columbia, are helping the people of Kalmunai, one of the hardest-hit districts in Sri Lanka.