

AFTER THE TSUNAMI: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Canada has provided expertise, funds, emergency relief and long-term support to offset some of the suffering caused by the tsunami—and help get the region back on track.

Mary Heather White is helping Sri Lankans put their lives back together. White, from Lion's Head, Ontario, manages a vocational training program for World University Service of Canada in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka, that provides poor and unemployed people with the skills to earn a living but is now focused on addressing the devastation after the tsunami.

In Banda Aceh, Indonesia, Canadian insurance company Manulife Financial, its own local offices destroyed and some 20 staff lost or unaccounted for in the disaster, has contributed \$200,000 to the relief effort and is expediting the processing of claims filed by victims.

At a Buddhist temple converted into a morgue in Krabi, Thailand, RCMP Inspector Neil Fraser and a team from Canada worked with forensic experts around the clock on the physically and emotionally demanding job of identifying victims of the deadly waves.

"The scope and scale of the disaster were beyond people's imagination," says Fraser, of Halifax, Nova Scotia, who shared responsibility for leading the 10-member team from Canada that worked for several weeks in January.

"Knowing that we were helping made our work very satisfying. We knew we were making a difference."



"Local people were the first to respond": Mary Heather White stands with Sri Lankan women involved in the carpentry program run by World University Service of Canada (WUSC), which is helping people to put their lives back together.

Whether providing expertise, donating money and relief supplies, or working directly in the 12 countries affected by the tsunami, Canadians from all walks of life, sectors, organizations and parts of the country have made a difference following the disaster. The outpouring of support for those affected in Asia Pacific builds on a long-standing relationship between Canada and the region as emergency relief turns to rehabilitation, reconstruction and other long-range efforts.

Within hours of the massive waves, the Government of Canada sprang into action at home and abroad. Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC), which is responsible for coordinating the overall government response to the crisis, convened a special disaster task force that brought together resources and expertise from more than a dozen federal departments and agencies, providing everything from forensic teams, immigration services and satellite images of affected areas to

assistance for Canadian companies looking to get involved in the reconstruction process.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) responded immediately by working with multilateral and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners to channel Canada's aid. The Government of Canada has allocated \$425 million toward humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation and reconstruction over the next five years.

Perhaps one of Canada's most visible contributions has been the involvement of the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), a military unit assigned in January and February to provide medical support and water purification to Ampara, a region in Sri Lanka where 10,000 people died and 180,000 lost their homes. During their stay, the team treated 5,500 patients, produced more than 2.5 million litres of drinking water, transported some 55,000 people