

# Christian Aid's Management Response to the Tsunami Evaluation

Christian Aid is pleased to publicly share the results of a recent independent evaluation of its tsunami response. Overall, we were very encouraged by the findings which broadly provide an informed and balanced account of the programme. We are delighted that the report concludes that 'Christian Aid has been able to make a strong and committed response to the tsunami, in which its use of a wide range of partner agencies has been its distinctive contribution.' The report continues that 'unusually for an evaluation exercise of this breadth, the results are **strongly positive**'.

Two-and-a-half years into Christian Aid's largest ever emergency response we were keen to hold an evaluation to provide an experienced, independent and in-depth review of our response. The aim was to acknowledge successes, but also to raise challenges and make recommendations for addressing them.

The evaluation has provided much food for thought and some useful suggestions for improving the current tsunami response as well as future humanitarian responses. Outlined below are the key aspects of the evaluation that we endorse, the conclusions we question and some outstanding issues that we will be addressing over the next year.

## **We affirm the following:**

- Christian Aid's partnership approach allows for a more locally relevant response and greatly facilitates the transition process from relief to recovery, and wider social development
- High quality houses were successfully constructed, especially for the poorest
- The tsunami funds were used to reduce social exclusion in India
- The dedicated Programme Management team were a strength of the response
- Christian Aid successfully worked through a wider group of more specialised international agencies, as well as local partners, which strengthened the organisation's capacity to respond

## **We question the following findings:**

- The report suggests that we should have started strengthening poor communities against future disasters earlier. We question this conclusion as we believe that all of the rebuilding work by partners incorporated some level of disaster resilience. Also, this will be strengthened over the next two years once the immediate needs of communities have been met.
- The report concludes that there should be greater use in future of in-country photographers and communications specialists to reduce the number of visits by UK staff. We believe that this should be reviewed on a case by case basis. Some situations – such as the 2004 Tsunami which created so much interest in the media – require a large number of visits by UK staff who understand the UK media and audiences. We will continue to use in-country specialists wherever we feel appropriate.

## **Issues we are now addressing:**

- Feedback from the evaluation suggests that despite the Tsunami Managers being very clear with partners about the reduction in funding over the next couple of years, some partners are still in denial of reduced funding in the future. Christian Aid staff will work closely with partners over the next six months to ensure that they are as well prepared as possible once our funding comes to an end.
- We will review and where necessary strengthen our disaster preparedness systems and procedures for the tsunami programme by the end June 2008.
- We commit to building on the lessons we have learned regarding social exclusion of dalits in the relief effort in India to ensure that the most vulnerable people are reached in future disasters. Our staff in India will conduct a Social Equity Audit with India tsunami partners and share the lessons inform wider approaches to social equity across Christian Aid.