



## Environmental Cooperation-Asia

# Post-tsunami Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods Program



Photo Credit: Unknown

*Cash-for-Work, such as mangrove re-planting, provides relief to over 300 villagers in need*

**BACKGROUND** The tsunami of December 2004 devastated Thailand's entire Andaman coast. A total of 392 villages and some 54,500 people were affected, with more than 5,000 deaths recorded and many others missing. The disaster devastated the local economy by crushing fishing boats, along with engines and gear. Homes, public buildings, and coastal infrastructure, including roads and bridges were also destroyed. The tsunami had its greatest impacts on rural coastal communities, many of which were already poor and economically vulnerable with few livelihood options. Recovery is especially difficult because many of those that survived lost the means to practice their livelihoods.

The USAID Regional Development Mission/Asia responded with a demonstration program that helps coastal communities in Southern Thailand rehabilitate livelihoods, become more resilient to future natural disasters and adopt livelihood practices that use natural resources more sustainably. ECO-Asia assists coastal communities to achieve economic self-sufficiency, preparedness in the face of natural hazards and protection of their natural heritage.

**APPROACH** Five tsunami-affected villages in Ranong Province were selected for ECO-Asia's demonstration initiative. Located within Laemson National Park, these villages have a population of 5,000 and are dependent on fishing and agriculture for their livelihoods. This relatively small, compact area makes it suitable for modeling an integrated approach to coastal disaster rehabilitation. As a model project, the knowledge and lessons learned will be transferred to other at-risk coastal communities in Thailand and other countries in the Asia region.

**PROJECT ACTIVITIES** The program has five major program components:

**Build a common vision for action.** ECO-Asia works closely with local government authorities and community leaders to build local ownership and establish a common vision for rehabilitation. Key activities include quarterly village meetings, nomination of Village Volunteer facilitators, weekly meetings with local government authorities, monthly donor coordination meetings, and local distribution of the Kamphuan in Action Newsletter.

**Reestablish and diversify livelihoods.** ECO-Asia provides small grants, technical assistance, training, cash-for-work activities, and

