Focus
The December 26, 2004, Indian Ocean tsunami was one of the greatest natural disasters in history. This News in Review module revisits that event, and looks at the work of international aid agencies throughout the region. We also look at proposals to enlarge international aid donations, and anticipate upcoming changes in the way Canada administers its international aid.

Update
As this issue was being prepared, yet another powerful earthquake hit the region. Measured at a magnitude of 8.7, it did not cause a tsunami, but the Indonesian island of Nias was badly hit with possibly 2,000 casualties.

Sections
marked with this symbol indicate content suitable for younger viewers.

Introduction
The Indian Ocean tsunami on December 26, 2004, resulted in the greatest outpouring of aid in history. Billions of dollars, hundreds of aid agencies, and thousands of volunteers were dedicated to tsunami relief. Three months after the event, the aid efforts have had tremendous success. Most refugees are housed and fed, and anticipated epidemics have been avoided. The relief effort is over, and reconstruction is beginning. In some areas, aid co-ordination remains a problem; on the whole, however, progress is taking place at a rate that was not anticipated.

No country was more generous, on a per-capita basis, in its efforts than Canada. Canadians and their government have pledged almost $1-billion to tsunami relief. In addition, Canada’s Disaster Assistance Response Team provided invaluable assistance to residents of Sri Lanka’s devastated Ampara province. Many Canadians flew to the region at their own expense to offer their help. Canadian charities continue to work in many of the affected areas, and the Canadian media continue to monitor the progress of the reconstruction.

Canada and International Aid
The money contributed by the Canadian government to tsunami relief was extraordinary. But Canada has always contributed money for international assistance of various types—in 2003-2004, it amounted to $2.6-billion—administered through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). CIDA is also administering the approximately $450-million pledged for tsunami relief.

The government is currently completing a thorough review of Canada’s foreign policy. Part of that review examines foreign aid; indications are that major changes will be taking place in the way Canada approaches this issue. Canada now contributes to over 155 countries, almost 90 of which receive less than $5-million. Proposed changes will increase donations to over $6-billion by 2010, but restrict donations to 20 to 30 countries. Those countries have yet to be determined, but the criteria by which they will be chosen have been.

International Co-operation Minister Aileen Carroll outlined the criteria in a speech to Oxford University’s Global Economic Governance Programme (Toronto Star, March 9, 2005). “Good governance” will be the key requirement. Recipients will have “a strong civil service, good laws enforced by an independent judiciary, a respect for human rights and an aversion to corruption.” The level of poverty will also be one of the criteria.

In addition to targeting specific countries, CIDA will also target specific areas. These four key sectors are health, education, expansion of the private sector, and support of good governance. This will be a shift from traditional areas such as infrastructure and agriculture.

The 0.7 Per Cent Solution
For the most part, the proposed changes to Canada’s international aid appropriations have been greeted with approval by both the press and international officials. Most believe that, while some countries will be disappointed, the
impact of Canadian aid will be far more significant than it is currently.

The tsunami and the subsequent outpouring of assistance have, however, served to highlight the need for international assistance to countries throughout the world—and the inadequacy of the current levels of assistance from most wealthy countries. In 2000, the United Nations set Millennium Development Goals aimed at reducing all forms of poverty by half by the year 2015. This will require almost all donor nations to up the total of their contributions by a considerable amount.

In 1970, Robert McNamara of the World Bank asked Lester Pearson, former prime minister of Canada, to lead a commission on international assistance to eliminate world poverty. Pearson’s committee challenged nations to commit 0.7 per cent of their gross national products to international assistance. Canada was one nation that agreed.

In the 1980s, the country’s contribution reached 0.5 per cent. By 2003, however, we had dropped to 0.24 per cent, an amount behind almost every other major country except the United States. In dollar terms, this means that only 24 cents of every $100 the country makes goes to international aid.

Jeffrey Sachs of Harvard University has calculated that an increase by all rich nations to 0.44 per cent in 2006 and to 0.54 per cent by 2015 would meet the U.N.’s Millennium Goal. The generosity of international—and Canadian—contributors to tsunami relief would seem to indicate that, with the proper resolution, this goal could be met.

For Discussion

In an editorial on January 18, 2005, The Globe and Mail argued:

“As soon as he gets back from Asia [he was visiting Sri Lanka and attending a conference on international assistance to tsunami victims], Mr. Martin should meet with his cabinet and hammer out a firm timetable for reaching 0.7. As Prof. Sachs puts it, Canada is ‘the home of 0.7.’ If we are really the compassionate nation we claim to be, the least we can do is reach the goal we helped set.”

Should this indeed become a keystone of our foreign policy? Does our generosity to tsunami victims translate to a public willingness to almost triple our annual contribution to international aid? Would you personally support this increase in aid? Explain.
TSUNAMI SURVIVORS: CAUGHT IN THE WAKE

Video Review

Part I
1. How many people are now estimated to have been killed by the tsunami?

2. What is the approximate amount of aid donated worldwide? By Canadians?

3. Mark Kelley is reporting from one of the areas that was most devastated. What is it?

4. The first local word that Mark Kelley learned was dicari. What does it mean?

5. Why do some Indonesians find it so difficult to obtain aid?

6. How many humanitarian groups are now working in Banda Aceh? ______

7. What effect does the competition among aid groups have on the price of food and building materials?

8. Why did Doctors Without Borders stop collecting money for tsunami relief?

9. In politically sensitive areas of Aceh province, how is the food aid distributed?

10. What are the three reasons that Mark Kelley suggests are why some aid agencies avoid certain areas of Aceh province?

11. How many people does the Islamic Foundation of Toronto serve in their volunteer clinic?

Did you know…
Canada sends aid to more countries in the world than any other nation? At present, Canadian aid reaches 155 nations, although 90 receive less than $5-million dollars.

As you watch the video, answer the questions in the spaces provided.

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12. By when does the Indonesian government want most aid groups to leave?

13. The Indonesian government was able to use its aid stockpile after what other recent natural disaster?

**Part II**

Before a second viewing of the video, read the following paragraph (from “Charity and Chaos: An insurgency was bleeding Aceh before the tsunami hit. Food aid can’t fix that,” *Newsweek*, January 17, 2005). Then consider the discussion questions that follow.

“One immediate challenge for aid outfits in Aceh is to keep their personnel safe. Relief workers are operating alongside radical Islamic groups and paramilitary youth gangs, as well as Acehnese rebels who hijack food convoys. . . . Rescue teams also have to deal with the Indonesian military, which has committed gross rights abuses in Aceh, and has a well-earned reputation for corruption. ‘There’s clear evidence that Army and police are stealing food aid and selling it in the market,’ says outraged religious leader Muslim Ibrahim, chairman of an association of Islamic clerics called the Aceh Ulama Assembly.”

1. Does the information in this paragraph help explain why many aid agencies avoid working independently in some of the more remote areas of Aceh province? Why? Why not?

2. Ultimately, who is responsible if aid efforts are duplicated or the necessary aid does not get through to the people who need it? Explain clearly.

3. Does helping out directly in the tsunami-ravaged areas of the world appeal to you? Why? Why not?

4. Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of the nations that were hurt by the tsunami? Explain fully.
TSUNAMI SURVIVORS: CAUGHT IN THE WAKE
“The Wave That Shook the World”

The December 26, 2004, earthquake and resulting tsunami that affected 12 countries in and surrounding the Indian Ocean is one of the greatest disasters in world history. Three months after the event, the full extent of the devastation is still being learned.

Scientists writing for the journal *Nature* (March 30, 2005) now believe that the size of the earthquake was underestimated, and that it had a magnitude of 9.3. This was 2.5 times the size originally thought and would make it the second largest earthquake ever recorded. The length of the underwater rupture was about 1 200 kilometres, and the shaking lasted about 500 seconds.

Depending on how deep below the earth’s surface an underwater earthquake takes place, the energy that is generated can be dispersed in two ways. It can either create a shock wave through the earth’s crust, or a tsunami through the water. The Indian Ocean earthquake was relatively close to the surface. The upward thrust of the ocean floor to the east of the rupture generated enormous waves that travelled at speeds up to 1 000 km per hour. Within 15 minutes the first wave rolled over northern Sumatra; it was here that over three-fourths of the total number of victims died.

**The Victims**

Precisely how many people were killed by the tsunami will never be known. Many of the areas worst affected have inadequate census records; in other areas the records were destroyed. The total number of deaths is at least 250 000, and it was the poor and the young who were the hardest hit.

UNICEF has estimated that there are at least 1.5-million children throughout the area who were orphaned, homeless, sick, or starving.

Two of the most devastated areas are also areas of extreme political unrest.

Aceh province, Indonesia, has been the scene of a 29-year armed struggle between the government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM in Indonesian). For 18 months prior to the tsunami, the Indonesian army controlled the province.

In Aceh 124 000 people have been confirmed dead, and another 114 000 remain missing. Survivors have been moved into about 180 refugee camps, some with thousands of residents. Barracks have been hastily built to replace the original tents. Rebuilding communities awaits an official government blueprint outlining where and what kind of rebuilding will be allowed, and which aid organizations will be permitted to assist.

In Sri Lanka, the conflict is between the Sinhalese majority government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. A three-year ceasefire between the two groups was on the verge of being broken when the tsunami struck. It hit parts of the country controlled by both groups.

The statistics tell a grim story. More than 31 000 Sri Lankans were killed. Two-thirds of the coast was ravaged, with 99 000 homes demolished and 443 000 people left homeless. Two-thirds of the fishing fleet were destroyed; so were schools, clinics, hospitals, and pharmacies. The tsunami hit especially hard in the northeast, where fighting had already forced 40 000 people into refugee camps.
The Tamil Tigers have accused the government of attempting to slow or withhold aid from the areas they control. The World Bank estimates that about $1.5-billion in international aid will be required in Sri Lanka, and that two-thirds of this is needed in the north and east. The government claims that two-thirds of available funds currently go to this area; Tamil charities claim it is only one-third.

**Navalady: The Fate of Survivors**

On March 6, 2005, *The New York Times* published an article by Amy Waldman that poignantly described the devastation and challenges faced by many people who live in the tsunami-devastated areas. It described the plight of the village of Navalady, Sri Lanka, as “luckier than some, harder hit than most.” Located on a sandbar, the village was directly in the path of the waves on December 26. At least 620 of its 1,900 inhabitants were killed; of the 365 students in the village school only 178 survived.

All of the village’s refugees moved to a school in nearby Batticaloa, where they tried to remain together as a community. The women occupied themselves with some domestic chores. But men who had worked hard all their lives had literally nothing to do. In these close quarters the communal spirit of the villagers began to fail, and all the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder began to appear. People who had never used alcohol began to drink. Fights broke out. Gambling became a principal pastime among the young.

Few of the refugees expressed any desire to move back to Navalady. According to custom, however, the community returned 30 days after the tsunami to cook a feast for their relatives who had died. As they revisited the ruins, many slowly experienced an attraction to their old homes. Waldman described the experience: “Placeless people can find themselves nostalgic even for homes linked with horror. More than longing for a specific piece of ground, it is the ache for normalcy, familiarity, routine, the ability to locate themselves in a web of known people.”

We can still only speculate as to whether Navalady will be rebuilt. A month passed with none of the debris cleared, and the washed-out road to the village remained unrepaired. New regulations will require that all construction take place at least 100 metres from the shore—a big challenge for a Third World fishing community. Meanwhile, the community was to be relocated to tent camps. The village would be divided—no single camp would be able to contain them all.

**To Consider**

Move or rebuild—this is a fundamental question for many tsunami victims. What would you do? Why? For a chance to explore the options, see the final section, in this module, “Relocating a Village.”

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**Quote**

“I wish I was still there helping out. I’m wondering what I am doing back in Canada. I wish I could have done more.” — Rahul Singh, Canadian paramedic who led a team of health workers to Sri Lanka, *Toronto Star*, March 7, 2005

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In addition to providing funding to assist in tsunami recovery efforts, the Canadian government also deployed the military’s Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART). This is a group of about 200 military staff who are brought together to provide emergency relief in four areas:
- basic medical care
- drinking water production
- infrastructure repairs
- communications

While DART is headquartered in Kingston, Ontario, its members are drawn from several different military units across Canada and are brought together for emergency deployment.

DART Deploys
DART did not arrive in Sri Lanka until January 8. As a result, the Canadian government came under fire from media critics who believed that it should have had a team on the way within hours after the tsunami had struck.

The government responded that the very specific capabilities of a large assistance team meant that it could only be deployed after an assessment. DART needed to know where it was most needed and could be most effective. An advance reconnaissance team determined that Sri Lanka was the best choice, and the decision was made to go to the eastern province of Ampara. One-third of the Sri Lankans killed by the tsunami died there, and many survivors were displaced from their homes and in need of basic services.

With 206 people, DART became the largest aid organization working in the district. The mission was expected to last six weeks and cost about $20-million.

What DART Did
DART’s relief efforts were wide-ranging and effective and included:
- four purification units providing water to hospitals, refugee camps, and the general public
- four medical teams, each seeing a minimum of 60-70 patients per day
- engineering teams repairing water lines, clearing out schools so they could reopen, and repairing motors on the few remaining fishing boats
- construction of a refugee camp (using Canadian Forces tarpaulins) for refugees who were evicted from schools when they reopened to students

By the time the first team members returned to Canada on February 16, they had seen over 5,500 patients and produced more than 2.5-million litres of drinking water. Praise for DART’s efforts was universal, from Sri Lankans and Canadians alike. Gen. Rick Hillier, greeting the last team members to return to Canada, said, “These folks saw visibly that they had a chance to impact on people’s lives during the worst moment of their lives. And all of a sudden a group of immensely capable men and women wearing a Canadian flag on their shoulder showed up and gave them exactly the help that they needed” (North Bay Nugget, February 28, 2005).

The Team’s Experiences
DART members are quick to acknowledge that their experience in Sri Lanka was a rewarding one. “To be part of this . . . it feels very good. It’s very uplifting to arrive here and meet the people and see how thankful they are,” said Sgt Wayne Walsh in The Telegram (St. John’s), January 30, 2005.
“We helped thousands and thousands of people,” the Toronto Star (February 25, 2005) quoted Lt.-Col. Michael Voith. “If we hadn’t provided them with water and medicine, what would have become of them? It’s not possible to place a price on these things.”

For some, the work was emotionally draining, because the problems of the survivors were so great. “We talk about everything after the day. We always have a little briefing just to talk about how the day went and how we feel. There is a lot of devastation that we see. You have to talk about it and you have to download,” said Cpl. Angela Townsend (in the Cape Breton Post, January 29, 2005).

The medical team rapidly realized that the problems they were dealing with were not just physical. Capt. Carmen Meakin, having met several patients with severe psychological problems, was quoted in the Saskatoon StarPhoenix, February 2, 2005: “It’s really difficult to try to help them because we could have every medication that there is, but none of those are going to help. All you can do is listen to them, help them in any way that you can.”

Capt. Jim Hardwick summed up the experience. “I think we’re all changed after this. Our hearts have been impacted huge. We probably gave people some hope—but they gave us hope, too” (Toronto Star February 25, 2005).

**Analysis**

One reason the DART team did not deploy immediately was size—200-plus people and all their specialized equipment. This required the rental of huge Russian Antonov transport planes, because Canada has no planes of its own large enough to do the job. Some commentators have suggested that, although DART’s mission was a success, it would be better to break the team into much smaller groups that could be deployed more quickly. Do you agree, or would you recommend another solution?
The outpouring of international aid after the Indian Ocean tsunami has become one of the most impressive examples of human compassion in history. No other event has attracted both public and private charity in such quantity. Pledges from governments have exceeded US $7-billion. But disaster assistance can come in many forms, not just as money. Here are some of the many ways in which governments and individuals are assisting in the recovery effort.

A Different Kind of Military Aid
As shown in the “DART in Sri Lanka” section, specially trained military forces can play an important role in providing disaster assistance. In Indonesia’s Aceh province the U.S. military made one of the most significant contributions to the aid effort. Much of the infrastructure in the area, including the roads to coastal towns, was destroyed by the waves. Thousands in the area were left homeless, injured, and hungry.

The amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard, the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, and other ships were dispatched to the Indian Ocean around Sumatra to assist in relief efforts. U.S. News & World Report was able to relate that, by the end of the first week in January, 54 military helicopters from the ships had delivered over 125 000 kilograms of food and other supplies to isolated towns.

In addition, the U.S. Air Force had provided 35 planes to carry million of pounds of food, water, and equipment to the region. About 13 000 military personnel had been deployed, and thousands more were expected to arrive within days.

Because the helicopters were carrying so many casualties to the only functional hospital in Banda Aceh, the U.S. sought additional ways to help with medical needs in the area. By February, the U.S. Navy was able to issue the following press release: “USNS Mercy [a hospital ship] is currently deployed off the coast of Banda Aceh as part of a multinational tsunami relief effort. Navy medical personnel, Project HOPE volunteers, and health-care professionals from the United States Public Health Service are making daily trips ashore to assist Indonesian hospital officials, International military medical teams, and various NGOs in providing medical care for the people of Banda Aceh” (www.mercy.navy.mil/htm/PressRelease3.htm). Mobile field hospitals were also deployed throughout the area.

New Life in a New Land
Within days of the tsunami, the Canadian government announced that it would use its immigration policy as disaster assistance and “fast track” the immigration applications of people from the affected countries. By early March 2005, 994 applicants—mostly in the family reunification category—had been identified as requiring urgent attention. Of these, 114 had been granted landed status and were in Canada. Citizenship and Immigration Canada explained that all applicants still need to pass criminal and security checks. These normally take 18 months or more, but the target for those on the urgent list is now six months.

Some critics feel that the program, while laudable, is too slow. Conserva-
tive MP Diane Ablonczy, assessing the six-month waiting period, argues that “it hardly releases people from a situation where they’re under extreme hardship and peril. . . . If you’re really in need of expedited entry, then six months is not very expedited,” Toronto Star, March 10, 2005.

New Efforts
As the immediate relief effort changes to one of rebuilding, new kinds of assistance will be called for. Already, new types of international aid are emerging. Here are some examples.

- The city of Toronto’s Emergency Management Office compiled a list of staff volunteers—public health personnel, paramedics, works department staff—prepared to go to the area to assist with rebuilding efforts. Other governments are organizing similar groups of volunteers.
- International development groups are creating projects for individuals interested in “volunteer vacations” to assist in rebuilding tsunami-devastated areas. Volunteer vacationers combine their holiday time with work on an aid project in a designated area. Volunteers were initially discouraged unless they had very specific skills in disaster management. Now, suitable reconstruction projects will be available for them.
- Many NGOs (non-governmental organizations) involved in tsunami relief are already developing multi-year plans for the area. Those who have received substantial contributions are developing methods, such as micro-enterprise loans, that may be used to stimulate economic growth in the affected areas over the next few years.
- The international community is investigating methods of increasing assistance for the poorest countries hit by the tsunami. These include full or partial forgiveness of current loans held by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the removal of trade barriers to promote increased exports, and targeted aid that will ensure it will be spent for specific purposes.

Discussion
The number of people taking volunteer vacations increases every year. Many of these are students who take part of their summer holiday to travel and work on a project in a less-developed country. What types of projects would be most suitable for a student volunteer? What special skills or aptitudes do you have that you might share as a volunteer vacationer? Have you ever done any volunteer work in another country? Describe your experiences.
TSUNAMI SURVIVORS: CAUGHT IN THE WAKE
Delivering Aid: The Problems

As we have seen in Mark Kelley’s report in the video portion of this module, aid is not always getting through to those who need it the most. And sometimes what does get through is not always the most appropriate. In some cases international aid can actually create as many problems as it solves.

No Co-ordination
As Kelley demonstrates in Aceh, the lack of a co-ordinating body to see that the right assistance gets to all affected areas can be a severe problem. The number of NGOs (non-governmental organizations) involved in the relief effort is staggering. In Sri Lanka over 180 groups are involved; in Aceh it is about 200. Thanks to the generosity of donors, many of these NGOs have millions of dollars committed to tsunami relief, and they are actually competing with other groups for ways to assist survivors.

Who should co-ordinate the effort? There is currently no official mechanism for co-ordinating relief efforts, but there is an understanding of the need to develop one in the near future. One of the most often mentioned candidates to take the lead is the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). OCHA already plays a leading role in providing information to governments and relief organizations in times of crisis. It provides a Web site, ReliefWeb (www.reliefweb.int), to assist all who are involved in relief efforts around the world. According to the Web site, “ReliefWeb disseminates timely, reliable and relevant humanitarian information by updating its Web site around the clock. In addition, ReliefWeb reaches over 70 000 subscribers through its e-mail subscription services, allowing those who have low bandwidth Internet connections to receive information reliably.” In the days following the tsunami, the site was averaging three million hits per day.

Politics
In some areas—especially in Sri Lanka and Indonesia’s Aceh province—politics plays an extremely important role in how aid is distributed. Both have large rebel groups who resist all government control. The Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka and Free Aceh Movement (GAM) both insist that they are not receiving all of the aid to which they are entitled. Initial co-operation between governments and rebels in the distribution of aid seems to be breaking down in both countries.

Politics is even playing a role in the decision to create a tsunami warning system in the Indian Ocean. Several countries are fighting over the location of the early warning centre. When other countries rejected Thailand’s bid, it announced it would set up its own system. Ultimately, this is a costly and unnecessary duplication—but saves face for the country’s leaders.

Killing with Kindness
Japan is a generous donor to tsunami relief. At a conference in Geneva of several donor nations, its experts emphasized that there is actually a risk of doing more harm than good with aid money. According to them, the danger is that the huge amount of money will
be spent on short- rather than long-term projects. Economist Daisuke Hiratsuka gave an example (Catholic New Times, January 30, 2005): “There is a risk that the money could just be used on producing short-term results, as, for instance, pouring everything into the construction industry for rebuilding houses—rather than also focusing on people’s lives.” His colleague, development expert Hisashi Nakamura, emphasized that it was the rebuilding of livelihoods that takes priority. In Sri Lanka, for example, it was fishers who were hardest hit, and “they need money fast to buy boats, nets, and refrigeration units to start their lives again... Aid as well as money must be channeled to help them earn a living again.”

Aid not only can be misapplied, it can also hurt. Shipping millions of tons of free food into an area can cause prices to plummet for local farmers and destroy the local economy. Many NGOs will attempt to purchase food locally. However, several governments require that all the emergency aid food they distribute be purchased from sources in their own countries. This is indeed the case in Canada, where the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is required to do just that.

Real Success — and a Lesson
Despite the difficulties, however, the tsunami relief effort has in many ways been a real triumph for the organizations involved. “Post-tsunamis, health officials ‘got it right,’” said an article by André Picard (The Globe and Mail, March 31, 2005) referring to the unprecedented lack of outbreaks of disease in even the most devastated areas. “That there has been so little disease in the affected areas is a testament to the fact that the money is being used wisely. From day one, the emphasis of many aid groups has been on clean water and sanitation facilities, nipping outbreaks in the bud and vaccinating... The threat of epidemic was real but, this time, in their response, governments and relief organizations got it right.” Picard quotes Dr. David Nabarro of the World Health Organization: “We’ve shown that, if we do it properly, we can limit the number of post-disaster deaths.”

The shame, as Picard goes on to point out, is that millions of the world’s poor die every year from similarly preventable conditions. “It is wonderful that public-health officials ‘got it right’ in the tsunami-affected areas. But the lessons of post-tsunami relief need to be applied more broadly and systematically, not only in the wake of spectacular disasters. We need to ‘get it right’ everywhere, all the time.”

To Consider
Given money and effort, we have the ability to improve health conditions in most of the world’s poorest countries. Are there things that we as Canadians (and our governments) can do to promote a new era of international assistance in the area of public health? Draw up a list of possible actions we could take today to make a better tomorrow. Be prepared to share your results with your peers...
TSUNAMI SURVIVORS: CAUGHT IN THE WAKE

Activity: Relocating a Village

News Item: “Ashvin Dayal, head of Oxfam in East Asia, warns that governments and other aid agencies must be careful to consult survivors about their wishes, and not simply impose their pet reconstruction plans. Fishermen in Sri Lanka are already up in arms about a scheme to relocate their villages farther from the shore.” — The Economist, February 5, 2005

It is a scenario that will be repeated throughout the tsunami-affected area. Villages that were devastated by the waves will be told that they must be relocated, that the area where they once lived—sometimes for centuries—is too vulnerable to be resettled. A typical example is Navalady (see “The Wave That Shook the World”), which was completely destroyed. As a result, the villagers are now displaced and unsure whether they will reconstruct or resettle.

In this role-playing exercise, students will assume the roles of some of the individuals deciding whether relocation is a necessity for a Sri Lankan village. These include:

• Government officials, who ultimately will make the final decision; hopefully, this will be the result of consultation with the villagers
• Representatives of the rebel opposition, whose assistance the government will require in implementing the decision
• Villagers of various types — fishers, merchants, homemakers — both men and women who will have a variety of perspectives on such questions as safety vs. livelihood
• Aid workers from various organizations who will arrange both financial assistance and rebuilding expertise
• An unbiased (Canadian?) observer to chair the discussion

The Scenario
The small fishing village of _______________ was destroyed by the December 26 tsunami. Fortunately, over 80 per cent of the villagers survived the disaster, but all were displaced and are now in camps. Rather than rebuild in the same area, the government would prefer to move the villagers partway up a hill 1.5 kilometres from the ocean. A public meeting will be held, and will include all interested people, and be chaired by an outsider who will gain or lose nothing from the decision.

Those students presenting the government's case should take 10 minutes to prepare their arguments in favour of the move. Those representing villagers, aid workers, and rebel officials should take that time to consider how they might respond to the arguments in favour of the move, and what objections they might have. A free vote at the end of the meeting will determine the outcome. (Of course, ultimately, the government could choose to ignore this and make its own decision.) After the vote, the government should discuss the results and then offer their decision.