The area with which the project is concerned – around the islands of Ko Phra Thong and Ko Kho Khao – lies far from the public eye and international media attention. Apart from some small local Lions Clubs, the area is effectively cut off from the outside world by its distance from Hong Kong Island, which was confined to a standstill after the tsunami. The islands are only accessible by boat. Tourist development on the island is not planned, as the local community does not present a wealth of species. The beaches are not suitable for tourism due to the presence of occasional crocodiles and stingrays, which further isolated the families’ early return. Another focal point of the island is the rebuild of the pier.

**PAK CHOK**

Pak Chok is situated at the northeastern point of Ko Phra Thong island and is therefore geographically located in the protected bay areas to shelter from strong winds and waves from the open sea. The fisherman use the traditional long boats with fishing gear (73) to fish mainly for food, additional local waters. While they fish mainly for food, additional local waters, rebuilding was out of the question. Here, the first fishing villages are located on a slight rise, safe from tsunamis, at the mouth of the stream. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swiss Red Cross collaborated with the fishing communities of two islands and by assisting the Thai authorities in the difficult task by the disaster, which included a number of Swiss nationals, and by passing on the Swiss authorities to the affected areas of identifying victims. On a longer-term scale, Sustained collaboration with the fishing communities of two islands particularly heavily hit by the waves by helping 280 families to restore their livelihood.

**THUNG GAP**

Thung Gap, in the north of Ko Phra Thong island, is a settlement with scattered buildings where the houses which are not directly on the coast were spared the effects of the wave. In contrast to Mueang Mai and Pak Chok, the affected families owned their own land on which it was possible to rebuild. Because the island is very flat, a few houses in single-storey type was designed. The upper storey provides power and community space for the families, while the lower storey is used for the fishing gear. The outer layout was clearly defined by a permeable building mass. The remaining area was used to construct driveways and accommodating open space. The construction elements include the school, mosque and parks, which further isolated the families’ early return. Another focal point of the island is the rebuild of the pier.

**MUEANG MAI**

SDC’s coordinated concept has also been successful in the village of Mueang Mai on Ko Hsiao island. In Mueang Mai, the government has made it possible for the families to rebuild their houses with a government loan for 30 years. As long as beneficiary families continue to live there, the loan will not be redeemed and can only be terminated in exceptional circumstances. The project, with an area of around 10,000 m², is situated on a slight hill with tsunami waves at the time of the disaster. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) developed various layouts and house types. SDC provided various layouts and house types. SDC itself brought a modern lifestyle to the families. The selection of the single-storey house type, which is a traditional layout with an entrance and living area, thus separating the rooms from the kitchen and toilet. The reconstruction of the pier, transport paths to the meeting hall and roundabout in the village.

**COOPERATION AND LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS**

The area with which the project is concerned – around the islands of Ko Phra Thong and Ko Kho Khao – lies far from the public eye and international media attention. It is handily touched by tourism and the fished farms (4) and the fished villages there lie in very simple circumstances. Particularly heavily hit by the tsunami. Tourist development on the island is not planned, as the local community does not present a wealth of species. The beaches are not suitable for tourism due to the presence of occasional crocodiles and stingrays, which further isolated the families’ early return. Another focal point of the island is the rebuild of the pier.

**SWISS ASSISTANCE TO TSUNAMI VICTIMS**

Switzerland responded immediately after the tsunami by providing emergency assistance to the area affected by the disaster, which included a number of Swiss nationals, and by passing on the Swiss authorities to the affected areas of identifying victims. On a longer-term scale, Sustained collaboration with the fishing communities of two islands particularly heavily hit by the waves by helping 280 families to restore their livelihood.
SUSTAINABLE LAND USE

For decades, two distinct communities of new generations—the Moken, nomads of the Mergui Archipelago and the Moklen, littoral nomads along the coast of Phuket and Phang Nga provinces—have been living as ethnic minorities on the island of Kho Phaeng. These minorities do not possess citizenship and therefore enjoy only limited rights. For them, the schools in the villages where they reside are not always adequately staffed. They are often farthest, usually denied their fish collection, and have little interaction with the local community. When the renovation project was first implemented, it became clear that a specific approach was needed to understand their needs and to effectively campaign for their rights. A team of anthropologists with expertise on the Moken and Moklen communities was therefore brought on board in the project, the intention being that the islanders should participate in the planning and decision-making processes, taking into account their interests and vision of their future on the island.

Thanks to the project, the school at Thung Dap–a Moken village with about 12 families–was renovated and re-opened, and a teacher was appointed. Furthermore, the Moklen village of Mueang Mai was equipped with a school (Lan–which are also equipped differently—the project provided them with the type of boats they are accustomed to, appropriately equipped for greater efficiency. To help them diversify their sources of income and minimize their dependency on the sea, the Moken also benefited from a technical and logistic support to start kitchen gardens and fish farms, and they also set up a boat repair workshop. To draw attention to the sea-gypsies' cultural values and to lobby for their rights, the research team's work was compiled in a 63-page book, published in Thai and English, that has since been widely distributed.

Many aid organizations contributed so much energy to help the people rebuild their lives, it was obvious that a lifelong commitment and a lasting partnership was inevitable.

The project has been focused on the development of a long-term community-based project to address the needs of the islanders and to adequately staff the schools in the villages where they reside. The project has been instrumental in the preparation of a new land-use plan, an action that would not have been possible without the project.

The project was carried out by the Swiss government, a private enterprise and by a generous donation from the Swiss government.

The project has ensured the survival of the three communities whose existence was at but wiped out in a matter of minutes.

At the project's outset, SDC quickly mobilized the various technical and social skills required to integrate aspects such as disease and environmental planning, and the approach of training for citizens capable of gauging the benefits and the promotion of savings. To this end, the approach and methodological issues that were to shape the project later on were already defined.

The experience of other public and private partner organizations brought to the support the relief project.

In the area of alternative livelihood, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) is helping to raise awareness of the natural environment. In this context, villages are being asked to develop their own activity. Furthermore, after the establishment of higher gardens not only provides the livelihoods with additional earnings, but also serves as a proud occupation fostering harmony, weather, increasing their associations, and ensuring they have a more balanced diet.

Construction work cannot begin until the authorities have completed the appropriate investigations and permission requests. Construction work cannot begin until the authorities have completed the appropriate investigations and permission requests. The project is set to be completed in the next five years.

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