

EAST-WEST CENTER IN FOREFRONT OF DISASTER RESPONSE AND PREPAREDNESS

2005 was the year for action and reflection in response to forces of nature that caught the world unprepared. The devastation touched the East-West Center community deeply, igniting the resolve to reach out to the region, support relief and rebuilding efforts, and help prepare for future disasters.

Following the December 26, 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the East-West Center immediately established a Tsunami Relief Fund. An outpouring of support, from both the local community and EWC alumni worldwide, raised more than U.S. \$500,000 to aid the recovery process.

East-West Center staff and students also made numerous trips to the area to assist the humanitarian relief work and assess firsthand the impact of the tsunami. Terance W. Bigalke, director of the Center's Education Program, identified the critical need at many schools and universities. In turn, the majority of the relief funds went to rebuild educational infrastructure. In summer 2005, the Center entered into an agreement with the Ar-Raniry State Institute for Islamic Studies in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. The agreement enabled students to finish their degree program in Jakarta and then return to the heavily damaged provincial capital to teach. Accepting the funds, Rector Rusjdi Ali Muhammad expressed, "We're very grateful for this aid and cooperation and we are confident that this relationship will be a lasting one for both of our institutions and countries."



EWC Asia Pacific Leadership Program students assist the Thai Red Cross tsunami relief efforts.



An American teacher participating in AsiaPacificEd Program's Schools-Helping-Schools initiative connects with students in tsunami-affected areas of Thailand.

Another initiative included the Schools-Helping-Schools (SHS) project, established by the Center's AsiaPacificEd Program in collaboration with an EWC alumni network of teachers. The SHS initiative connected American students with those in tsunami-stricken schools in Thailand and Sri Lanka. AsiaPacificEd teachers across the U.S. raised funds with their students to provide needed supplies for their partner schools. Later in the year, the program brought 20 American teachers to Thailand to witness recovery efforts. In 2006, 25 American students will visit Thai schools in the affected areas and Thai students will travel to Honolulu, as part of a new program focused on youth building disaster-resilient communities.

Members of the East-West Center's Research Program were also deeply involved in tsunami-related activities. In collaboration

"As a community we have come together and reached out to help those in need on the other side of the world.... Thank you for the opportunity to share in the recovery efforts...and contribute to the good work of so many organizations."

J. SWINEHART
middle school teacher
from Denver, Colorado,
participating in
AsiaPacificEd's SHS project

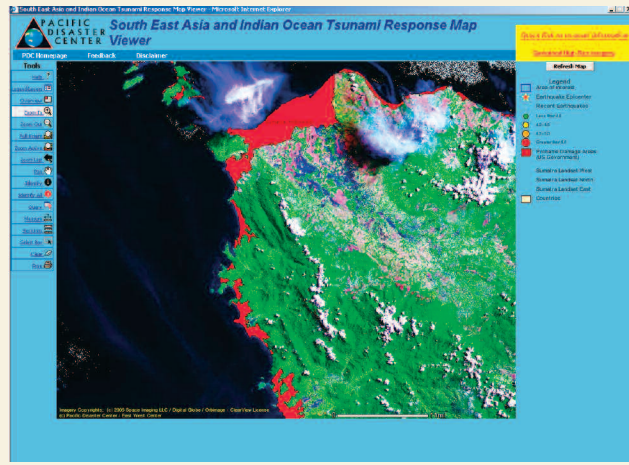


EWC's Education Program director, Terance Bigalke (2nd from left), meets with university faculty in Banda Aceh to discuss the rebuilding effort.

with the University of California at Berkeley, the EWC published the five-country study, "After the Tsunami: Human Rights of Vulnerable Populations." To support preparation for future disasters, EWC climate project coordinator Eileen Shea testified before a U.S. Senate committee in favor of legislation that would strengthen the ability of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to detect, forecast, and warn of natural disasters.

Focusing on disaster risk reduction and management, East-West Seminars held intensive workshops for Pacific leaders. In the initial seminar, directors of power utility organizations participated in a training on disaster risk reduction strategies to strengthen critical power infrastructure. In the subsequent seminar, national disaster managers convened in Papua New Guinea to finalize a ten-year Pacific islands action plan to help communities reduce their vulnerability, manage disasters, and enhance the security of civil society. The plan calls for regional organizations, including the East-West Center, to assist in developing and implementing comprehensive action plans for each island nation.

The EWC-managed Pacific Disaster Center (PDC) also played a dynamic role in disaster response and

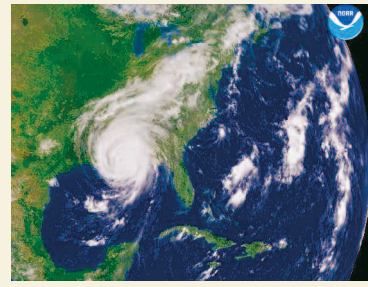


The Pacific Disaster Center develops the South East Asia and Indian Ocean Tsunami Response Map to aid humanitarian field operations.

preparedness. Within days after the tsunami struck, the PDC sent the latest technology to support rescue and recovery teams. The PDC then worked closely with governments in the distressed areas on future planning and the development of Disaster Warning Systems.

To assist Pacific island businesses, educators, and other sectors in preparing for natural disasters, the PDC created specialized Tsunami Awareness Kits. In addition to tsunami-related activities, they supported Hurricane Katrina relief operations and are currently mapping the course of the avian flu — an area that EWC researchers are analyzing as well.

Looking back over the year, EWC President Morrison reflected on the "amazing resilience of spirit and international cooperation that has sprung from tragedy." He stated: "Now we look towards the courage of the survivors as they find new hope and rebuild their lives. Their determination is an inspiration for our continued work in promoting an Asia Pacific community."



PDC's GIS Analyst Mike Napier provides geospatial support to field operations in Banda Aceh.