



June 2007

# US IOTWS Program Update

US Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System (IOTWS) Program  
*from advanced technologies to resilient communities*

## USAID Program Trains Thai Teams on Assessing Coastal Community Resilience

June 4-8, 2007, Phuket, Thailand

Baan Nam Kem, a coastal community in Phang Nga, Thailand, is making strides towards recovery from the 2004 tsunami, particularly regarding livelihoods. Disaster managers and coastal resource managers formed teams to conduct a practice assessment as part of a national Coastal Community Resilience (CCR) training. Since the 2004 tsunami, most fishing households have diversified their income. The community has also established its own banking system so members can access funds at favorable interest rates. Looking ahead, the CCR teams found that while villagers are aware of coastal hazards, improved community resilience still requires a better understanding of risks through scientific knowledge, stronger links with the national warning system, and improved community preparedness.



US IOTWS Program:  
Charachie Chongpaibul

Community radio announcer in Baan Nam Kem, Thailand, demonstrates warning process

## Indonesian National Consultation to Review DM Policies

June 14, 2007, Jakarta, Indonesia



A recent USAID-supported review of disaster management policies and institutional capacity in Indonesia was presented at a national consultation on June 14, 2007. The report shows that the country has reached several milestones in strengthening its capacity for early warning, preparedness, and response since the 2004 tsunami. Chief among the accomplishments highlighted is the passage of a new disaster management bill in the Parliament. It also outlines seven recommendations for further improvement including enhancing local early warning systems and establishing emergency operations centers. The seven recommendations are in the process of being addressed by the US IOTWS Program, other donors, and national agencies. The consultation provided a forum for disaster management stakeholders to give additional inputs to the report. The report is serving as a living document that is marking progress and priorities for Indonesian disaster management over time.

## Save Andaman Network and ETSU Present Findings of Natural Tsunami Warning Study

June 18–June 20, 2007, Krabi, Thailand

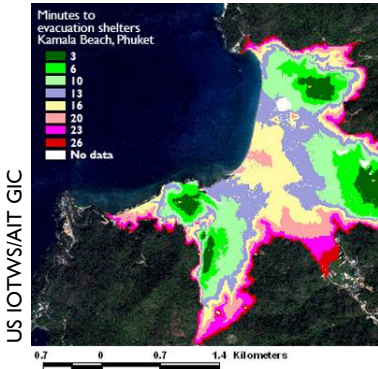
A study recently completed under a US IOTWS Program grant has identified promising new ways to increase the efficacy of tsunami warning systems. While warning systems often focus on technical components and official notification roles, they often neglect social considerations, informal notification mechanisms, and natural environmental alerts. Case studies have shown that tsunami education programs may not increase the level of community preparedness if they do not also address how communities evaluate risk, the benefits of mitigation efforts, and the need for personal responsibility. Working in Thai communities, a joint research team from Save



Andaman Network and East Tennessee State University (ETSU) identified an effective model for warning systems that integrates social and technical warning system components. The findings for improving tsunami warning systems, such as the greater inclusion of communities in national disaster management and warning efforts, were presented at an international workshop June 18-20, 2007, in Krabi, Thailand.

### US IOTWS Grant Recipients Map Potential Evacuation Routes in Phuket

June 25–June 28, 2007, Pathumthani, Thailand



The Geoinformatics Center of the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) and Thailand's Department of Disaster Mitigation and Prevention (DDPM) have prepared a case study on possible tsunami evacuation routes in Kamala Beach, Phuket, Thailand. Results show that people will be able to walk to safe areas within three to twenty-six minutes after a tsunami warning is issued. These findings provide valuable information for planning a safe and effective evacuation in case of a warning in one of Thailand's most popular tourist destinations. The case study, along with training on multi-hazard risk assessment, was conducted as part of the US IOTWS Small Grants Program. The training was held at AIT June 25-28, 2007, with twenty participants from various Thai government agencies. Case studies have also been conducted in India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka under the grant.

### Sri Lanka Conducts Disaster Simulation Exercise in Habaraduwa, Galle

June 27, 2007, Habaraduwa, Sri Lanka

Sri Lankan officials conducted a simulation exercise in Galle's Habaraduwa division, to show how Incident Command Systems (ICS) can be applied within division-level units of disaster management agencies. The exercise simulated a disaster arising from widespread flooding and showcased successful ICS mechanisms that participants from sectors spanning health, emergency services, infrastructure, utilities, hotels, and NGOs will be able to apply in future emergency situations. Following the simulation, organizers from the Sri Lankan government, the US IOTWS Program, and the American Red Cross identified weaknesses and opportunities to improve existing disaster response plans.



ICS team conducting an operational briefing before the disaster simulation

S.H.M. Fakhruddin

## UPCOMING US IOTWS PROGRAM AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

### Study Tour to US on ICS and Disaster Management, July 14-28, 2007

Vallejo, California USA

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### International Tsunami Training Institute Certification Program, July 21-August 2, 2007

Seattle, Washington USA

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### Tsunami Alert Rapid Notification System Regional Workshop, August 13-14, 2007

Sanur, Indonesia

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### Coastal Community Resilience Regional Workshop, August 14-16, 2007

Sanur, Indonesia

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### About the US Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System (IOTWS) Program

The US IOTWS Program is part of the international effort to develop tsunami warning system capabilities in the Indian Ocean following the December 2004 tsunami disaster. The US program adopts an “end-to-end” approach—addressing regional, national, and local aspects of a truly functional warning system—along with multiple other hazards that threaten communities in the region. In partnership with the international community, national governments, and other partners, the US program offers technology transfer, training, and information resources to strengthen the tsunami warning and preparedness capabilities of national and local stakeholders in the region.

For more information please visit [www.us-iotws.gov](http://www.us-iotws.gov).