TAFREN/ILO Livelihoods: Cash for Work

Technical Paper #1:

Lessons Learned and Research Findings on the Current Cash For Work Situation and their Influence on Project Design

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Abstract
Ms. Tournee and Ms. Caron are independent consultants who carried out field research in three tsunami affected districts on key issues related to Cash for Work initiatives. These districts are the initial districts where TAFREN will launch intensive field operations in support of the Livelihoods program for people whose livelihoods have been adversely affected by the tsunami. These operations will start in July 2005, at the same time as the government plans to terminate the general cash and income transfers to tsunami affected people. Once the cash and income support ends employment and income opportunities will be very important to enable women and men to bridge the gap from relief to (re-) establishing sustainable livelihoods. During field visits, the authors held focus group discussions and conducted individual interviews with a wide range of stakeholders involved in Cash for Work and related relief activities. The paper gives a snap shot of the situation on the ground and looks at key aspects that should be considered when formulating well designed and effective cash for work projects.

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1 Edited version by Cynthia Caron and David Salter-(ILO)
2 Jaffna, Batticaloa, and Galle.
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Acronyms and Abbreviations
ADB Asian Development Bank
CBO Community-Based Organisation
CFWP Cash for Work Project
CTA Chief Technical Advisor
DCS Department of Census and Statistics
DivS Divisional Secretary
DS / GA District Secretary / Government Agent
FAO Food and Agriculture Organization
GIS Global Information System
GN Grama Niladhari
GTZ Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
ICRC International Committee for the Red Cross
ILO International Labour Organization
(INTERNATIONAL) Non-Government Organisation
IPEC International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
IRAP Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning
ITDG Intermediate Technology Development Group
LBA Labour-Based Appropriate Technology
LI Labour-Intensive
MIS Management Information Systems
MPCLG Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government
ODA Overseas Development Assistance
PC Provincial council
PS Pradeshiya Sabha
RIRP Rapid Income Recovery Program
SLILG Sri Lankan Institute for Local Government
TAFREN Task Force to Rebuild the Nation
UNDP United Nations Development Program
UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF United Nations Children’s Fund
UNOPS United Nations Office for Project Services
WFP World Food Program
1. SUMMARY OF GENERAL FINDINGS

The findings in this technical paper result from information gathered from government officials, (NGO) staff, and local community leaders in three tsunami-affected districts. The main findings as they pertain to the design of potential Cash for Work initiatives include:

- There is general consensus that once government cash transfers and food benefits cease there will be significant interest in participating in cash for work projects. It is therefore important that the timing of the activities corresponds to this event;

- Project participation at Divisional and District level coordination meetings as well as coordinating with the Pradeshiya Sabha is necessary to foster good cooperation. Such action is especially important in Jaffna;

- There is a continued need to remove debris through cash for work interventions.
  - However, during the first TAFREN CFW coordination meeting\(^4\), a number of major agencies indicated that based upon their experience the amount of debris cleaning needed to be done was quickly diminishing.

- Some donor agencies are planning to phase out their cash for work programs within the next three months. The termination of these projects will reduce the current competition for labour between organizations implementing CFW, but also will reduce employment opportunities for those who are not equipped to return to their previous livelihood activities;

- Cash for work has become synonymous with debris clearing and minor construction, etc. It is not always associated with engineered construction of infrastructure. It is necessary to develop cash for work projects that address the infrastructure priorities of the affected communities, as well as continue with the debris clearing;

- (I)NGO and government officials alike support opening up the category of project beneficiaries for CFW to include all poor people who need employment;

- In most cases, communities have been consulted on their immediate priorities, albeit in a rapid and less thorough process than would be anticipated in a development context, but this haste reflects the need for swift action;

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\(^3\) Not all debris removal is possible by hand, and therefore separate clearing of large debris will need to be carried out using equipment.

\(^4\) TAFREN Donor Coordination Meeting, 18 May 2005
• The capacity of communities and their associated CBOs to undertake CFW activities varies greatly across and within districts as well as within Grama Nilidhari divisions themselves;

• Communities are not implementing cash for work projects directly, but rather as partners in the implementation. Often, financial management remains with the NGOs, Government or Donor Agencies. There were no written agreements or contracts signed with the communities at the worksites visited;

• In the Phase 1 districts of Batticaloa, Galle and Jaffna, the number of (I)NGOs operational on the ground is between 20-50. It is very difficult to find a complete comprehensive list of all I(NGOs) working in any one of these three districts;

• It may be difficult to identify one NGO partner for the project in a single division, as the NGOs have divided up the support to communities and transition settlements among themselves or as directed.

• Communities have the responsibility of identifying participants for cash for work projects and this is often organized on a one person per family basis;

• Women’s participation in CFW is reported to be less than men’s often as a result of the one person per family rule, which results in men or elder sons participating. To address this situation, some NGOs have held special awareness programs and as a result more women came forward for CFW especially widows and those from single headed households;

• Communities with existing Community-Based Organizations (CBO) that have book-keeping experience and store-keeping experience will be able to take on some of the responsibilities for implementing cash for work activities. Due to the need for rapid delivery, it will not be possible to build up sufficient capacity within the communities for them to supervise the infrastructure works without additional support. This additional support will need to be provided through the project, either directly or through partner organizations;

• In the case of complex infrastructure, community leaders recognize the need for contracting out the works to a local contractor;

• There is a serious shortage of skilled labour. This shortage is likely to affect the implementation of works as they require both skilled and unskilled labour. In the case of unskilled labour, there will be a need to increase the level of supervision required;

• Some organisations are offering wages above the pre-tsunami market rates, possibly to attract workers during a period when most tsunami-affected
individuals are receiving cash benefits and food rations. Some communities view this practice as harmful. Attempts to agree upon and set standardized wage rates among implementing agencies at the district level has not been successful, as some implementers continued to offer higher rates. From information available on wage rates, it is recommended that a rate in the range of Rs 300 to Rs 350 would be sufficient to attract workers without distorting the market wage rates.

- At the above mentioned TAFREN First Donor Coordinatin Meeting, it was reported that many District Secretaries are promoting a Rs. 400 daily wage.

- An observation from some cash for work sites, not necessarily those visited, but those seen during while traveling, is that there is insufficient attention to worker safety, particularly when working adjacent to heavily trafficked roads;

- At the District, Divisional, and Pradeshiya Sabha levels, there is little capacity to prepare cash for work projects, although ideas exist (i.e. “greening” of reconstructed barriers along the coast, improvement of drainage systems, roadworks, landscaping of damaged public areas, etc.). Despite having ideas, Government Departments have not managed to prepare proposals. (Estimates for roadworks and major infrastructure have been prepared). The lack of “off the shelf” cash for work activities was perceived as a shortcoming when organizations and funding agencies came to meetings prepared to fund cash for work projects, but the government departments did not have any proposals to lay before them;

- A decision has been taken to have a 100 and 200 metre buffer zone along the coast. However, there will be buildings that will remain in this area, and the land remains privately owned. It will be difficult to do debris clearing within this area, unless on commonly-owned property or at the specific request of communities.
2 PROJECT DESIGN AND STRATEGY DECISIONS

2.1 Entry Point and Outline Strategy

The common entry point for a project should be the affected communities, their leaders and their community-based organisations (CBOs). What will vary, will be the level at which the community actively participates in the project. The degree of responsibility of the community will be based on (i) community capacity and (ii) the technical complexity of the project chosen.

The starting point should be the identification and prioritisation of the community’s needs. Where priorities have been established through NGOs or local government, these priorities should be verified to ensure that they have not changed in the recent intervening period, and that the wishes of different sections of the community are included.

Having identified and prioritised needs, the next step is to identify sub-projects that would be suitable for implementation through cash for work (i.e., debris clearing, environmental conservation or enhancement or construction). The sub-projects will lend themselves to implementation using labour-based methods thus enabling significant numbers of workers from the community to access temporary employment.

The decision on whether to implement CFW directly through the community or by contracting out works to a local contractor will depend, as stated above, on the capacity and skills within the community and the complexity of the works. In either case there will be need for external support to the communities.

Where communities are fragmented, and consultation processes are difficult to initiate, works identified by the Pradeshiya Sabha and the Divisional Secretary could be initiated for implementation through a contractor. In this case the community would simply receive cash wages by working with the contractor, but they would have little or no participation in the decision-making process itself.

2.2 Timing

Timing of CFW activities is vital. To date, the (I)NGO sector has led the way in organizing and providing CFW opportunities in affected areas. They have accumulated important experience that should be drawn upon in project design.

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5 NGOs will be vetted by the government. After the tsunami, new NGOs started to emerge compelling the government to issue a moratorium on the registration of new NGOs. On February 1, 2005, previously-registered NGOs in Sri Lanka who had been working in the country were required to register with a new body, the Centre for Non-governmental Sector (CNGS) housed in the Ministry of Finance. As of 4 May 2005, 59 INGOs and 188 local NGOs have successfully passed the CNGS’s registration requirements. As of 2 May 2005, the CNGS has recommended that another 78 organizations be registered.
July is an important month, as the last general tsunami cash and income transfer payments are scheduled to end in June. CFW programs will be able to address the total number of affected persons, however, they should assist in “bridging the gap” by providing short-term opportunities to earn income. Some affected families are already returning to their previous livelihoods, but this will be a gradual process, depending on the speed of loans, grants and replacement of equipment. Certainly the need for cash for work should reduce with time, but the pre-tsunami figures for under/unemployment indicate that employment and income generating opportunities will need to continue to allow time for the expansion of community driven development programs that will address broader issues of poverty. Linkages to the cash grant program and livelihood recovery will be facilitated through TAFREN – see below.

2.3 Balancing community planning and management with speed of response necessary in the Sri Lankan post-tsunami context

Working with communities in the development context requires considerable inputs in terms of time and project staff before a project starts and during implementation weighted against ownership, community commitment, quality of product, and capacity and confidence building within the community. However, in the transitional period from emergency to recovery, the length of lead-in time in the development context (6 months to 2 years) is entirely inappropriate. It is equally unacceptable to have a top down process with no consultation. A compromise is needed that will enable speed of delivery while incorporating as many of the longer-term community development goals as is possible.

In many communities, even some of the transition housing communities, a needs assessment has been carried out. One participatory method has been to bring together the community in one session. A combined introduction to the project is made and then the meeting is split into groups (elders, men, women, youth) to ensure that all sections of the community have a chance to contribute their ideas. The findings of these small group discussions are brought together to agree on a final list of prioritised needs. (I)NGOs doing this work have the needs assessment documents with them. At present, most Samurdhi officials have been concentrating on their work on providing benefit payments and have not been active in consulting the affected communities on non-personal post-tsunami needs.

2.4 Targeting

2.4.1 Tsunami affected

The definitions below are an attempt to define the tsunami affected communities and their members.

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6 Adapted from: Cynthia M. Caron, Ph.D. Final Report to UNOPS on Cash for Work Field Visits. 12 May 2005.
1. **Acutely tsunami-affected persons**: individuals who lost family members, homes, possessions, and livelihoods.

2. **Moderately tsunami-affected persons**: individuals who have completely lost their livelihoods due to the tsunami, but may not have lost a family member or their residence.

3. **Indirectly tsunami-affected persons**: individuals who have suffered a *loss* in business or livelihood opportunities due to the disruption of their social and economic networks and associated infrastructure.

4. **Host community members**: In the war context, communities that receive or ‘host’ displaced persons are considered war-affected. To that end, with the influx of families living with relatives and friends or in transitional shelter, and with the probable resettlement of tsunami-affected families in the interior because of the 100-meter rule (200m in the N&E) or fear to live near the sea, interior communities are host communities to the tsunami displaced.

5. **Local Poor People**: These are people who have not been very affected by the tsunami but are poor and considered to be vulnerable.

Within a community, a possible approach is to allow all whom are interested and willing to take up the work opportunity at the agreed wage rate an opportunity to participate (further elaborated below). Projects should reach into the interior and target pockets of need such as communities with an influx of tsunami-displaced persons.

### 2.4.2 Geographical targeting and coordination

There are a wide variety of coordination meetings taking place at the district and divisional levels. The main meeting at district level is the meeting of the District Coordination Committee chaired by the District Secretary. There are also coordination meetings on sector issues, (livelihoods, housing, water and sanitation) for the exchange of information about programmes and future intentions. Various databases are being compiled and up-dated. However there seems to be a variety of inconsistencies in the data collected.

Under the TAFREN RIRP framework it is envisaged that RIRP committees will be formed or existing committees adapted. Committees will operate at the District, Divisional and Village levels. The formation of the committees and the finalisation of their terms of references will be done by TAFREN leadership. Coordination and geographical distribution of cash for work projects and the linkage to the cessation of cash grants will be dealt with by these bodies and at national level. Therefore it is important to cooperate with the coordination mechanisms, but not duplicate them.

### 2.4.3 Individual targeting

Reaching the poorest of the poor requires targeting and awareness within communities. Setting a wage rate that is slightly below the prevailing market rates will assist targeting
and selection. Provided that the wage rate selected is above the legal minimum wage and represents a “fair” wage and not an “exploitive” wage.

For worker selection, proper announcements should be made within the community and in appropriate areas to inform marginalized members of the community. Announcement methods include: society meetings, community-notice boards, temple and other places of religious worship, CBO’s buildings including women’s CBOs, and in public places frequented by different sections of the population (i.e. women, youth, elders).

A ballot system for selection of the workers, and their sequence in rotation, removes favouritism in recruitment. Rotation of workers can be adopted if demand outstrips availability of opportunities. At present rotation is happening on a two to three day basis. For practical reasons of work organisation and to ensure that participants are those in need of work, rotation should be weekly if not fortnightly.

Special recruitment arrangements should be made for less physically able persons as there will be administrative tasks within the community works (i.e. site record keeping, store keeping).

All community members who work should be paid. Wherever possible, skilled workers should be sought from within the community implementing the project.

2.5 Wage Setting

The following information is the result of enquiries in the districts and at national level.

2.5.1 Batticaloa District

Interviews with NGO staff in Batticaloa discovered that there is a significant level of hostility between organizations with respect to implementing CFW. Many Batticaloa NGOs are of the opinion that all parties agreed to fix CFW rates at 350 for unskilled and 500 for skilled labor. But, two important organizations were identified for breaking this agreement. Persons interviewed stated that one organization was paying 450-500 for unskilled labour and 800 for skilled labour and Rs. 500 to assistant masons and carpenters. The ensuing labour competition that prevails led one NGO worker to comment, “They are stealing our labor.” In the villages where a third important organization is implementing projects, it is paying Rs. 362.50 a day for unskilled labor and Rs. 600 a month for skilled labor. According to information gathered from community leaders, before the tsunami unskilled labor earned Rs. 350 a day. All cash for work is paid for being present for 8 hours; it is not paid based on a quantity of output or achieved results.

Community leaders interviewed said they if they wanted to hire workers, they would be prepared to pay a rate of Rs 300 to 350, (Rs 300 being equivalent to a pre-tsunami rate) but that no-one would now come to work for that rate, given the competition from higher paying cash for work schemes.
2.5.2 Galle District
Unskilled workers are being paid Rs 350 - 400 per day for an eight-hour work day. All wages are based on daily payments, rather than individual or group tasks (productivity-based payments). Some organisations are paying Rs 400 despite attempts to have an agreed wage rate of Rs 350. Estimates of pre-tsunami wage rates are in the range of Rs 300 to 350 per day. An unskilled worker may work for less than Rs300 per day, with the addition of all meals and free accommodation or his/her travel being paid.

Wages for alternative employment have been difficult to estimate as often there are additional payments in kind such as food and accommodation. When extras are offered, the actual wage rate decreases.

The 2005 Government rate for unskilled labour in Galle District is Rs 350.

2.5.3 Jaffna District
Unskilled workers are being paid Rs 400 - 450 per day for a six to eight hour working day. In one case, men’s gangs are working eight hours and the separate women’s gangs are working fewer hours (longer lunch break), but the wages remain the same, Rs 450. One major organization is paying Rs 300 for a six-hour working day. All wages are based on daily payments, rather than individual or group tasks.

Government estimates of pre-tsunami wage rates are in the range of Rs 350, which have now increased to at least Rs400.

Alternative employment, such as weeding for women, is seasonal. For four hours, the wage rate is Rs 150 plus a meal. For six hours work, the wage rate is Rs 250 plus a meal.

Wage rates also reflect the gender imbalance in wages, where women generally receive lower wages than men. Women who sell fish can earn Rs 200 to Rs 300 for three hours work. The current private sector labour wage is estimated to be between Rs 350 to 400. Another important organization is paying the 2005 Government rate for Jaffna District of Rs 350.

ICRC and ACF together with CARITAS are investigating wage rates and livelihoods/incomes, respectively, but they have not released results as yet.

2.5.4 National Statistics
The majority of the published statistics on wages and working hours are not current, but for 2003. Available data from the Central Bank of Sri Lanka can be found in the 2004 Annual Report. The nominal informal private sector daily wages for the agriculture sector vary from Rs 304 to Rs 361 for men, and Rs 199 to Rs 230 for women. In the construction sector it is Rs 314 for unskilled labour/semi-skilled helper. This is an average for 2004, and there will have been a further increase in the first six months of 2005.

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7 Central Bank of Sri Lanka Annual Report – 2004, P82 - 84
2.5.5 **Recommendation on Wage Rates**
From the findings above, it is recommended that wage rates be set within the range of Rs 300 to Rs 350 per day or at the government rate of Rs 350 for tasks equivalent to an eight-hour working day.

2.6 **Current levels of activity**
The current levels of activity vary from district to district. In the case of Galle and Jaffna, once government assistance stops, there is a great need for the rapid expansion of cash for work. In the case of Batticaloa, there is already considerable NGO activity in cash for work and there would be a case for the project to concentrate on cash for work that requires a greater degree of technical input, so as not to “compete” with debris cleaning and other simpler activities.

2.7 **Contractor’s obligations**
Clauses should be added to all contracts requiring:-

- Recruitment of all unskilled labour from within the community;
- Payment of the agreed daily wage rate for unskilled workers;
- Equal pay for men and women;
- Recruitment of both men and women through a ballot system.

Such clauses have successfully been used in many international programmes and an investigation of the Sri Lankan contract system indicates that there will be no barriers to these types of additions.

2.8 **Infrastructure Needs**
There have been several assessments made of infrastructural needs. In many cases estimates have been prepared by the government, and they are awaiting funding for implementation. For cash for work, the most appropriate works will be environmental restoration or improvements, debris cleaning that is appropriate for labour rather than for machinery, repair of small irrigation schemes or E and unclassified roads. For example, in Jaffna there are 90 kilometers of road under the jurisdiction of local authority (i.e., Urban Councils, Pradeshiya Sabha) that are identified for immediate rehabilitation.  

2.9 **Institutional capacity**
From the visits to the 3 districts, it was established that while Technical Officers are posted to government offices, the general levels of technical staff were low in Divisional and Pradeshiya Sabha offices. In addition some of the posts were not filled. Overall, due to the amount of work that needs to be done, Technical Officers are busy and their capacities are being stretched.

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2.9.1 Provincial Councils
Much of the planning capacity rests in the Provincial Councils. They are a source of technical advice and support to the Districts and the PSs. In Jaffna District planning is being supported through the Northern Rehabilitation Project, and in the Southern Province planning and mapping is being supported through UNDP/REAP with part of the E and unclassified road network prioritised for funding by the ADB.

2.9.2 District Secretary/Government Agent
DS offices are stretched by the amount of coordination and number of meetings for which they are responsible for organizing and attending. Coordination of the provision of temporary accommodation and finding a solution for permanent housing is a top priority. Technical and financial staffing levels are at a minimal level.

2.9.3 Divisional Secretary
Again the resources of the office particularly in the case of senior staff are extremely stretched. Technical officers are minimal in number and some posts are not filled. In addition the office facilities vary from division to division, but some are in need of improvement to create a suitable atmosphere for working.

2.9.4 Pradeshiya Sabha
Again the resources of the office particularly senior staff are extremely stretched. Technical officers are small in number and some posts are not filled.

2.9.5 Grama Niladari
The GN has good information on his/her communities and is an important contact/entry point for community-based work. CBOs are additional focal points. GN involvement in coordination at village level varies and in some areas his/her ordinary workload has been reduced as a result of the increase of tsunami relief activities.

2.9.6 (I) NGOs
(I)NGOs often have a combination of community development and technical staff. They have ably demonstrated an ability to rapidly respond to community needs and deliver CFW projects. However, some of their skills could be up-graded, especially as debris clearing reduces and infrastructure improvement increases.

2.9.7 Conclusions
The Divisional Secretary and the PSs should be key partners in the delivery of CFW projects, and the strengthening of their capacity is important for delivery. Other delivery channels through (I)NGOs and the private sector also are available.

2.10 Operation and maintenance
The projects implemented under cash for work should be designed using a minimum life cycle cost approach. This approach will attempt to minimize the maintenance burden that
will remain with the communities and in some cases the DS or PS. Training should be provided for operation and necessary maintenance, and perhaps more importantly for the organisation and funding of the maintenance.

2.11 Special Approaches in the North and East

Based on investigations in the North and East, the approach to cash for work at the community level will not vary as the districts, division and (I)NGOs structures are present as they are in other parts of the country. What varies in these districts is the surrounding context. Consultation is vital to the success of the project, but even more so in the north and east. As stated above, the framework for consultation should be through the TAFREN RIRP committees. There are also special issues to be taken into consideration, such as the difficulties fishermen are facing in returning to sea, and the resulting implications for provision of alternative sources of income until this issue is resolved. In addition, the shortage of skilled workers for construction, although a serious problem in the country as a whole, is even more acute in some areas of the north. The result may be that an increased level of support and supervision will be required to guide less experienced workers.

With regard to a seeming discrepancy between unemployment figures and those willing to work, the reasons may be two fold (i) the receipt of benefit payments and (ii) the receipt of remittances from abroad which play a role in the economy of the north and east.
3 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Support to communities

The need for community support will vary depending on their capacity. Community support can be sourced from a variety of actors including:

- Project staff
- Government: District, Pradeshiya Sabha, Division, Grama Niladari
- (I)NGOs

In the visited districts, Batticaloa, Galle and Jaffna, (I)NGOs numbering between 20 and 50, are operational on the ground. Entry to and cooperation with communities and their leaders can be facilitated either through the government structures or existing supporting NGOs. In many cases, NGOs have assisted communities in carrying out their own rapid needs assessments and therefore they are well placed to assist in the priority verification and to support communities during planning and implementation. This being said, a project may wish to develop the capacity at the district, divisional and PS levels to respond to community needs. All activities at the community level have to be approved by either Divisional Secretary or at Pradeshiya Sabha level. Identified projects are often submitted through, or together with the Grama Niladari. In the case of a cash for work project, the general framework of the project operating in a district will need the agreement of the District Secretary.

3.2 Level of Community Management and Implementation

As a result of investigations (see end of this section) it is clear that while communities have existing CBOs and that some of these CBOs carry out minor works within the Division and with the Pradeshiya Sabha, the majority of communities are not sufficiently capable to take on the full “Community Driven Development (CDD)” approach of managing the whole implementation process themselves. This CDD approach would also not be appropriate given the multiple demands on individuals and communities in the aftermath of the tsunami. Once priorities have been established, two implementation approaches can be considered for a CFW project.

Approach One: sign an agreement for implementation with all partners: (i.e. the community, the community support organisation, the technical design and supervision partner, the project, and the government agency responsible for the infrastructure chosen, (and funder depending on the flow of funds). While this seems to be excessive, one or two of the roles will be combined under one organisation. (i.e. the project can be the provider of technical input or the (I) NGO provider of community support and technical input). The DS or PS could provide technical support, or community support, as well as being the responsible government agency. The approach must be kept flexible in order to make the best use of available capacities in the districts and divisions. Basic responsibilities can be in a standard agreement that should not exceed 6 pages.
It is unlikely that the community will control the funding, but who will control it will depend on the route of the flow of funds. The community will be principally responsible for the organisation of labour and the care of handtools and stores provided to them.

**Approach Two:** contract the works out to a commercial contractor or qualified NGO. In this case, the community has prioritized the works to do done, but only will provide paid labour to the project.

A diagram outlining the community approach for the project is below.
3.3 Lessons learned from current Cash for Work activities

Views on CFW: A common reaction when discussing CFW with local NGOs and civil society leaders was that CFW should be stopped. Many individuals stated that CFW violates the principle of “DO NO HARM” as it makes people psychologically and
economically dependent. Instead of CFW, donors should focus on long-term livelihood development in order to make people more independent. Additionally, it was mentioned that CFW was not ‘true’ community participation as CFW-implementing organizations claim. Paying a community to build public and community works in their own community is not community participation in its best sense.

On implementing directly with local community groups: Batticaloa NGOs said that communities were unable to make decisions in the post-tsunami context and are very dependent on others. One NGO worker said that they were in the process of addressing community building and CBO strengthening, but that it would be 6 to 9 months before communities would be able to take over a project and manage it (i.e., the community-driven development model). Another NGO staff person said that it is difficult to know whom the decision maker in the family is as distributions are in the husband’s name, but traditionally decision making was the wife’s responsibility. Thus, at the household and community level, decision making roles are less definite in the post-tsunami period. Another reason given as to why communities are unable to make decisions is that they are scattered across camps.

From community visits with NGOs and in discussions with other actors in Jaffna, it is apparent that CBOs are active in gathering information about the needs of their members, and interacting with NGOs and government departments. They are supported by NGOs in assessment of needs and priorities. A more rapid method was developed to address the speed of response required in the post tsunami period. The responsibility for cash for work is being divided between the community and the support organization - (I)NGOs. The community is responsible for organizing the participants; support organizations administer wages and supervise the site activities. In Jaffna the strongest CBO is the fishing cooperative society.

Organisation of activities: Debris clearing activities are being organised on a daily attendance basis, there are no allocation of tasks, or output against the wages paid. One of the difficulties facing cash for work is the acute shortage of skilled workers who are often necessary to work along side unskilled labourers. This shortage will be acute if proposals are developed that entail work exceeding the demands and skills of debris clearing.

Planning: The Northern Rehabilitation Programme supported by GTZ is providing planning support to the district and selected divisions. They are happy to cooperate with complementary activities and indeed would begin to withdraw themselves from this area of operation, if suitable support for the district was identified.

Visits were made to Galle on two separate and independent trips on April 28th, 29th and May 5th. Interviews were conducted with a range of actors representing: provincial council government, local government, international organizations, NGO sector, and the private sector. A summary of key points follows.
Status of CFW: Among the agencies engaged in CFW are: Red Cross, Project Galle 2005, USAID-OTI, CHF International and the UNDP Transitions Program. NGOs were supportive of increasing CFW opportunities as debris clearing needs to be done and people need employment; many persons interviewed noted that CFW was useful as hundreds of people remain in camps with little to do all day. In addition, many fishermen are afraid to go back to sea and need jobs in the short term. NGO persons engaged in CFW said that with supervision skill levels had not been a problem with respect to drainage systems in camps.

Wage rates vary. Supervisors, also tsunami victims, are employed at Rs 500 per day, and lunch if travelling from outside the area. NGOs are trying to locate as many of the skills that are needed within the community itself. One individual commented that it was strating to be difficult to organize work parties of 30-40 persons as labour demand was high. Several people advocated that CFW should only last 4-6 months followed by long-term livelihood development. Several organizations stated that CFW should be done in the interior (beyond 200 meters) and that beneficiary groups be expanded to include the poor people in the area.

CFW appears to be concentrated in the Galle Municipal area and in areas adjacent to the Galle Divisional boundary. Problems with the JVP were given as one reason why few (I)NGOs were working in Balapitiya division. One well-respected Samurdhi officer in Balapitiya took one of the researchers on a tour of tsunami-damaged roads that fall under Pradeshiya Sabha management and discussed the role that local government and CBOs could play in this particular area.

On implementing directly with local community groups: NGOs said that many of the CBOs that they were working with were established post-tsunami. Newly-established CBOs are made up of various committees (fisheries, income, housing & land, women & children, and health & environment). These committees collect data from community members on the above topics to ascertain changes in the community. The committees meet once a week to discuss progress and share information. Three members from each committee form an apex organization at the village level that meets every other Saturday to prioritize which issues to take up in the following weeks and allocate said tasks. NGOs said that community members were meeting regularly and could prioritize their needs and manage projects in the post-tsunami context with minimum assistance from NGOs.

Some organizations are speeding up participatory methods to work with communities entering into the community through the Grama Nilidhari (GN). Once an idea for a project has been agreed upon with the GN and community it is forwarded by the GN to the DS and the DS gives the donor the ‘ok’ to implement the proposal. The donor evaluates the proposal and monitors participation. Donors who normally would use the CBO route for activities are post–tsunami following the recommended government
routes. Their longer-term goal is to start area development/sustainable livelihood programs.

Current survival strategies: A large number of families keep their tents on the road side, but do not occupy them. They station a person at the tent daily as only people who are occupying tents are eligible for free goods. There are also accounts of parents not sending their children to school but keeping them behind as persons/agencies who distribute free goods are more inclined to give them to women with a small child(ren). When asked why the child is not going to school, the parent replies that the child is too traumatized or “mentally upset” to go to school.

A number of people who could be working are not. For example: one woman’s husband is a bus driver. He lost his driver’s license in the tsunami and cannot pay the Rs. 2000 for a new license; therefore he is not working. Another public servant, a policeman, claims that he is not going to work because he does not have a house. When asked if he was concerned if he would lose his job, he repeated that he couldn’t work because he has lost his house. When asked how he provides for his family, he said foreigners bring them things like mattresses and milk powder and promptly asked the interviewer what s/he was going to give them. A lot of fishermen in the area are not working because they have yet to receive equipment.
4 CASE STUDIES

Reports from Community-Level Discussions with Grama Nilidharis (GN) and CBO leaders (Conducted in 3 of the 8 tsunami-affected divisions of Batticaloa District)

Due to the diversity within communities with respect to “tsunami-affectedness”, the project will need to follow a flexible, context-driven methodology in its strategies of implementation among local communities. The case studies below demonstrate the variability within and between communities and elucidate the difficulties in defining which communities are more tsunami affected than others and which communities would make better project beneficiaries.

Case Study One

Comparative Study of Two Adjacent GN Divisions in Kallady (Mannunai North DS)

A. The village of Trichchendoor had approximately 1100 families before the tsunami. Most families lost their homes and livelihoods and are scattered. 409 families are scattered across four different camps. 290 families are living with neighbors and relations. 492 families have returned to their homes. All of the masons and carpenters are employed in reconstruction at Rs. 800 a day. Some of the men are going for fishing. Many of the men who stay behind in camps either do nothing or occasionally go for CFW.

There are three CBOs in the village: Women’s Development Forum (WDF), Rural Development Society (RDS) and Samurdhi Task Force. These organizations meet more regularly than they did before the tsunami (almost everyday). The membership the WDF has increased 100% to 60 members as women want access to micro-finance to start small businesses. These three CBOs also work together. They are currently doing shramadana to build a temporary nursery school building to replace the one lost in the tsunami. In a focus group discussion with 10 individuals including group leaders and the Grama Sevaka, a number of problems were identified and prioritized with respect to the kinds of community works their organizations could cooperate on in a CFW context: first, the desire to build a sand bund at the end of the beach to hold back another tsunami; second, drainage along the road that leads from the CEB sub station to create channels so the water drains into the lagoon and not into the village; third, building a new GS office; fourth, building a vocational training center to learn how to build things like bricks. In the case of direct community grant, the accountant at the RDS is very good and could handle the funds. The GS, WDF president and secretary of the RDS would coordinate labor. They mentioned that they would need assistance with surveying, machinery and architecture/design for any project. They stated that CFW is necessary, as they have heard that one popular CFW program was going to finish on May 15th.

Adjacent Village

B. Adjacent to Trichchendoor is the village of Kallady. Kallady had 567 families before the tsunami. 22 village individuals died. At the time of the interview in early May, everyone had returned to his or her own home (no one remained in a camp or with
relations). All of the masons and carpenters were working. All of the people who did odd jobs or who were fishing before the tsunami have gone back to their previous jobs. No one in the village was going for CFW. There are about 150 students with O-level or A-level qualifications who are either not working or are working as mason or carpenter assistants for Rs. 500 per day. The RDS and STF in the village are active. When asked if the situation with respect to employment in his village was almost back to normal, he said, “you could say that (sollalam)”

Case Study Two
Comparative Study of Two Adjacent GN Divisions in Pasikudah (Valachchenai DS)

A. The village of Kalkudah has had a CFW program for the past three months funded by the Red Cross. The daily wage for debris clearing is Rs. 360 for 8 hours of work. The RDS office was destroyed in the tsunami, but the organization remains active and is helping the Red Cross to coordinate the CFW program in the village. People in the village are employed in the CFW and some go for fishing. The PS cleared the main road that runs through Kalkudah and Pasikudah in January.

Adjacent Village

B. The village of Pasikudah is adjacent to Kalkudah. 200 people from this village died in the tsunami including 65 children. The researcher held a discussion with Pasikudah residents who are residing in a camp called Sangilipalam, namely, the Secretary of the Sangilipalam camp, a member of the camp’s tsunami action committee, and the secretary of the RDS from Kalkudah (mentioned above). Pasikudah never had its own RDS; its RDS activities always fell under the Kalkaduh RDS. No debris clearing has occurred in Pasikudah and it is full of demarcated mine fields. As they understand the situation, Red Cross does not have permission to work in Pasikudah.

Only 30 men from the village have returned to fishing after the local priest gave them boats. The rest of those living in the camp sit and “do nothing”. It is unclear whether or not they were invited to participate in the CFW program at Kalkudah. Some men said yes they were invited, but didn’t go because they want to clear their own village. Other men said no they were not invited. Pasikudah falls within the 100-meter buffer zone so the GN with the assistance of the local MP is trying to find 15 acres of land for resettlement. The MP found an area of private land and offered to pay Rs. 100,000. Thereafter, a priest offered Rs. 125,000. The priest will be taking possession of the land. Their camp is located on private land and the owner has given them only six months to stay there. After that the families do not know where they will go.

The camp secretary and the GN said that the RDS is a stronger more capable society in these villages than the STF and would be able to undertake rural infrastructure projects. However, this community has no geographical (physical) place within which to do such works. They are trying to get 40 acres of land from the Coconut Cultivation Board.
Case Study Three

*Interview with Grama Nilidhari, Kaluthavalai –2 (Kalwanchekuddy DS)*

There were 315 families in the village before the tsunami. With the loss of family members due to the tsunami, families have migrated to live closer to one another. There are now 335 families living in Kaluthavalai 2. There are no families living in camps, although 15 families are living in tents on their own property. 55 people in the village have government jobs and 15 men have gone back to fishing. The rest of families who were engaged in farming before the tsunami cannot cultivate their land as land is too salty after saltwater inundation from the waves. These men and women are participating in CFW or other tsunami related jobs. RDS and the Samurdhi Task Force are active in the area; although it was explicitly mentioned that Samurdhi was ‘the government’. World Vision is working with the RDS on a low-interest loan scheme. RDS members usually work for free organizing *shramadana* and visiting people in the hospital. The Grama Nilidhari mentioned that members of the RDS are a bit fed up with working for free. In the village there are few common buildings in the village, but the interior ‘church road’ needed repairing with gravel and the cutting of drainage channels.
5 RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of lessons and useful points, extracted from the information gathered during these brief field visits, are relevant to project design and implementation:

- If contracts for CFW projects with CBOs are introduced, initially they must be very short and only outline workdays, inputs and outputs, budget, and the responsibilities of partner organizations.
- Communities should be responsible for priority setting, worker selection and recording of attendance, monitoring progress (following guidelines).
- The communities will need technical and organisational support to carry out their projects.
- Community priorities exist, but need to be verified.
- Assistance is needed for communities/CBOs, NGOs, DS, PS and the GA in preparing proposals for cash for work.
- Routes for implementation can either be directly through project staff, or through (I)NGOs or DS/PS offices.
- There is a need to address gender and safety issues in all works even debris clearing.
- There is a need to expand options for cash for work beyond debris cleaning and small buildings, although debris cleaning is necessary and will continue, albeit at a reduced level.
- Immediate liaison is necessary with district planning, NRP /REAP and responsible line ministries to reconcile community choices with government implementation plans.