



United Nations Human Settlements Programme
(UN-HABITAT)

Programme des Nations Unies pour les établissements humains
Jl. T.M.Pahlawan No.3A, Banda Aceh, NAD,
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Building ‘Sheikh Khalifa City’ in Banda Aceh --740 houses to be completed by UN-Habitat in two devastated areas—

Press Release - Feb 15, 2006

UN-Habitat. On Wednesday (15/02), United Arab Emirates Deputy Ambassador for Indonesia, Mr. Ahmed Nasher Alkhoja, and Mr. Abdullah Mohammed Almahmoud, Head of the Red Crescent Delegation visited Sheikh Khalifa City Project in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Mr. Simon Field, UNDP Head Office and Mr. Ian Hamilton, UN-Habitat Programme Manager, welcomed the delegations.

Sheikh Khalifa City covers Merduati and Peulanggahan villages, which are some of those most affected tsunami areas in Banda Aceh. Aceh especially, is the province in Indonesia which most directly affected by the 2004 Indian ocean earthquake and tsunami.

Of the total 8,701 original Merduati-Peulanggahan population there are only 3,039 survivors. Others were lost in the disasters of 26 December 2004. It was initially planned to build 1,033 units, but the number was substantially reduced because of the increase of the building materials price. At current prices it is expected that only 740 house can be constructed or repaired by the communities. Another 175 housing units have been requested in the two areas in addition to the original committed 1,033 units which would bring the total housing needs to 1,208 units.

To finance the project, UAE has bestowed a US\$5.07 million (approximately Rp 50 billion) donation. A partnership agreement between UAE Red Crescent Society (RCS) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) / UN-Habitat was signed in Abu Dhabi in mid-October last year. Merduati and Peulanggahan housing areas have been named Sheikh Khalifa City Project, after the UAE President, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed.

Grants for infrastructure constructions

UN-Habitat carries out the construction of the houses using a community driven approach. At the outset, a technical team of the agency briefed the potential beneficiaries on several types of houses, construction system, and building materials to be used, in order to build their confidence. Once they decide their preferred type and agreed on the conditions of their participation, the selected beneficiaries formed clusters of between seven to 13 families.

A financial contribution of Rp 42 million (previously Rp 35 million) for a family to build a house is provided by UN-Habitat to each cluster. Each cluster opens a bank account in the names of the head, the secretary, and the treasurer, who were selected by the cluster members. The financial contribution is deposited by UN-Habitat into the account of the cluster. The installments of 20%, 45%, 20%, and 15% respectively are linked to the progress of house construction.



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A cross check by the agency and the local implementing committee is carried out during the construction process.

In Merduati, Mr. Ahmed Nasher and Mr. Abdullah Mohammed Almahmoud handed over keys to five beneficiaries of selected houses.

“We thank God because we will have a house again. With our children we are eager to leave the miserable lives in this tent. We are all wet whenever it rains heavily and we are hot if the sun shines brightly,” said Saedah, 45, a beneficiary whose tent sits next to “Merduati” mosque, expressed her gratitude.

Saedah and her husband, Amiruddin, and nine out of the 12 children they have, survived the tsunami because on the fateful day, shortly after the earthquake jolted, the family fled to safer place on their *becak*, three-wheeled pedicab. Amiruddin drove his wife and small children to check on the fate of his parents-in-law residing in Pante Perak, several kilometres away. However, before reaching the place, the rushing tidal waves swept Merduati. Three of their children being left at home were killed.

Saedah now earns money by doing laundry. Her husband, who used to run a small-scale fish salted industry, now works as construction worker building his future house and gets a daily payment of Rp 35.000. Their new house, measuring 9 x 4 meters is a bit larger than their old house ravaged by the disasters.

The UAE Delegation also visited some other tsunami devastated areas mainly in Banda Aceh and attended the Laying of the Corner Stone for the Reconstruction Houses in Lampaseh, Banda Aceh.

Meanwhile, Ian Hamilton, UN-Habitat Program Manager conveyed his admiration toward the patience and the strength of the community.

“I have been impressed by the patience of the community who have had to deal with many delays outside their control. But they are still willing to meet and discuss issues in the belief that eventually their community will be rebuilt”.



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UAE Delegations arrived in Merduati village, Banda Aceh-Indonesia,
where Sheikh Khalifa City project takes place



Mr. Simon Field, UNDP Head Office and Mr. Ian Hamilton, UNHabitat
Programme Manager, welcomed the UAE delegations.



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Mr. Abdullah Mohammed Almahmoud (Head of Red Crescent Delegation) and
Mr. Deputy Ambassador for Indonesia, Mr. Ahmed Nasher Alkhoja
at hand over key for beneficiaries of houses in Sheikh Khalifa City Project, Merduati village, Banda Aceh



Mr. Abdullah Mohammed Almahmoud (Head of Red Crescent Delegation) greets a boy
in Merduati village, Banda Aceh. Sheikh Khalifa City Project, funded by United Arab Emirates



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