

## Tsunami: 270 Days Later

Some 270 days have passed since last December's deadly tsunami. What's been done? What's ahead?

Leaders and development experts met at the Global Consortium on September 22 to look at progress made so far and address ongoing concerns about reconstruction in the Asian countries devastated by the tsunami.

The Global Consortium is an international initiative led by former US President Bill Clinton to help the region recover from the tsunami.

The affected Asian governments are really only beginning a long and complex reconstruction process. So far, the countries have established national recovery plans and have committed to develop transparent, on-line financial tracking systems and common indicators to track the recovery effort. They are also working on a region-wide early warning system that is expected to be running within a year.

Many challenges still remain. Logistical and capacity constraints make recovery difficult. Here are some reasons why:

- India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka don't have enough teachers and civil servants since thousands perished in the tsunami. Without civil servants (who include government officials) it is challenging to figure out who is in charge and can move reconstruction along.
- Roads and other infrastructure were destroyed in all the countries. This is making rebuilding difficult because it's hard to transport materials, like concrete.
- In Aceh, Indonesia, which experienced the greatest loss of life, tens of thousands of displaced persons are still living in inadequate shelters and don't have jobs.

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Since reconstruction will take a while and people need adequate housing in the meantime, the Global Consortium members have come up with a plan to construct thousands of new and improved shelters to house the people in Aceh until they can return home.

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