

# Indonesia

## BACKGROUND

In the wake of the Boxing Day tsunami in 2004, we immediately established an outreach programme to children around Banda Aceh on the island of Sumatra, the closest major city to the earthquake's epicenter.

In January 2005, we established a Children's Care Centre, in partnership with large Indonesian welfare organisation Muhammadiyah. Work is now focused on longer-term needs. Using funds donated to YOTS tsunami appeal, land has been purchased in readiness for a permanent centre. Cottage style accommodation for 80 children and young people, and a community centre for the local villagers, will be built, with the tendering process for this large project well advanced.

Muhammadiyah officials are so pleased with the cottage style accommodation model proposed, that this model will be used as a basis for other new orphanages across Indonesia. A Mosque on the site will welcome all locals for prayers and, longer term, a skills based school will help the young residents to find jobs after they finish school. To support local shops and businesses, the Centre purchases all its requirements in Aceh, although in the early days after the tsunami, container loads of donated goods were sent to the region. A mobile library Service and tertiary education fund have been established, and five girls recently departed to attend university, allowing the centre to shelter other children.

We are proud of our efforts to date, which would not have been possible without the extraordinary support of so many Australians! We thank you!

## AWARD WINNER

Awarding our centre the 2005 Tsunami Appeal Award, the Fundraising Institute of Australia declared: "although working in an environment of extreme urgency, their aid project was well managed, exceeded its targets and brought about an impressive and continuing alliance between Muslim and Christian communities";.

MUHAMMADIYAH/YOUTH OFF THE STREETS OVERSEAS RELIEF FUND CHILDREN'S CARE CENTRE  
History Booklet of the Muhammadiyah/Youth Off The Streets Overseas Relief Fund Children's Care Centre

## Country Facts

OFFICIAL COUNTRY NAME: Republic of Indonesia

CAPITAL: Jakarta

LOCATION: Most of the Malay Archipelago in South East Asia - lying across the Equator. Consisting of 13,677 islands, 6,000 of which are inhabited.

AREA: 1,905 Sq Km

CLIMATE: Tropical: with wet and dry seasons. Hot and wet during October to April and hot and dry during May to September.

POPULATION: 224 million. There are around 300 ethnic and tribal groups. The principal ones are Acehnese, Bataks, Minangkabaus (Sumatra); Javanese, Sundanese (Java); Balinese (Bali); Sasaks (Lombok); and Dani (Papua)

RELIGION: 88% Muslim, 8% Christian, 2% Hindu

LANGUAGE: Bahasa Indonesia

NATURAL RESOURCES AND INDUSTRY: The rich volcanic soil of Indonesia is ideal for crops and many varieties are grown. Indonesia has the world's largest tropical forest reserves outside the Amazon. Logging has been intensive in some areas, notably Kalamantan, but forests still cover about two thirds of the total land area. Tin, bauxite, oil, natural gas, copper, nickel, and coal are major mineral resources; small amounts of silver, diamonds, and rubies are also found. Salt-water fish are abundant, and the surrounding seas also yield pearls, shells, and agar, a seaweed extract. Today, as in the past when it was the focus of the lucrative spice trade, Indonesia's wealth is derived largely from exports of raw materials. Now, however, minerals—dominated by oil and natural gas—have replaced agricultural products as the main source of export income. Major exports to Australia include crude petroleum, non monetary gold, paper and paperboard and timber.

CURRENCY: Rupiah (Rp)

CURRENT ISSUES: The country's extensive reserves of natural resources have been used significantly to reduce poverty and to increase incomes over the past 20 years, but access to safe water and sanitation remains limited. The majority of the population remains largely dependent on agriculture and average income levels are relatively low. Unemployment is a significant problem only on the most developed and urbanized islands like Java; elsewhere most people live a subsistence lifestyle and underemployment is the main problem. Even on densely populated Java, the effects of unemployment and job shortages are limited by the practice of job sharing—a number of people do a job that would normally take only one or two. This system encompasses virtually all sectors, from the civil service to university lecturers, artisans, and petty traders, and enables most people to earn a basic living. Indonesia now also faces ongoing challenges with the growing problem of terrorist and separatist activity in the region.

Source: Lonely Planet, Aust. Dept Foreign Affairs, Encarta