



Feature

Annie Ong Hui Nee, UNV/UN-Habitat volunteer in Sumatra

Originally from Malaysia, Annie Ong Hui Nee has been living and working for the past two months as an International UNV volunteer on Sumatra's biggest island Nias. As a Spatial Planner she willingly contributes her skills to benefit almost three thousand people affected by the December 26, 2004 Tsunami in the area.

Assigned to UN-Habitat - the agency in charge of implementing the *Nias Settlements Support Programme* – she has been closely working with the consultant team in charge of preparing a sub-project that involves the construction of 486 housing units in four villages.

The programme strategy actually ensures that affected families are at the centre of the recovery process. "Volunteering allows me to work hand in hand with the community. As part of my job, I meet and hold discussions with the villages' leaders in order to find out the best ways to provide them with technical and organizational support" she explains.

By the end of November the project's appraisal and preparations report will be submitted to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for project and funding approval. Once the reconstruction stage begins, Annie will carry out the community village planning.

"I'm proposing a holistic approach that benefits not only the Tsunami victims, but all the local communities. They'll be instructed on what needs to be done in order to have better settlements and living environments", Annie points out.

Like Annie, each year more than eight thousand national and international qualified men and women serve as UNV volunteers in more than 160 countries.

They value free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity and in doing so they greatly contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).