

South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies, Trivandrum

NGO Resource Centre for Tsunami Relief in Nagapattinam

A Concept Note

NGO Coordination Centre, Nagapattinam

South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies (SIFFS) in collaboration with SNEHA, an NGO working in Nagapattinam District, has been running the NGO Coordination Centre in the Nagapattinam District Collectorate since 1st Jan 2005 in connection with the tsunami relief work in the district. Nagapattinam was the worst affected district on the Indian mainland and expectedly attracted the greatest attention from both the Government and Civil Society. Not surprisingly it also led to serious problems of coordination among the NGOs and also between the NGOs and the Government. Realising this quite early on, the District administration under a group of senior officers of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), established a working relationship with the NGOs and this led to the formation of an NGO coordination centre with SIFFS given a mandate to run it. SNEHA with its strong grass roots presence in the district joined SIFFS to put the NGO Coordination centre on a strong footing.

The NGO Coordination Centre during its first three weeks has done the following tasks.

- Register NGOs working the district and create a data base for public access
- Set up a system of volunteers covering most of the affected villages and establish a two way system of information flow to and from the villages on their needs
- Coordinate with the Government relief system to ensure that relief materials reached all camps and villages based on needs reported by the village volunteers
- Help the Government manage the relief materials in the godowns with volunteers to handle materials and install computerised inventory control systems
- To pass on details of unmet demands to other NGOs and donors and organise material supply
- Conducting series of meetings to create a sense of common purpose among the NGOs
- Provide information to all NGOs on a number of aspects that they need to understand in order to take up their tasks
- Formed sector groups related to shelter, livelihoods, counselling, health & sanitation, children, etc., which came up with guidelines, policies on their respective themes
- Run a separate desk for legal aid to families of missing persons; work with district administration for a single window system to handle such cases and get speedy redress
- Worked out a consensus among NGOs on where each works for interim shelter and avoid unnecessary overlap
- Put up policy notes to the Government on the interim shelter and permanent rehabilitation plans

The Coordination Centre was run mainly with qualified volunteers from different parts of the country. A number of NGOs and organisations were happy to allow their staff to work with the Centre.

Towards a Resource Centre

While relief activities needed coordination, the rehab phase needs significant inputs of a different kind to ensure that the rehabilitation work is effective and that the long term sustainability and development of the affected communities takes place. The response to the sectoral groups also indicates that NGOs and Donors involved in the rehabilitation would like to have access to technical expertise and policy guidelines in their respective areas of interest. The village communities themselves would like to have some entity which would help them understand the options available to them. Further, the strategy of working with volunteers is not workable for the rehab phase that could easily go on for at least a year.

In view of the above, SIFFS and SNEHA have decided to convert the Coordination Centre into a Resource Centre, which will provide a range of services to the communities and organisations involved in the rehabilitation process. The Resource Centre would work on the basis of a small core team of professionals and full-timers supported by volunteers.

Resource Centre: Role and activities

The RC will have the following two distinct constituencies: the communities and outside agencies. The outside agencies will include NGOs, Donors, Government agencies and inter-government agencies involved in the rehab.

For agencies involved in rehab

The following will be the services/activities that will be undertaken for the agencies involved in the rehab.

- Information centre that provides all relevant background information and statistics
- Link with technical and other resource organisations and individual experts and make available technical know how, designs, etc. relevant for the rehab process
- Provide technical and policy guidelines on themes like habitat, shelter, livelihoods, etc.
- Will prepare policy notes for the use of Government and NGOs/Donors
- Will organise regular interactions, meetings, workshops that will enable all the agencies involved in rehab learn from each other and develop some common perspectives and strengthen collaboration

For the communities

- Strengthen the system of village volunteers (already in place) which provides two way communication between the communities and the rehabilitation system (Govt., NGOs, Donors, etc.).

- Equip village communities prepare their own micro level plans for rehabilitation and to take greater control and ownership of the rehabilitation process

Structure and composition of the RC

The RC will be headed by a Chief Executive capable of giving leadership to the team under him and interface with both Government and NGOs/Donors. Under him will be sector team leaders, head of administration, information manager, computer specialists, etc. There will also be a team leader who will lead the community support team (the system of village volunteers and coordinators of today). A steering committee will supervise the activities of the RC. The steering committee will be composed of five persons who have been part of the coordination centre activities from the start including the heads of SIFFS and SNEHA. A chart showing the structure of the RC is appended.

The actual manpower needed for each of the sectors and departments will be dependent on the work load and need felt from time to time. In addition to the full timers, part timers and volunteers will be made use of for various tasks.

The Resource Centre will be in touch with a number of institutions and individuals with expertise in various thematic areas connected with the rehabilitation process.

Funding of the RC

It is expected that the RC is funded by a small group of donors who would like to encourage participatory processes and support the autonomy of the RC. Many NGOs, donors and corporates will be encouraged to depute or second staff to man the resource centre as their contribution to the rehabilitation efforts.

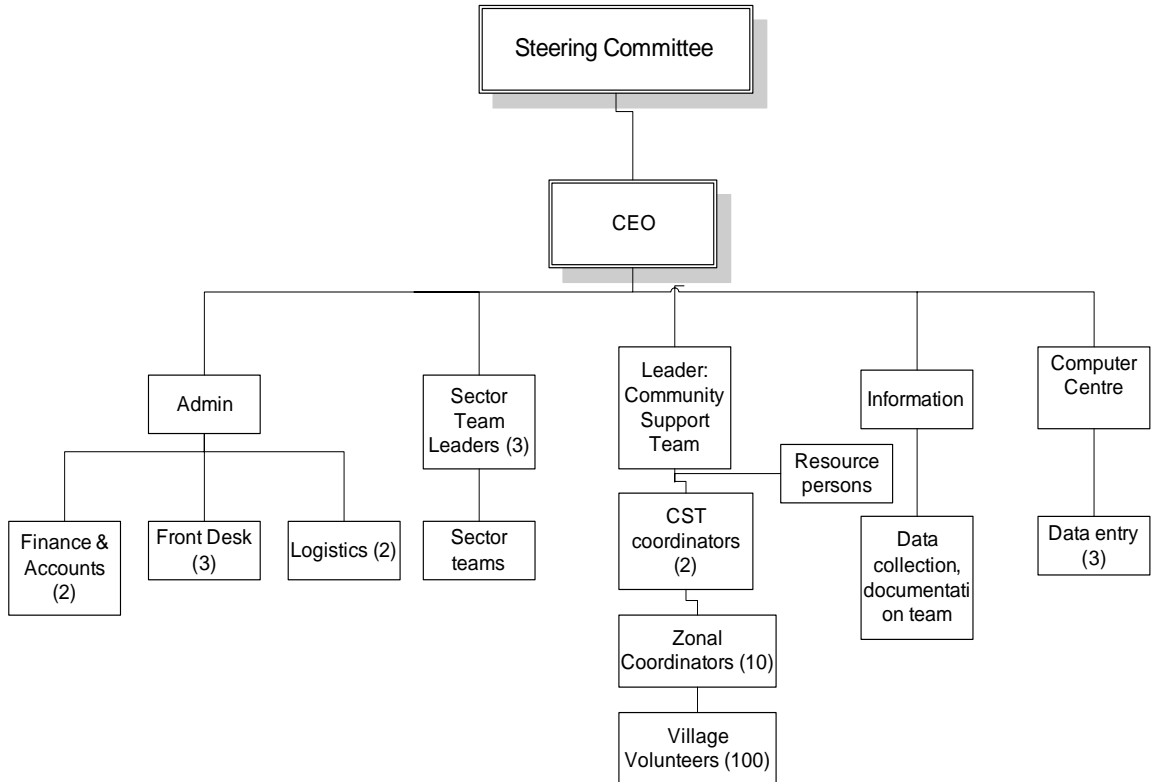
Budget

The following is a tentative budget for the functioning of the RC for one year. The expenses mentioned are those that will be paid for by the RC. All figures are in Indian Rupees.

1. Salaries @ 3.0 lakhs/month:	36.0 lakhs
2. Office rent, equipment, furniture, etc.:	10.0 lakhs
3. Transportation, vehicles, etc @ 3 lakhs/month:	36.0
4. Workshops, meetings, etc.:	10.0
5. Others:	08.0
Total	100.0 lakhs

Approximate value of time given by volunteers and material support by other organisations: 50 lakhs

NGO Resource Centre



Key Personnel Required for Resource Centre

Position	Job Description	Qualifications	Salary
CEO	Lead the team, liaise with donors, ngos, etc.	Professional with management experience, good development perspective and good communications skills.	Rs.25,000 if paid for by RC; however senior persons may be seconded by other organisations
Sector team leaders (3)	Anchor respective sector related work; link with experts and institutions, provide support to NGOs/Donors; organise workshops, training, meetings, etc.	Professionals from IRMA, TISS or others with good experience in development organisations; knowledge of Tamil useful	12,000-20,000 depending on qualifications and experience
Leader, Community Support Team	Lead the entire force of village volunteers and coordinators	Good community organisation and volunteer management skills, good in Tamil and English	12,000-20,000
Administrator	Look after all admin in finance, logistics, etc.	Professional with experience in admin	12,000-20,000
Computer specialist	Looks after computer centre and data entry staff	Qualified computer specialist with good skills to handle networked systems, website, etc.	15,000-20,000
Head of information dept.	Look after all information needs of RC and takes care of data collection and dissemination	Professional with good analytical and writing skills	12,000-20,000
Accountant	Looks after book keeping	Trained accountant with knowledge of Tally	5,000-10,000
Logistics in charge	Manage vehicles, arrange materials and supplies	Any dynamic person	8,000-12,000