



## **Tsunami Reconstruction Plan – Sri Lanka**

Shelter For Life® has a long-term commitment to provide shelter and assistance for 10,000 families in Sri Lanka, some 48,000 people, left homeless by the tsunami through a comprehensive, multi-year plan.

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- *Provision of 720,000 liters of water per day to 48,0000 beneficiaries*
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### ***Phase II –Transition to Sustainable Livelihoods; 4 years***

- *Construction of 10,000 permanent starter homes and latrines*
- *Establishment of a sustainable water system*
- *Construction of school and clinic facilities*
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### ***Phase III – Community Development; 5-10 years (overlap with Phase II)***

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## Architects Offer Help After Tsunami

By ERNEST BECK

Published: December 30, 2004

**W**HEN Craig D. Williams, an architect in Santa Rosa, Calif., first heard about the devastating impact of the tsunami on communities in Asia and East Africa, he jumped online. As the director of the North American chapter of Architects Without Borders, an international network of volunteers, Mr. Williams was able to reach colleagues in 15 nations.

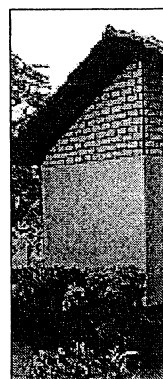
"We are facing a tragedy of historic proportions," he wrote in an e-mail message, urging them to start thinking about what the organization could do.

About 50 wrote back, joining a global effort that is just beginning to take shape. Over the next few months groups like this could send volunteers and housing experts to areas where there are vast numbers of survivors without homes.

As relief agencies and governments mobilize to provide temporary shelter, food, fresh water, medical care and sanitation facilities, a handful of nonprofit organizations with money from governments, United Nations agencies and private individuals are gearing up for longer-term rebuilding and reconstruction projects.

Harry van Burik, the international program director of Shelter for Life, a nonprofit relief and development organization in Oshkosh, Wis. ([www.shelter.org](http://www.shelter.org)), said his group hoped to spend \$1.5 million to build 1,000 houses in Sri Lanka, where about 200,000 homes were destroyed and more than one million people are believed homeless. "Sri Lankans are living in cramped conditions in schools and churches and desperately want to go back to their homes," Mr. van Burik said. "But they won't find anything there."

His organization built 5,000 permanent shelters in Afghanistan after the 2002 earthquake. And rather than fly or ship prefab shelters to Sri Lanka, where it has been building homes for people displaced by the civil war, the group plans to manage construction of one- and two-room brick or cement block houses with pitched roofs.



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Go to Complet

The philosophy guiding many groups involved in housing relief is that homes are the foundation for restoring a destroyed community. "We focus on individuals and villages," said Mr. Williams, whose organization ([www.awb.iohome.net](http://www.awb.iohome.net)) has provided design and technical assistance in Afghanistan, Vietnam and Bosnia. "We don't help rich hotel owners with beachfront property."

Farshad Rastegar, the executive director of Relief International ([www.ri.org](http://www.ri.org)), a nonprofit group in Los Angeles, said that secure, permanent shelter is a first step in helping people rebuild their lives. Without it, he noted, people are in a "permanent state of dependency."

To help 60,000 homeless victims of an earthquake last year in Bam, Iran, Mr. Rastegar said, Relief International is completing the building of 870 homes with quake-resistant concrete foundations and metal beams. The houses, adobe style but with a steel subframe, cost \$2,400 each and in many cases replaced simple mud houses that had "tumbled like a ton of bricks," he said.

Despite harrowing images of death and destruction, aid officials say finding funds for housing reconstruction is often stymied by bureaucratic foot-dragging, donor fatigue and fading media attention. In 1999, for example, the architecture firm Gans & Jelacic in New York was a finalist in a competition to design and build transitional housing for people displaced during the conflict in Kosovo. Completing the project, said Deborah Gans, a principal, is "still years away" because the money was diverted to other relief projects.

Housing advocates measure success in small numbers. Cameron Sinclair, the founder and executive director of Architecture for Humanity, a five-year-old nonprofit organization with members in over 100 countries, said he hoped to raise \$15,000 for victims of the tsunami, enough to build about a dozen houses, and has so far gathered \$7,000. His group ([www.architectureforhumanity.org](http://www.architectureforhumanity.org)) held the competition for the Kosovo project and it has also held one for a mobile H.I.V. clinic, as yet unbuilt, for use in sub-Saharan Africa.

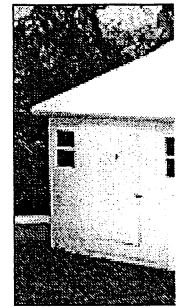
There is no shortage of innovative design solutions. For the moment, however, many relief organizations are concentrating on providing temporary shelter. Often it consists of a simple blue tarp: cheap, easy to distribute, easy to put up.

Mr. Sinclair has been working with Global Village Shelters, a design company in Morris, Conn. ([www.gvshelters.com](http://www.gvshelters.com)), that has created a \$370 flat-pack housing unit. Made of a three-quarter-inch laminated cardboardlike material that is waterproof and fire resistant (and biodegradable), the shelters are made in Butler, Ind., by Weyerhaeuser, the paper company.

"They are substantial structures," said Daniel Ferrara, president of Global Village Shelters, "not floppy tents without privacy." He said they provide enough ventilation to be suitable in the tropics and can offer a family 67 square feet of privacy; two or more can also be fit together.

A few prototypes are in Afghanistan, and 100 recently arrived in hurricane-trammeled Grenada, Mr. Ferrara said. The company is in touch with groups like the International Red Cross, which could buy and ship the kits, he said, adding that about 500 of them could be available for the areas hit by the tsunami within a month.

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