

BACKGROUND

Andaman and Nicobar group of islands were one of the most damaged areas caused by the Tsunami tidal wave, which struck the part of Asian continent on 26th December, 2004. The maximum damage has occurred in the Southern Group of Islands comprising the Nicobar District. Children were the worst affected among the lots. The educational facilities due to its extensive spread in the islands suffered the maximum causality among the Govt. Departments. As many as 85 schools were totally damaged or washed away and 34 schools got partly damaged. 71 of the Education Department staff perished in the tsunami. The massive destruction in ANI required an unprecedented emergency response. National and International relief agencies did respond, speedily and generously and involved themselves in consultation with the administration in the relief and rehabilitation work right from the beginning. While government and many NGOs were busy rebuilding the lives of the adults, there were very few who looked into the needs of the children.

BUTTERFLIES IN A & N ISLANDS: RELIEF AND RESPONSE

Butterflies a Delhi based NGO working with Street and Working Children volunteered to do the relief and rehabilitation work in the aftermath of disaster and designed a Post Tsunami Child Protection Programme. Butterflies is an organisation committed to the welfare and development of street and working children in Delhi since 1989. It aims to empower street and working children with skills and knowledge to protect their rights and to develop them as respected and productive citizens. Butterflies use the Constitution of India, Laws related to Children and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a major tool for ensuring government and public accountability for all.

As immediate response to Tsunami, Butterflies with the help of the local administration, distributed relief materials for children and adolescent girls in the relief camps in Port Blair, South Andaman, Little Andaman and Great Nicobar. Special attention was given to the needs of school going children. Educational material such as – stationeries, schoolbooks, sports & recreational materials were provided and tuition classes were arranged. Similarly, the needs of the young and infants were addressed. Apart from relief work, Butterflies addressed the psychological needs of children by conducting various cultural and sports event for the children with the support of adult facilitators. Butterflies developed a concept note for developing a programme in the Islands focusing on children.