

## JUB/Uplink in post-tsunami Aceh: achievements, potentials, limitations

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### ABSTRACT:

JUB/Uplink reconstructed 25 villages concentrated along 10km coastal areas stretching west from the symbolic Mosque of Ulee Lheue in Banda Aceh to Lam Pagueu at the far end of the bay.

Six weeks after the disaster, Jakarta's "blueprint" for Aceh's reconstruction and rehabilitation was made public. In the 12-volume master plan, all coastal villages and towns within 2 km of the sea would have to be relocated to new sites inland (Government of Indonesia, 2005).

In Banda Aceh, initially the plan was to construct a US\$ 67 million sea wall to protect the city and relocate the tens of thousands of surviving households and businesses in all three zones (covering 75% of the city!) to three new futuristic cities that the government would construct 20 - 30km from the sea. In the blueprint, all three zones would then become coastal greenbelts, where no building would be allowed.

This was also supposedly for reasons of safety, but as soon as the policy was announced, there was a huge rush by government insiders to buy land in the "new city" areas, and private sector contractors and commercial interests began jockeying for a share of the lucrative mega-project contracts the *blueprint* would entail (ACHR, 2006).

JUB was funded by people returning to their destroyed 24 villages as early as 3 months after 26 December 2004 tsunami.

Facilitating JUB has been a team work. Uplink and UPA have developed considerable advocacy and mobilization skills through their work with the poor in Indonesian cities. Uplink developed a close working partnership with the Indian NGO Abhiyan, which had dealt with the technical issues of large-scale, participatory reconstruction, after the 2001 earthquake in Gujarat. The match-making was facilitated by Misereor, the German funding agency.

JUB achievements stood out among the 40 organizations monitored by UN-Habitat/Unsyiah monitoring and quality controlling of provincial housing reconstruction and settlement recovery in Aceh. UN-Habitat monitoring evaluated a sample of 11 clusters from JUB housing programme (UN-Habitat/Unsyiah 2005-2007).

**BACKGROUND**

***The 26 December 2004 tsunami in Aceh***

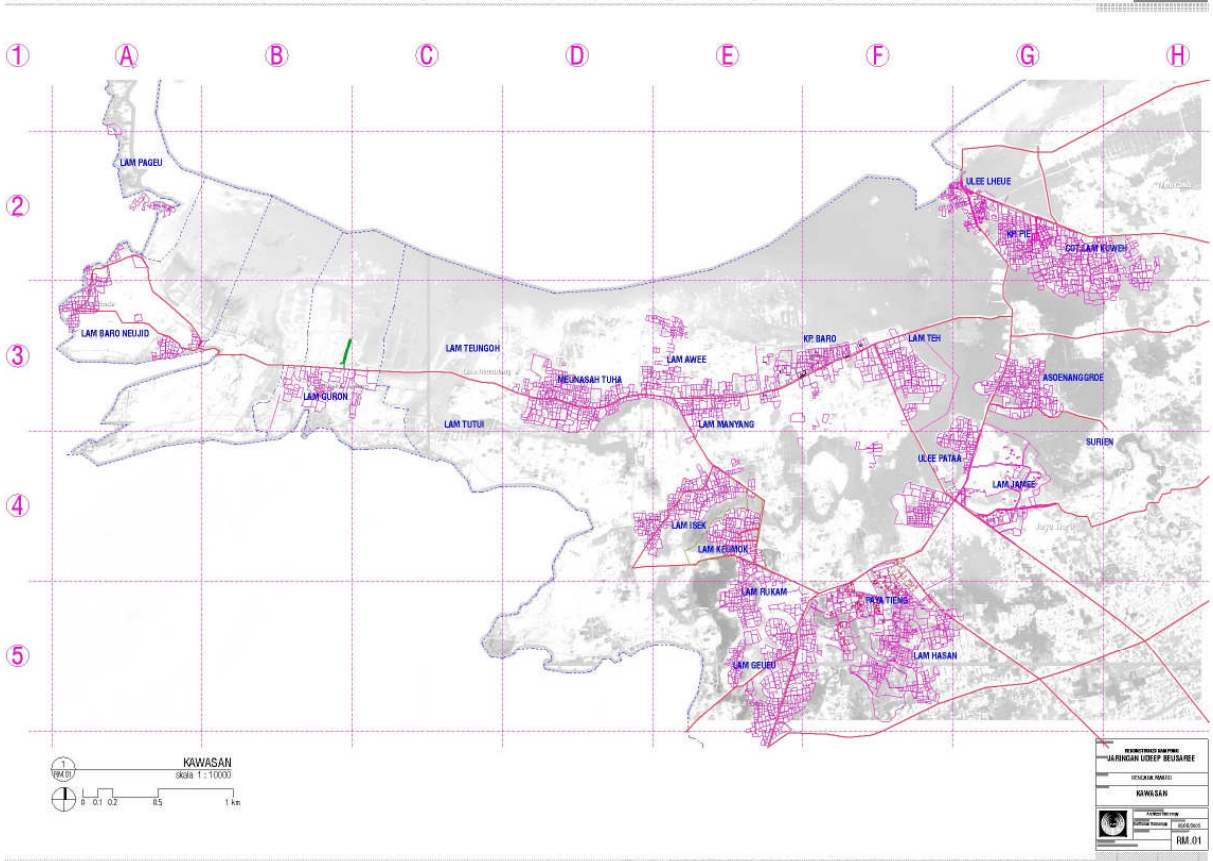
The earthquake epicentre that caused the December 26 tsunami was only 225 km west of Banda Aceh. Banda Aceh has become a very high-risk earthquake area.

While most of the death and destruction was caused by the tsunami, hundreds of people in Banda Aceh were killed inside collapsing buildings during the earthquake that shook the city 15 minutes earlier. A long series of quakes hit the area since then: January 2005, June 17 2005, etc with hundreds more casualties.

It may not be possible to build a house that is tsunami-proof, but it is definitely possible to build a house that is earthquake-resistant (Abhiyan, 2005).

***JUB facilitated by Uplink and Abhiyan. Sponsored by Misereor, Development and Peace and others.***

**JUB** stands for Udeep Beusaree network which means ‘living together’. 25 neighbouring coastal villages stretching for 10km West from the symbolic Mosque of Ulee Lheue in Banda Aceh to Lam Pagueu at the far end of the bay.



JUB, facilitated by Uplink and Abhiyan, took decisions on how to manage the reconstruction after the 2004 tsunami. Misereor, Development and Peace (among others) granted a fund which the federation managed while living back in their villages to fully participate in rebuilding 3500 houses, infrastructures and community facilities.

**Uplink** is an experienced urban poor community organizer active in many Indonesian major cities; a member of the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights and active in global forums, like for example the World Urban Forum 2006.

Uplink developed a close working partnership with the Indian NGO **Abhiyan**, led by Kiran Vaghela. Abhiyan had dealt with the technical issues of large-scale, participatory reconstruction, after the 2001 earthquake in Gujarat. The match-making was facilitated by Misereor, the German funding agency.

JUB's only requirement for the houses people rebuild is that they be designed in such a way as to withstand an earthquake. Kiran Vaghela has come to Aceh from India to help JUB people do just that. Kiran is a civil engineer from Bhuj, a city in Gujarat, India's westernmost state. This city was almost totally levelled by an earthquake on 26 January, 2001. 100,000 houses were destroyed, 400 villages badly damaged and 20,000 people were killed, most when the stone and mud houses they were sleeping in collapsed on top of them.

### ***UN-Habitat/University of Shyiah Kuala Monitoring of Aceh housing and settlement reconstruction***

UN-Habitat started the Aceh and Nias Settlement Support Programme (ANSSP) based in Banda Aceh in March 2005. ANSSP has two main units: the new houses and settlement Implementation Unit and the policy unit whose advisory role supports housing sector institutions at national and provincial level.

In the framework of the Aceh/Nias Settlements Support Programme UN-HABITAT Policy Unit has actively led the Shelter Working Group to insure the coordination of all actors involved in the reconstruction sector and encouraged them to share ideas and information. UN-HABITAT prepared guidelines for BAPPENA and the Department of Public Works, which were endorsed by BRR and published for all developing agencies working in Banda Aceh. Based on the support role and sector competency, BRR has formally requested UN-HABITAT to provide further support in the Monitoring and Enforcing program of the Agency. UN-HABITAT answered to the request and developed a monitoring program together with its partner, the University of Shyiah Kuala (UNSYIAH).

A sample representative of 40 housing programmes located in the Aceh province is at the basis of benchmarking for quality of construction, satisfaction, accountability and sustainable settlement recovery indexes.

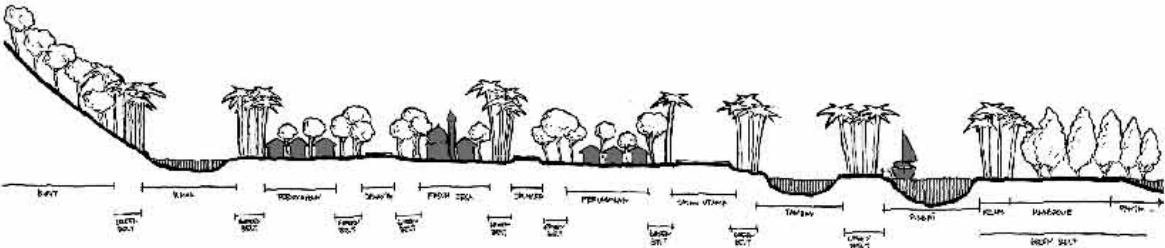
On the basis of this monitoring, UN-Habitat sponsored JUB/Uplink for the UN-Habitat's Scroll of Honour 2007.

## **APPROACH & ACHIEVEMENTS**

### ***Eco-village as an alternative to relocation:***

The Government's Master Plan for the reconstruction of Aceh set that all Banda Aceh's settlements should be cleared from a 2-km "safety zone" from the sea line and that everyone previously living within the newly created safety zone should relocate to new towns 20 - 30 km inland.

Abhiyan, Uplink and Misereor worked together to support their alternative solution to the government relocation plan: ecological buffers between sea and village, green ring belts, escape routes and evacuation centres.



To do this, a two-level strategy was adopted:

- At the grassroots level, to continue assisting villagers to move back to their former villages, build temporary housing and carry on with their rehabilitation planning, regardless of the official policy.
- At the policy level, to formulate a strong on-site redevelopment alternative to the government's relocation plans, to use to negotiate with local and national government agencies. Safety became the basis for the network's counter-proposal, in which people living within the three zones would rebuild in the same place, but make their communities safe by using other means, such as ecological buffers between sea and village, rings of greenbelt, escape routes and evacuation centres (see next page).

In early March 2005, this community-based alternative was formally presented to the committee set up under the National Development Planning Board to deal with the relocation policy for Aceh. The timing was critical. By then, international donors were waiting for a reconstruction policy from the government that was clearly pro-people before releasing aid money, and nobody imagined evicting the entire province's coastal communities could be perceived as being pro-people. So this gave the people a little room to maneuver. At the same time, Uplink worked closely with the media, so all the activities happening on the ground in the Udeep Beusaree villages were well-covered in the national newspapers and television programs. This helped build awareness of the issues and support for people's determination to go back.

**IT WORKED!** As a result of all these efforts, the government scrapped the 2-km "safety" zone and accepted the people's in-situ alternative. The zoning policy for Banda Aceh was also cancelled. Instead of any blanket zoning, the official policy now is to support a more bottom-up process of micro-planning, done in consultation with the affected villagers and their local governments. Villagers are now free to choose either to go back to their original villages or relocate. Compared with other affected areas (UN-Habitat/Unsyiah 2005-2007), very few JUB villagers are opting for relocation.

The eco-village's concept advocated for by Uplink was ambitious. It included also these aspects:

**Sustainable village development :** Villagers are also exploring new ways of making their communities more ecologically healthy, more self-sufficient and more in harmony with the environment by using such things as local building materials, recycling, organic waste-water treatment, kitchen gardening, biogas digesting and non-polluting alternative energy.

**Holistic community revival :** The people's plans also include fostering some less tangible aspects of community revival such as participation, trust, mutual help, sharing of resources, caring for those less well off, creating jobs within the community, respect for nature, etc.

**Achievements:** Local production of building material created jobs and spread skills in compressed earth block making, assembling steel for reinforcement and recycling timber for windows, doors and roof structure.

JUB made strategic use of construction money. They've set a rough target, however, of making sure that 60% of the funds used to rebuild houses should stay in the village, and only 40% should go into the market. To do this, they are exploring a number of things. First they will use skills available in the Udeep Beusaree villages as much as possible. Many of the area's skilled craftspeople died in the tsunami, but among the survivors are some carpenters, masons, plumbers, electricians, small building contractors, laborers and artisans of all sorts - all of whom will be part of the process. Next they are studying locally-available materials and local building traditions and to see how these can be incorporated into the designs, instead of just buying everything from the market - materials like local stone, sand, coconut wood and soil-cement blocks which the villagers can make themselves (with a little training and a borrowed block-making press from their Indian friends at Abhiyan).

**Limitations:** It is a shared impression that the sense of togetherness became less and less as people went back living in their single family houses. At the beginning JUB villagers lived in shared temporary accommodations on site, shared common kitchen, toilets and washing areas. Priorities were very similar and mutual help was driven by emergency. An evidence of this impression could be found in the fact that the JUB's leader election had low participation from JUB village members.

### ***Challenges faced by a Community-based Large Scale Building Construction Programme***

#### **Logistic challenge:**

The challenges of building 3,000 houses in a place where most of the commercial and transport infrastructure has been destroyed, but where everybody is trying to rebuild, are daunting.

A local supplier has agreed to let them use his big warehouse.

To build 3, 000 houses, JUB needed 150,000 bags of cement. In Banda Aceh, a 40-Kilo bag of cement went up to 31,000 Rupiah (\$3.50). But a 50-kilo bag in South Sumatra costs only 23,000 Rupiah (\$2.50) to buy and 7,000 Rupiah (\$0.75) to ship. So if they can ship all this cement and store it, JUB can save millions.

### Corruption challenge:

These houses will all be free. The funds to build them come from Uplink's donor partner Misereor, as a subsidy, not a loan, and will come in the form of materials, not cash. The budget for houses and infrastructure below is a ceiling, and is enough to build the four basic models the people have designed. In total a household's subsidy is 50 million Rupiah (US\$ 5,500). This includes a budget per house of 38 million Rupiah (US\$ 4,200), infrastructure subsidy of 12 million Rupiah (US\$ 1,300) per household.

UN-Habitat/Unsyiah monitoring showed that JUB/Uplink's satisfaction about transparency within the allocation process and material distribution was above average. Few cases of localised corruption happened among JUB villages; these were dealt with by JUB and the authorities.

### Quality of construction challenge:

Banda Aceh is a very high-risk earthquake area now. Houses that are not designed to resist earthquake pressures are bound to be extremely dangerous to live in.

Abhiyan trained the villagers with daily sessions on earthquake resistant construction. These built on their Gujarat experience in preparing training material for illiterate people and monitoring results to high quality standard.

UN-Habitat/Unsyiah monitoring confirms that Uplink/JUB achieved constantly very good quality of construction (see attachment 1) in comparison with other housing programmes. In addition, the monitoring showed that Uplink/JUB performed among large scale programmes like UN-Habitat (see attachment 2).

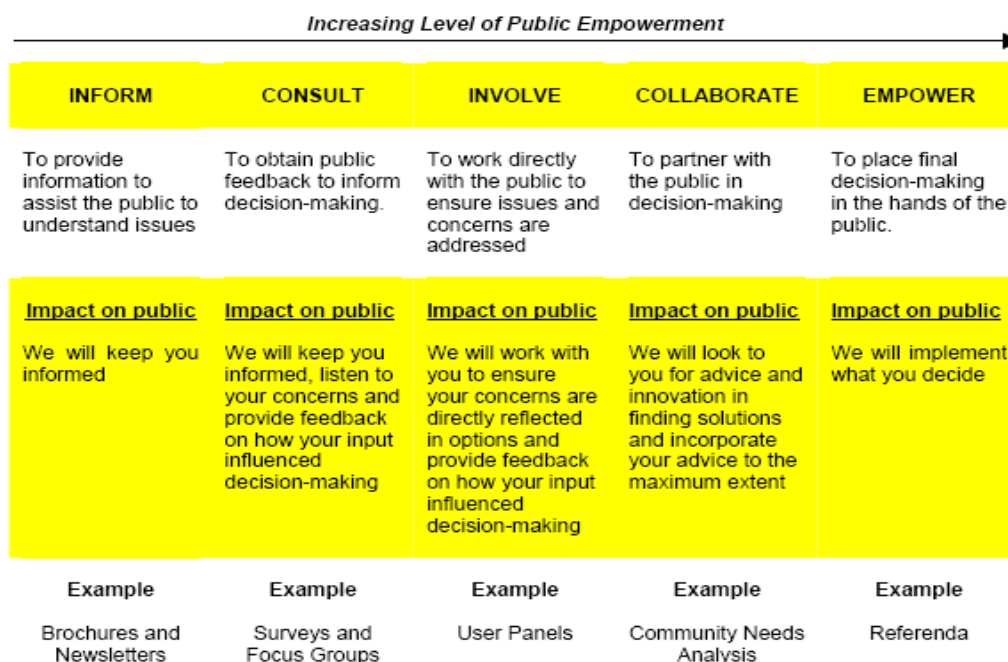
### Fully empowered grassroots form in post-conflict and disaster society:

UPLINK's Community Based Housing Reconstruction Program aimed to a fully participatory approach in collaboration with a sister organization that they themselves founded for this purpose. The JUB (Jaringan Udep Beusare) was a new entity in Aceh. Uplink community organisers provided first aid and stress relief in camps. They identified people from villages that have been severely affected by the conflict, who were resilient and who wanted to react to the sorrow rebuilding their villages. In the process, Uplink community organisers identified another group of villagers who were from the deprived area of Darussalam, Banda Aceh. This group of villages was closer to the Uplink/Urban Poor Consortium constituency in other areas of Indonesia; they were not as keen as the future JUB from Meuraxa and Peukan Bada to rebuild their villages where they were and investing their time in it.

Some Aceh commentators said that Uplink enforced local involvement based on a leftist, pro-poor spirit (Muamar Vebry, Chris Manu, Dr. Laine Berman, 2007). There was a gap in Uplink's aspirations to empower JUB while at the same time initiating the community to social behaviours which break with their society. JUB community belongs to an Islamic hierarchical society and although it was resilient to the government from Java their revolution is far from being politically close to Uplink's alternative approaches to the government. The gap narrowed along the line. They built trust in each other and some members saw the potentials of fully empowered JUB members. Unfortunately, this is not the majority.

In the table below, Uplink aimed to empower, worked hard with JUB to facilitate this and achieved a collaboration which had some self-starters from the grassroots who were the few empowered. The same Aceh commentators described Uplink's community involvement activities as skilled attempt to empower JUB. *"Together with JUB, UPLINK commenced their activities by facilitating community workshops, fully consulting, collaborating and empowering the community to manage their own housing program. UPLINK brought the community together to develop a Village Spatial Plan for their own village, and used Community Action*

*Planning methodology for the housing design, which involved all the stakeholders including women and minority groups as active participants. The design workshop creates a bridge between the community perspective and appropriate technical specifications, specifically for anti-seismic construction. Moreover, UPLINK applies a co-operative management style that enables and encourages the community to fully participate during the project implementation cycle (Muamar Vebry, Chris Manu, Dr. Laine Berman, 2007).”*



## REFERENCES

- Government of Indonesia, 2005, *Post-tsunami Aceh Reconstruction Master Plan*
- Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, 2006, *Updates from Banda Aceh*, Online Newsletter
- UN-Habitat/University of Syiah Kuala, 2005-2007, *Monitoring of Aceh Housing and Settlement Reconstruction*
- Sherry Arnstein, The Public Empowerment Ladder
- Muamar Vebry, Chris Manu, Dr. Laine Berman, 2007, *Community Development Approach in Aceh Reconstruction, Reflecting on Lessons Learned for Yogyakarta.*

## RESULTS OF LARGE PROGRAMMES

- measured mid 2006

all scores 0-10

Organisation (giving house assistance)	No of Samples	Construction Quality	Satisfaction	Transparency	(Being) Built	Average score
UP-LINK	11	7.5	7.3	8.5	2952	7.8
BUDHA TSU-CHI	1	6.2	8.3	8.3	2650	7.6
UN-HABITAT	8	6.6	6.9	8.1	3450	7.2
CRS	5	6.3	6.0	8.0	1441	6.8
GTZ KfW Mamamia	1	6.9	6.4	6.7	3551	6.6
CARITAS Mamamia	2	6.8	6.4	6.7	1687	6.6
SAMARITAN'S PURSE	2	6.2	5.8	7.0	2029	6.4
WORLD VISION INDONESIA	7	6.9	5.4	6.3	2459	6.2
CARE	3	7.1	5.9	4.6	1730	5.9
RE-KOMPAK (MDF)	5	6.5	5.1	5.9	1568	5.8
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY	10	6.5	5.7	4.9	3398	5.7
IOM	8	6.2	4.4	5.8	2365	5.5
TERRE DES HOMMES NETHERLANDS	3	6.1	4.8	5.1	1316	5.3
Dept. of PublicWorks-NAD, BRR	14	6.2	3.7	4.3	4176	4.7

**34772**

Average score for community-driven programmes	<b>46</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>21356</b>
Average score for contractor-lead programmes	<b>34</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>13416</b>

WORLD VISION INDONESIA	4	6.9	5.4	6.3	1405
UP-LINK	11	7.5	7.3	8.5	2952
UN-HABITAT	8	6.6	6.9	8.1	3450
CARITAS Mamamia	2	6.8	6.4	6.7	1687
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	<b>46</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>21356</b>

WORLD VISION INDONESIA	3	6.9	5.4	6.3	1054
BUDHA TSU-CHI	1	6.2	8.3	8.3	2650
CRS	5	6.3	6.0	8.0	1441
CARE	3	7.1	5.9	4.6	1730
IOM	8	6.2	4.4	5.8	2365
DOPW-NAD, BRR	14	6.2	3.7	4.3	4176
	<b>34</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>13416</b>

higher construction quality and durability

### lower satisfaction

Cluster	Organisation (giving house assistance)	Construction Quality	Satisfaction
CLG_001	BRR - PU NAD	2.61	3
PID_020	BRR - PU NAD	2.69	-5
BNA_022	CARE INTERNATIONAL	2.86	-5
ABA_011	CRS (CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE)	2.78	2
ABA_001	CRS (CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE)	2.85	0
BIR_004	DIAKONIE FOR EMERGENCY ARCHITECTS	2.57	3
PID_009	EMERGENCY ARCHITECTS FRANCE	2.74	2
PID_004	KfW (GTZ)	2.74	0
PID_008	HABITAT FOR HUMANITY	2.70	-2
BNA_034	HABITAT FOR HUMANITY	2.70	-2
PID_025	IOM	2.72	1
BNA_014	IOM	2.57	-2
ABA_017	ISLAMIC RELIEF	2.97	1
ABA_008	KJRC ( KUWAIT JOIN RED CRESCENT)	2.66	-4
ABA_010	KKSP	2.67	2
BNA_008	RE-KOMPAK (MDF - WORLD BANK - P2)	2.80	-1
PID_032	OXFAM	2.62	-1
BNA_047	OXFAM	2.84	-7
BNA_036	RE-KOMPAK (MDF - WORLD BANK - P2)	2.78	-6
BNA_004	PKPU	2.71	2
PID_003	SERASIH INDONESIA	2.70	-7
PID_005	TERRE DES HOMMES NETHERLANDS	2.54	-5
BNA_012	UN-HABITAT	2.69	2
PID_014	UN-HABITAT	2.66	-2
CLG_003	UNHCR	2.98	2
ABE_021	UPLINK	3.00	3
ABE_018	UPLINK	3.00	3
ABE_014	UPLINK	3.00	-1
LAM_004	WORLD VISION	2.94	3
ABA_019	WORLD VISION	2.83	2
BNA_032	WORLD VISION	2.83	-5

### higher satisfaction

Cluster	Organisation (giving house assistance)	Construction Quality	Satisfaction
PID_019	ATLAS LOGISTIQUE	3.05	6
ABE_030	CARE INTERNATIONAL	2.76	6
BNA_003	CARE INTERNATIONAL	2.86	4
LSM_002	CARITAS	3.06	4
NRY_004	CRS (CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE)	2.66	7
ABE_029	CHF (COMMITTEE HABITAT FINANCE)	2.68	7
ABE_025	CHF (COMMITTEE HABITAT FINANCE)	2.57	5
LAM_003	CHF (COMMITTEE HABITAT FINANCE)	2.81	4
PID_035	EMERGENCY ARCHITECTS FRANCE	2.93	6
PID_011	EMERGENCY ARCHITECTS FRANCE	2.60	7
PID_023	FRENCH RED CROSS	2.96	4
CLG_002	GERMANY RED CROSS	3.14	5
ABA_021	HABITAT FOR HUMANITY	2.82	7
PID_029	ISLAMIC RELIEF	2.65	4
ABE_001	ISLAMIC RELIEF	2.62	4
BIR_002	GVC-ITALIAN COOPERATION	3.04	5
ABE_037	ATLAS LOGISTIQUE / LARFARGE	3.20	3
LSM_003	MALTESER INTERNATIONAL	2.96	6
ABE_035	SAMARITAN'S PURSE	2.69	5
NRY_001	SHEEP	2.94	4
AUT_003	TERRE DES HOMMES GERMANY	2.83	4
ABE_007	TURKEY	2.83	8
BNA_016	TURKISH RED CRESENT	3.04	7
PID_016	UN-HABITAT	2.70	4
BNA_002	UN-HABITAT	2.61	5
BNA_043	UN-HABITAT	2.87	4
ABE_019	UPLINK	3.00	8
ABE_020	UPLINK	3.00	6
BNA_001	UPLINK	3.02	4
ABE_017	UPLINK	3.00	5
BNA_007	RE-KOMPAK (MDF - WORLD BANK - P2)	2.57	5

lower quality

BNA_018	ACEH RELIEF	2.34	-5
ABE_013	AL- IMDAAD FOUNDATION	2.45	-4
PID_030	BRR - PU NAD	2.45	-3
BNA_046	BRR - PU NAD	2.32	-4
BNA_044	BRR - PU NAD	2.44	-5
BNA_024	BRR - PU NAD	2.42	-5
ABA_018	CRS (CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE)	2.17	-1
BNA_033	ELSAKA	2.40	-2
BNA_023	HABITAT FOR HUMANITY	2.47	-1
ABA_014	HABITAT FOR HUMANITY	2.48	-5
PID_034	IOM		-1
ABE_038	IOM	2.40	-3
BNA_011	IOM	2.35	-7

ABA_005	SALVATION ARMY / BALAI KESELAMATAN	2.53	7
BNA_048	BRR - PU NAD	2.44	2
ABE_028	BRR - PU NAD	2.19	2
BNA_006	BUDHA TZU-CHI	2.47	6
ABE_039	CARITAS-MAMAMIA	2.34	1
ABA_013	CRS (CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE)	2.20	1
BIR_005	GVC-ITALIAN COOPERATION	2.39	4
ABA_002	HABITAT FOR HUMANITY	2.53	7
ABA_009	HABITAT FOR HUMANITY	2.52	6
PID_010	HABITAT FOR HUMANITY	2.43	3
BNA_045	IOM	2.26	1
BIR_001	IOM		0
NRY_005	KJRC ( KUWAIT JOIN RED CRESCENT)	2.30	2