



# **Humanitarian Information Unit**

Briefing for:  
USAID Senior Staff  
March 31, 2005

Alan L. Davis, Director  
Humanitarian Information Unit  
INR/GGI/HIU

## HIU Background:

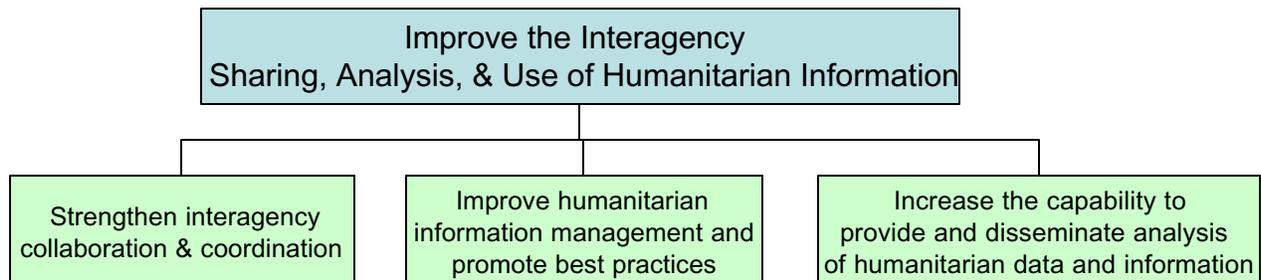
### Mission Statement:

The Humanitarian Information Unit (HIU) serves as a USG **interagency** center to identify, collect, analyze, and disseminate **unclassified** information critical to USG decision makers and partners in preparation for and response to **humanitarian emergencies worldwide**, and to promote best practices for **humanitarian information management**.

*Interagency Nature of the HIU. Staff represent the following agencies:*



## HIU Strategic Direction:



## Future Priorities and Enhanced Capabilities:

- Make more effective use of partner agency information to conduct HIU analysis that is not duplicative of other agencies.
- Influence partner humanitarian information management policies and standards through enhanced information-sharing processes.
- Increase outreach by better understanding the priorities of our primary customers (USG policy makers and partner agencies) through (a) more frequent contact and (b) partner-HIU cooperation agreements.
- Increase the use of web-based technologies for information management.
- Develop HIU prototype products and services that are targeted towards an identified set of headquarters' needs but also have applicability for field customers.
- Promote effective cutting edge technology for knowledge management.
- Establish capability to analyze remotely sensed information.

## **Select HIU Interagency Efforts:**

### **Population at Risk Information (P@RI) Project:**

The P@RI project is an HIU-led interagency initiative, involving representatives from over 30 organizations, to improve USG capability to more accurately estimate and make effective use of sub-national population information. The HIU has leveraged over \$400,000 from 7 agencies to support this project and is developing the initial materials in preparation of a planned National Academies of Science/National Research Council study on this issue. Development of prototype country decision support packages for Haiti, Mali, and Mozambique, which will be used to demonstrate the value of more accurate sub-national demographic information is progressing in parallel.

### **HIU Cooperation with DoD:**

The HIU is participating with the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD) for Network Information and Integration, the ASD for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, and NDU to develop doctrine governing the use and sharing of data in complex humanitarian emergencies.

The HIU is working with the DoD Civil Affairs community to develop common data collection forms, web portals, and collaborative tools.

The HIU is involved with the Joint Forces Command J-9 Office for Transformation and its initiative to develop the concept of the Joint Interagency Coordination Group, where the HIU has stressed the importance of the development and maintenance of a common interagency operating picture.

# Humanitarian Information Best Practice: Improving Assessments by Including Location Information

## Problem:

- Assessments that are strictly qualitative (narrative) tend to lose value over time and are difficult to integrate with other forms of data. Example:
- “The assessment team reports a need to prioritize reconstruction of the two destroyed bridges that connect agricultural producers with the local market. A third destroyed bridge prevents access to the nearest port.”

## Solution:

Assessments should include location information in the form of coordinates. An assessment with coordinates would look like this:

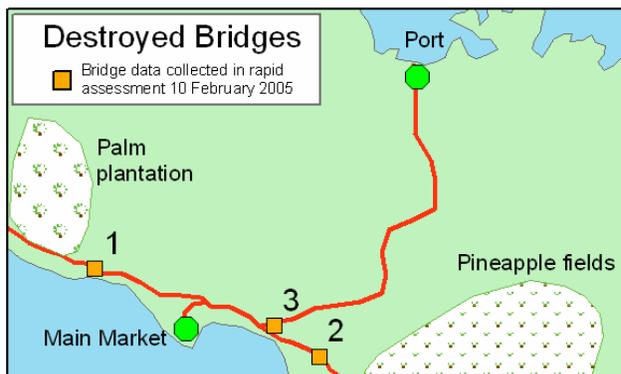
“The assessment team reports a need to prioritize reconstruction of the two destroyed bridges (2.5700399, 96.0752737), (2.5838459, 96.0315965) that connect agricultural producers with the local market. A third destroyed bridge (2.5625190, 96.0862688) prevents access to the nearest port.”

Database developed from coordinates to include additional reconstruction information:

RECHUM	LAT	LOH	LOIGHAME	Type	Partner	Start_date
9	+2.5700399	+96.0752737	1	concrete piers	Atlas Bridges	5/5/2005
36	+2.5838459	+96.0315965	2	steel span	Bridge Tek	4/4/2005
49	+2.5625190	+96.0862688	3	concrete piers	Atlas Bridges	6/6/2005



## Map produced from database coordinates:



## How:

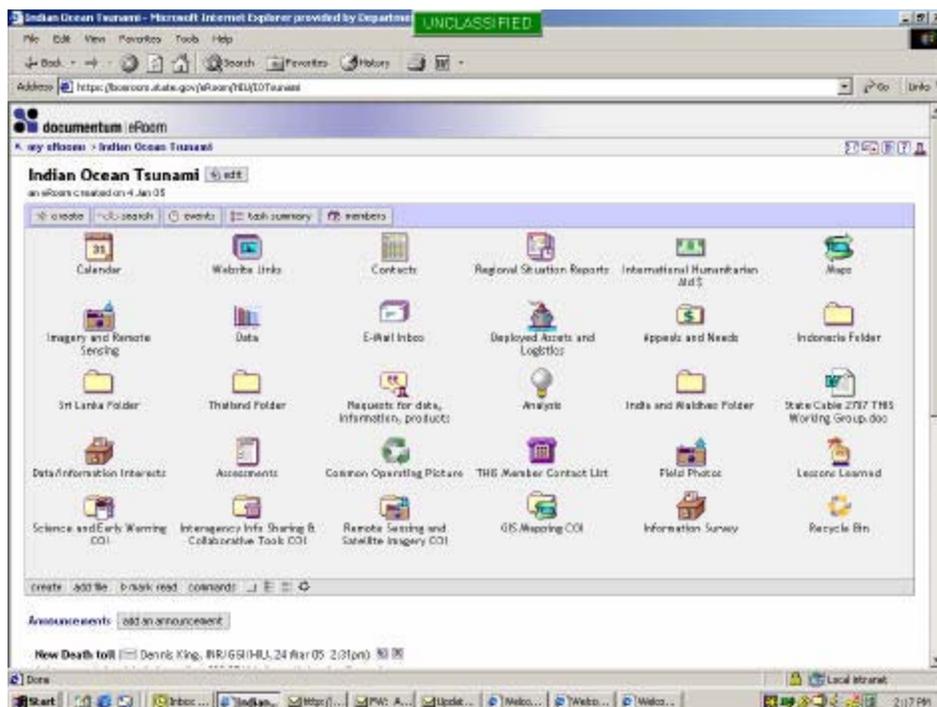
- Geo-referenced (location) data is collected using a GPS unit. GPS units are now easier to use than ever before. Some require only the pushing of a button to capture location coordinates. These coordinates can be downloaded directly from the GPS unit into a computer and used to produce maps and spreadsheets or databases.

## Why:

- Collecting location data increases both the immediate and long term value of the assessment. The geo-referenced assessment data can be displayed on a map for planning purposes. Having the location information reduces the need for multiple visits to the same area to determine exact locations. In addition, with location information as a common reference, additional data sets (agriculture, roads, and markets) can be added to the map. Geo-referenced information is of utility to many actors in all stages of a complex humanitarian emergency.

## Improving Interagency Collaboration and Knowledge Management:

The HIU has created interagency collaboration “eRooms”, where invited participants, regardless of location or agency, can add, retrieve and share information about a specific humanitarian emergency or issue. The HIU has created separate eRooms for the Indian Ocean Tsunami, the March 28 Sumatra earthquake, Darfur Sudan, and the Populations At Risk Working Group.



### Features available to members of the eRoom include:

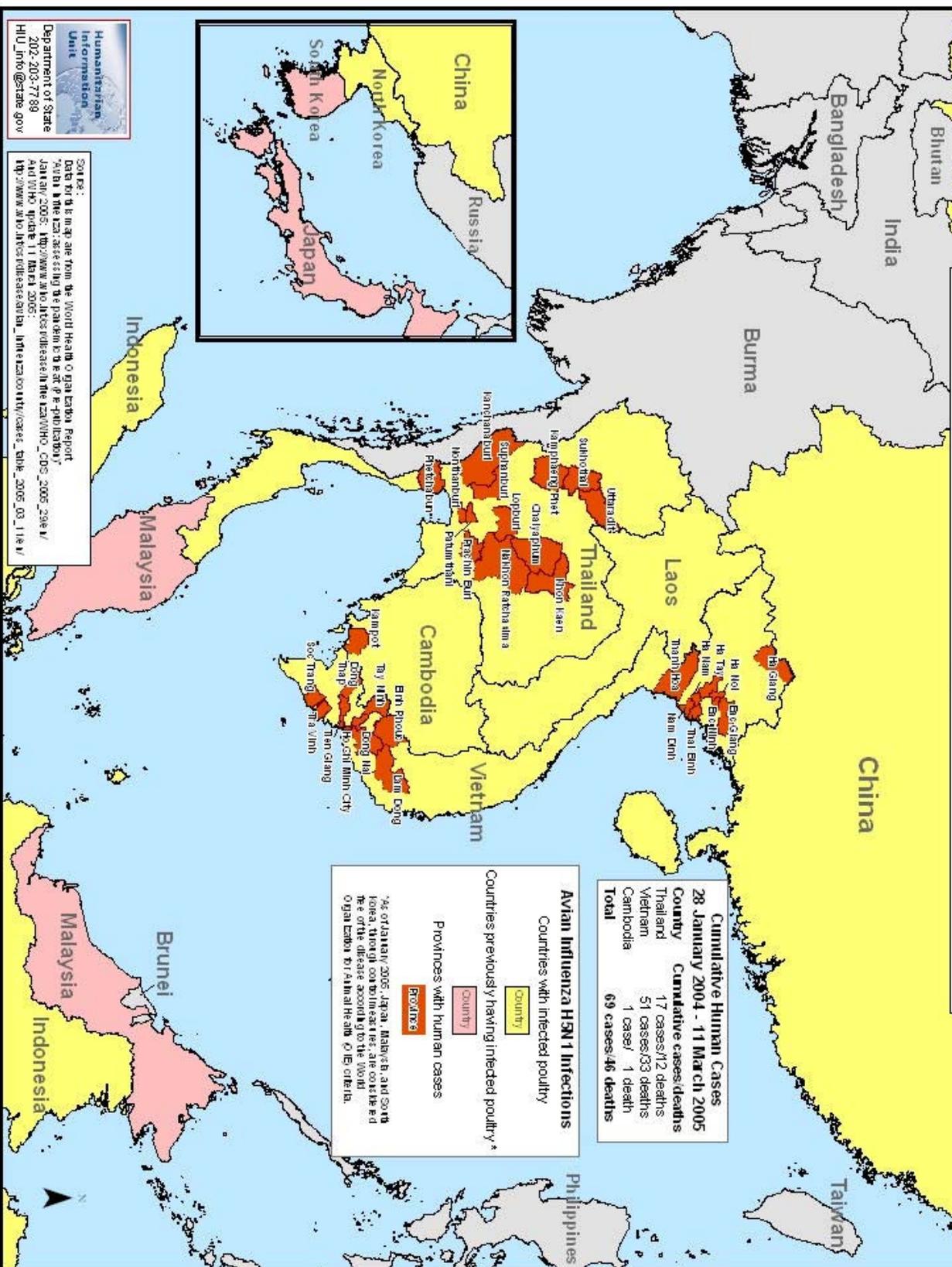
- Calendar – scheduling of meetings and briefings
- Contacts Directory – listing of contact information
- Library – posting of relevant documents
- Databases – uploading databases and files
- Portal – hyperlinks to relevant websites
- Gallery – maps and photos
- Discussion Forum – threaded discussion of issues



# Avian Influenza: Assessing the Pandemic Threat

March 28, 2005

UNCLASSIFIED



Cumulative Human Cases	
28 January 2004 - 11 March 2005	Country
17 cases/12 deaths	Thailand
51 cases/33 deaths	Vietnam
1 case/ 1 death	Cambodia
<b>69 cases/46 deaths</b>	<b>Total</b>

**Avian Influenza H5N1 Infections**

Countries with infected poultry: Country

Countries previously having infected poultry\*: Country

Provinces with human cases: Province

\*As of January 2005, Japan, Malaysia, and South Korea, though countries with infections, are considered free of the disease according to the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) criteria.

Humanitarian Information Unit  
 Department of State  
 202-203-7189  
 HIU\_info@state.gov

Sources:  
 Data for this map are from the World Health Organization Report, "Avian Influenza: Assessing the Pandemic Threat" (February 2005).  
 WHO, 2005. [http://www.who.int/diseases/influenza/WHO\\_CDS\\_2005\\_298/](http://www.who.int/diseases/influenza/WHO_CDS_2005_298/)  
 And WHO update 11 March 2005:  
[http://www.who.int/diseases/influenza/influenza/whocdscases\\_table\\_2005\\_03\\_11/en/](http://www.who.int/diseases/influenza/influenza/whocdscases_table_2005_03_11/en/)

UNCLASSIFIED

Date: February 9, 2005 COMMON OPERATING PICTURE FOR NORTHERN SUMATRA

UNCLASSIFIED

Economic Impact, Infrastructure Damage, and US Government Assistance



UNCLASSIFIED

# March 28 Sumatra Earthquake and Aftershocks

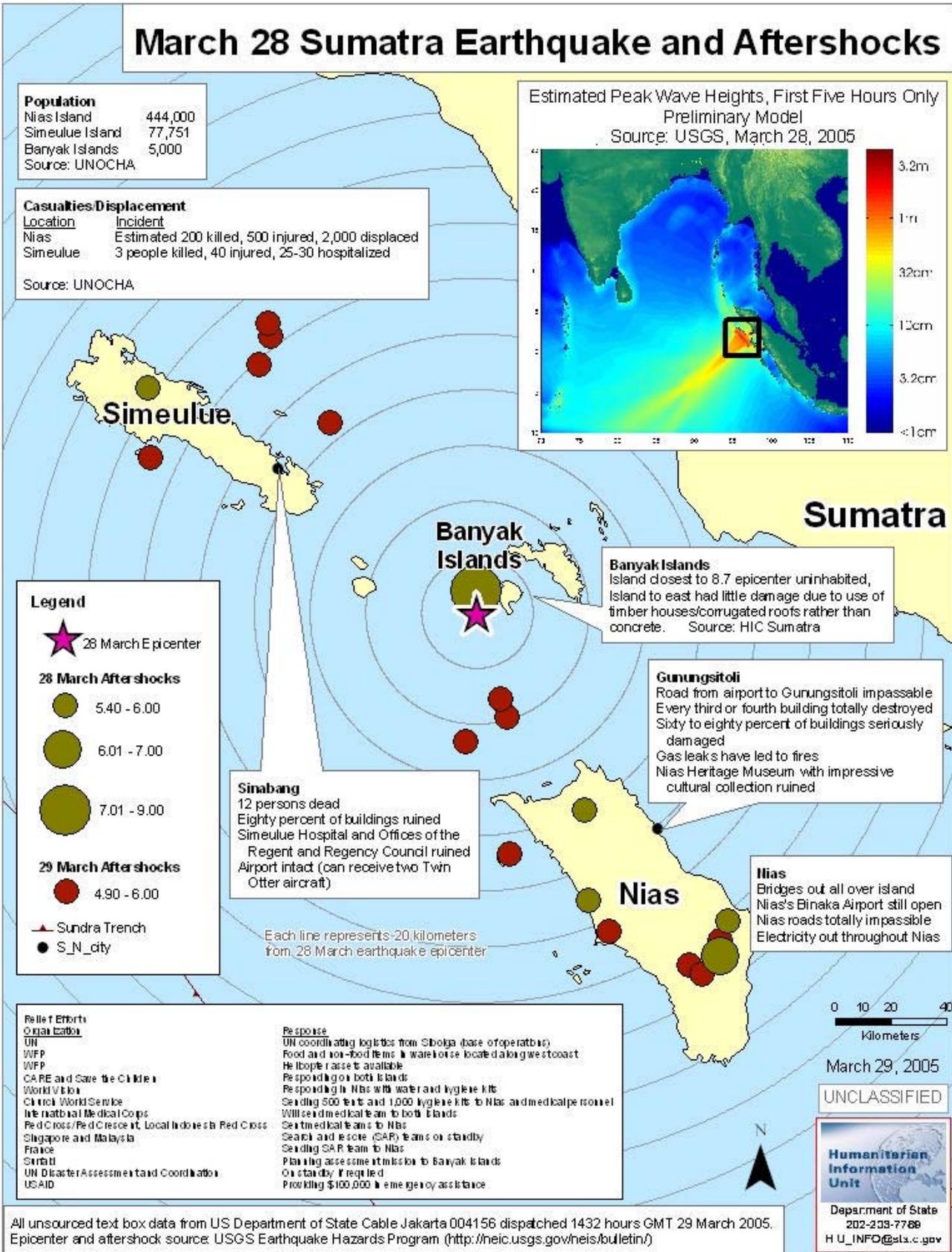
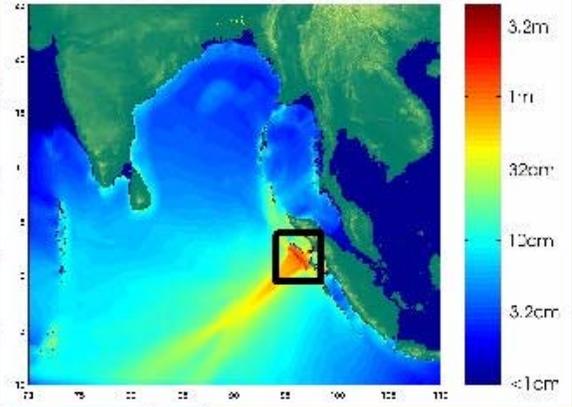
**Population**  
 Nias Island 444,000  
 Simeulue Island 77,751  
 Banyak Islands 5,000  
 Source: UNOCHA

**Casualties/Displacement**  

Location	Incident
Nias	Estimated 200 killed, 500 injured, 2,000 displaced
Simeulue	3 people killed, 40 injured, 25-30 hospitalized

  
 Source: UNOCHA

Estimated Peak Wave Heights, First Five Hours Only  
 Preliminary Model  
 Source: USGS, March 28, 2005



**Legend**

- ★ 28 March Epicenter
- 28 March Aftershocks**
  - 5.40 - 6.00
  - 6.01 - 7.00
  - 7.01 - 9.00
- 29 March Aftershocks**
  - 4.90 - 6.00
- ▲ Sunda Trench
- S\_N\_city

**Banyak Islands**  
 Island closest to 8.7 epicenter uninhabited, island to east had little damage due to use of timber houses/corrugated roofs rather than concrete. Source: HIC Sumatra

**Gunungsitoli**  
 Road from airport to Gunungsitoli impassable  
 Every third or fourth building totally destroyed  
 Sixty to eighty percent of buildings seriously damaged  
 Gas leaks have led to fires  
 Nias Heritage Museum with impressive cultural collection ruined

**Sinabang**  
 12 persons dead  
 Eighty percent of buildings ruined  
 Simeulue Hospital and Offices of the Regent and Regency Council ruined  
 Airport intact (can receive two Twin Otter aircraft)

**Nias**  
 Bridges out all over island  
 Nias's Binaka Airport still open  
 Nias roads totally impassable  
 Electricity out throughout Nias

Relief Efforts	Response
<b>Organizations</b> UN WFP WFP CARE and Save the Children World Vision Central World Service International Medical Corps Red Cross/Red Crescent, Local Indonesian Red Cross Singapore and Malaysia France Sri Lanka UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination USAID	UN coordinating logistics from Sibolga (base of operations) Food and non-food items in warehouse located along west coast Helicopter base available Responding on both islands Responding to Nias with water and hygiene kits Sending 500 kits and 1,000 hygiene kits to Nias and medical personnel Will send medical team to both islands Send medical teams to Nias Search and rescue (SAR) teams on standby Sending SAR team to Nias Planning assessment mission to Banyak Islands On standby if required Providing \$100,000 in emergency assistance

0 10 20 40  
 Kilometers

March 29, 2005

UNCLASSIFIED

**Humanitarian Information Unit**  
 Department of State  
 202-203-7788  
 H U\_INFO@state.gov

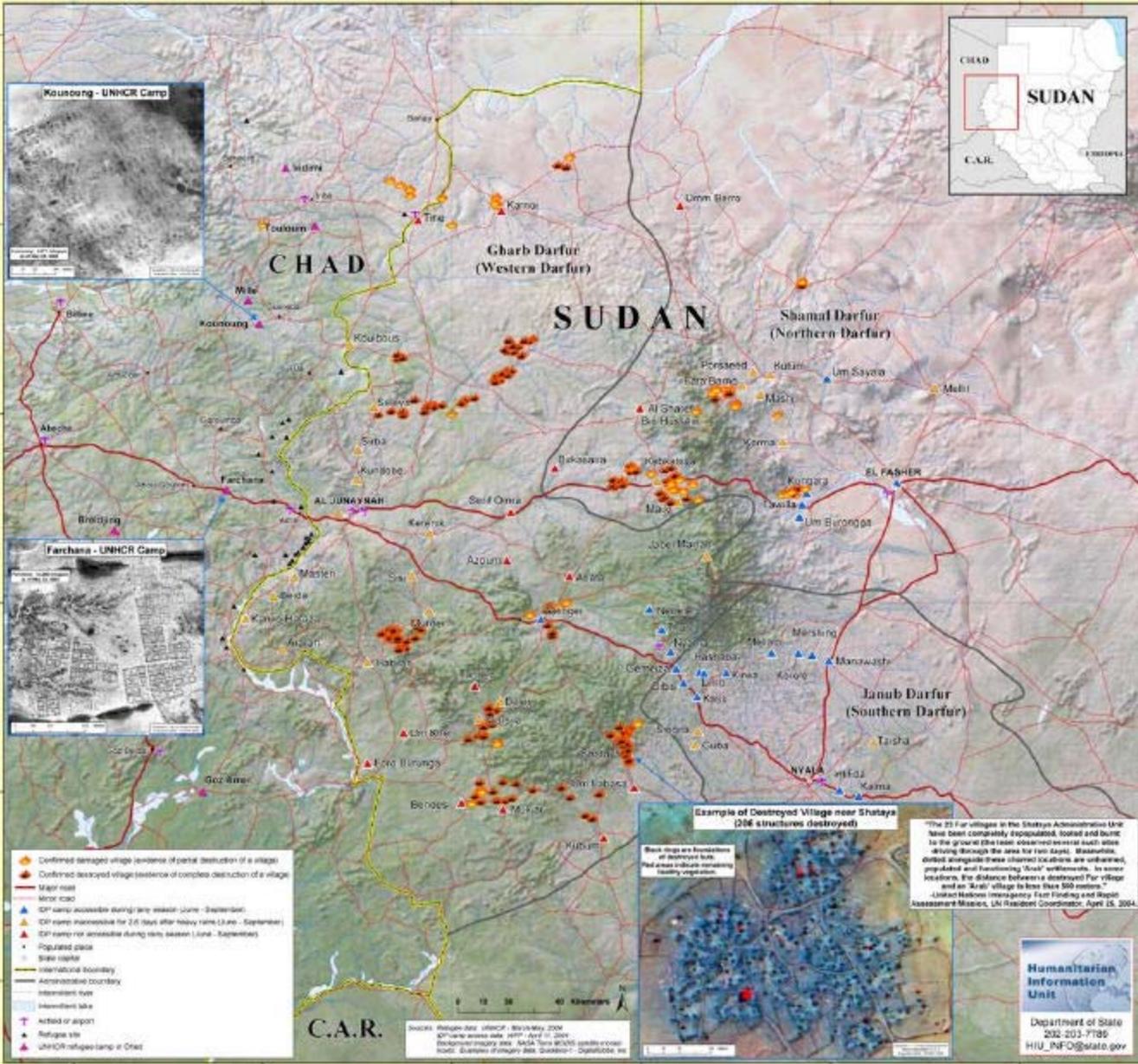
All unsourced text box data from US Department of State Cable Jakarta 004156 dispatched 1432 hours GMT 29 March 2005. Epicenter and aftershock source: USGS Earthquake Hazards Program (<http://neic.usgs.gov/neis/bulletin/>)

Date: May 27, 2004

### Sudan (Darfur) - Chad Border Region Confirmed Damaged and Destroyed Villages

UNCLASSIFIED

© Copyright 2004 Logica/GeoEye, Inc. All Rights Reserved.  
Logica/GeoEye and the Logica/GeoEye logo are trademarks of Logica/GeoEye, Inc. The use of other trademarks and/or logos is the property of their respective owners. No warranty is made by Logica/GeoEye for any use of the information contained herein. Logica/GeoEye and its subsidiaries are not responsible for any damage or loss of data or information that may result from the use of the information contained herein.



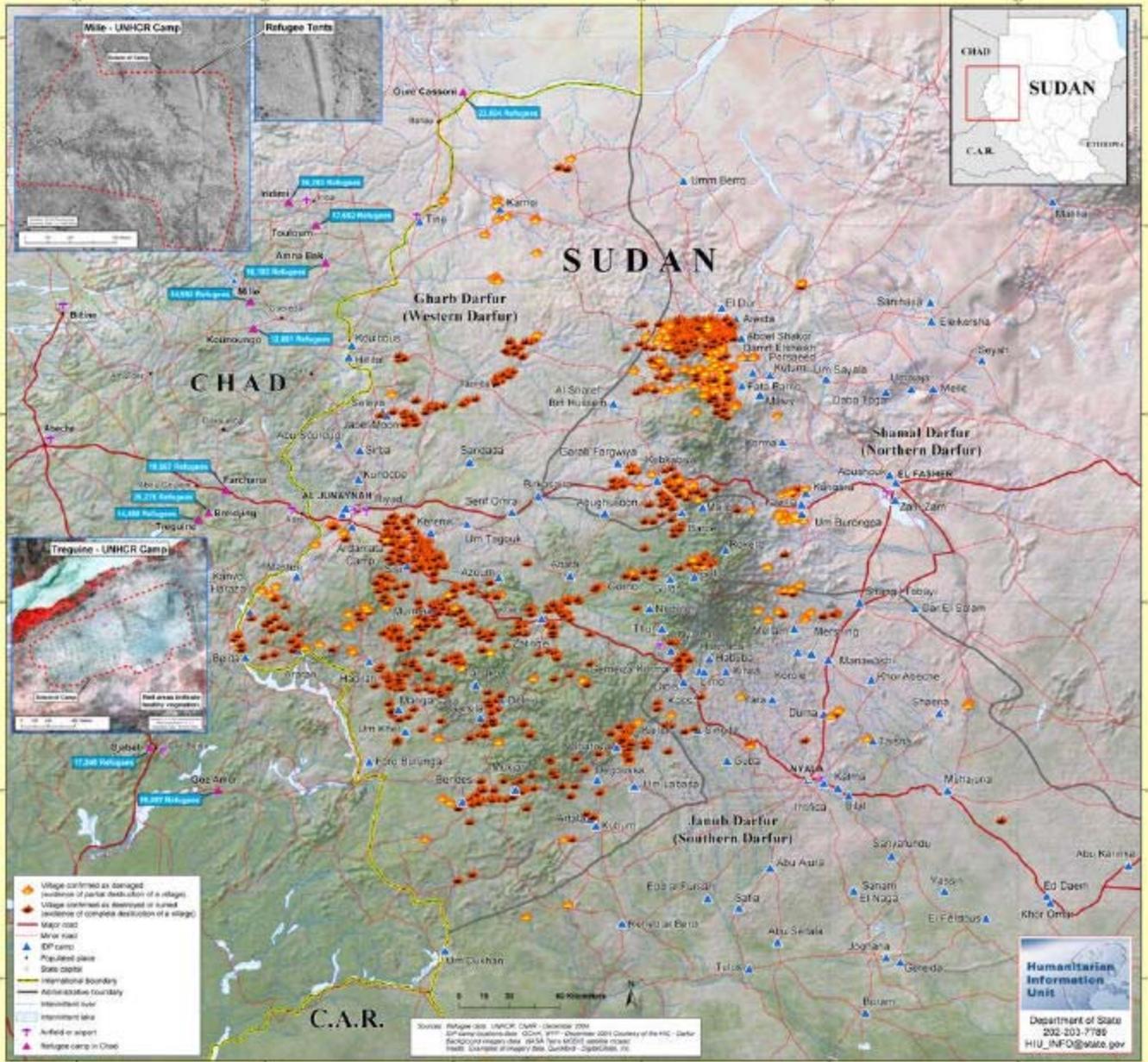
Date: February 25, 2005

Villages in Darfur confirmed as destroyed or ruined: 748  
Villages in Darfur confirmed as damaged: 201

### Sudan (Darfur) - Chad Border Region Confirmed Damaged and Destroyed Villages

UNCLASSIFIED

© 2004/2005 DigitalGlobe, Inc. All Rights Reserved.  
License: See USG Overseas License Agreement



Humanitarian Information Unit

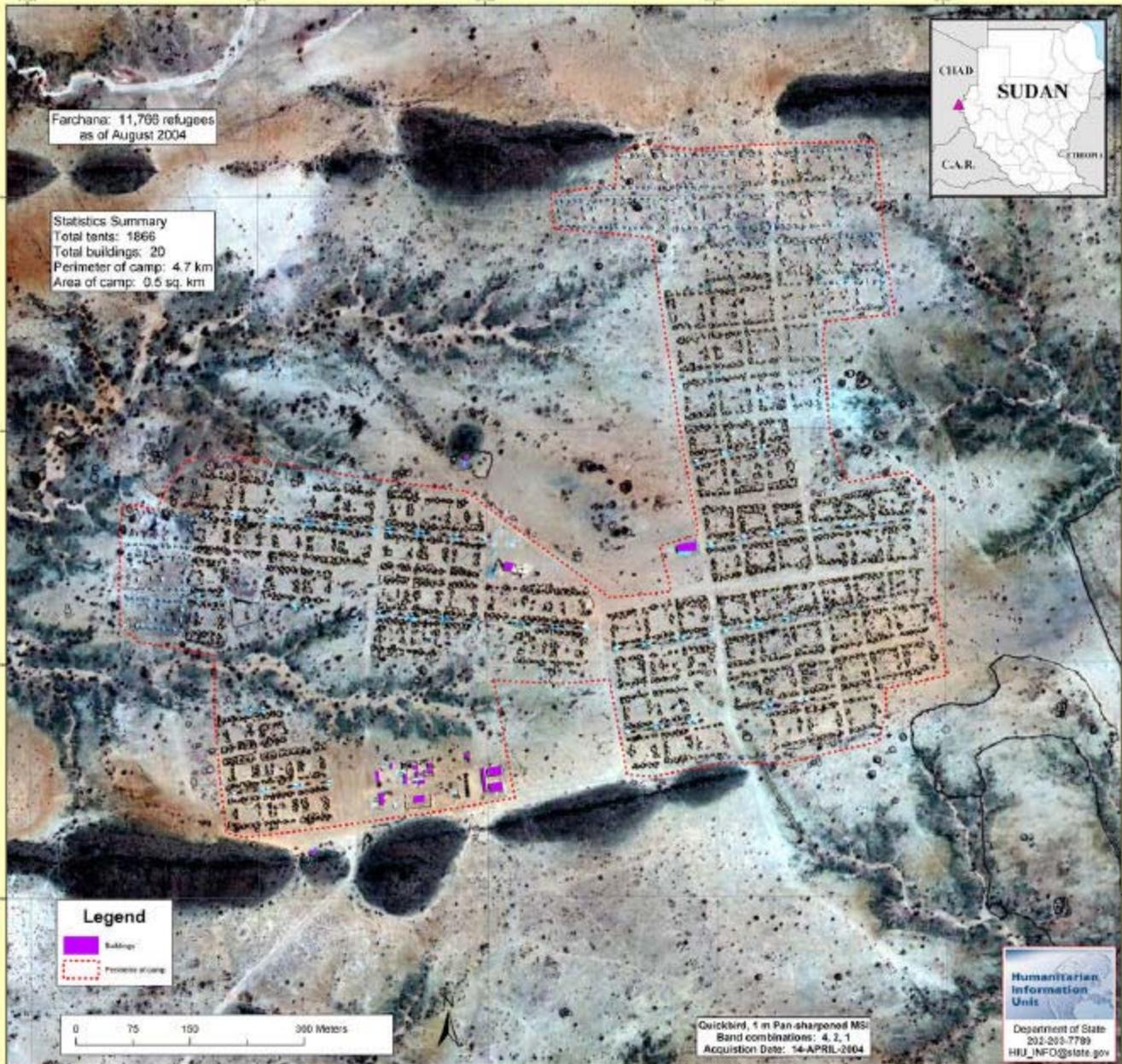
Department of State  
202-203-7198  
HIU\_INFO@state.gov

UNCLASSIFIED

November 3, 2004

# Farchana - UNHCR Camp

© COPYRIGHT 2004 DigitalGlobe, Inc. (All Rights Reserved)  
License Ter: USG OpenView License Agreement

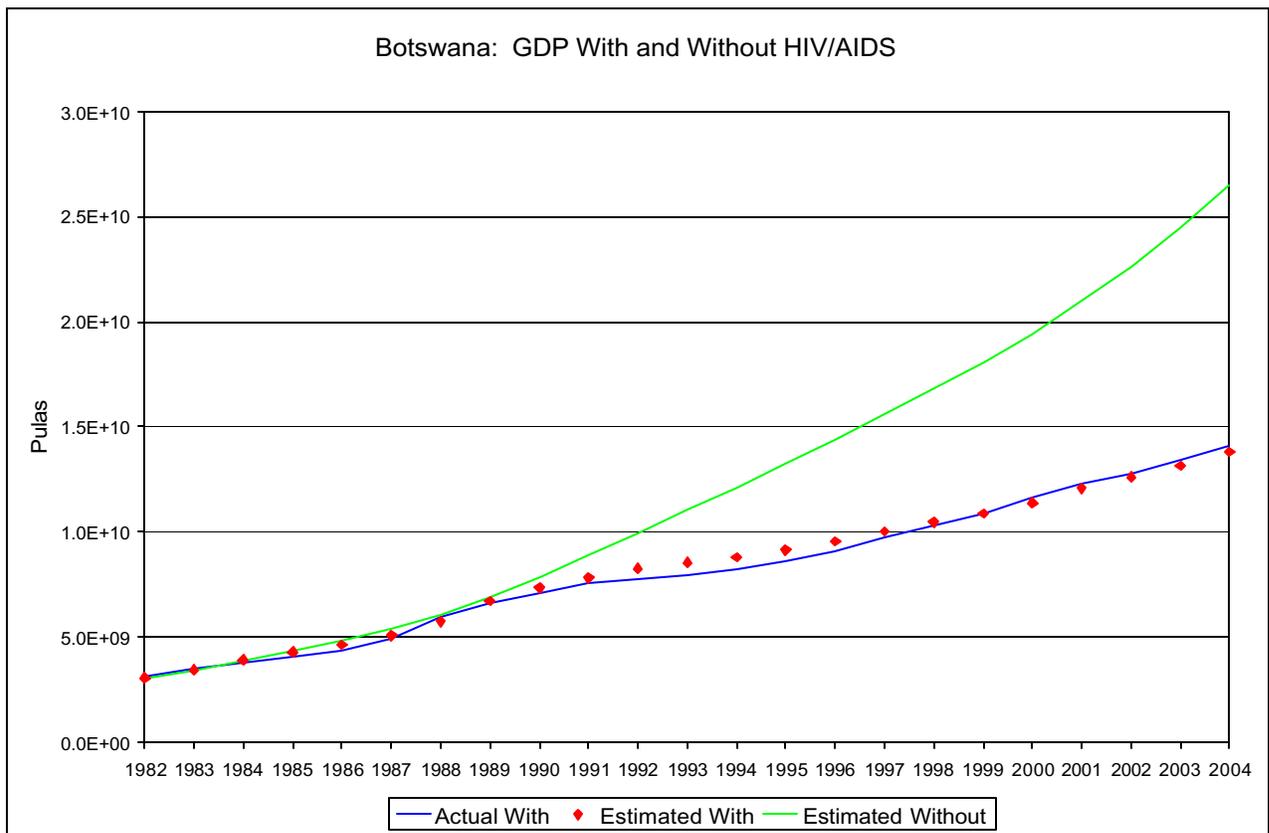


# HIV/AIDS Economic Analysis:

The HIU has modeled 5 of the 15 PEPFAR countries, using regression analysis and standard production function variables. Our methodology has been favorably reviewed by analysts at USDA, USAID, The Futures Group, and the World Bank.

## Preliminary Results Include:

- Botswana is the extreme example of the economic impact of HIV/AIDS because it has the highest prevalence rate—37.8%. Had Botswana not suffered from HIV/AIDS from 1982-2004, we estimate that average GDP growth would have been 3.2 percentage points higher. By 2004, GDP would have reached 26.5 billion pulas rather than 13.8 billion pulas. (see graphic below)



# Humanitarian Knowledge Management

Dennis J. King

US Department of State. Humanitarian Information Unit

[Kingdj2@state.gov](mailto:Kingdj2@state.gov)

## ABSTRACT

International complex humanitarian emergencies present numerous challenges to aid organizations trying to manage data, information and knowledge about any given situation or event. Humanitarian aid organizations should be able to identify what critical information they need, where to find it, what are the major gaps, and how best to share, present and disseminate this information. These challenges can be addressed through improved knowledge management. The faster and more efficiently humanitarian aid organizations are able to identify, collect, distill, analyze and manage the vast corpus of what they need to know, the more effectively they can plan for and respond to natural disasters and complex emergencies and the more lives are potentially saved.

## Keywords

Knowledge Management, Crisis Management, Humanitarian Assistance, Complex Humanitarian Emergencies

## WHAT DO AID ORGANIZATIONS NEED TO KNOW?

In any complex humanitarian emergency, there are certain questions that humanitarian aid organizations want answered. Certain background and situational information is needed by all humanitarian organizations: NGOs, UN agencies, governments and donors. Other types of information are more specifically needed by different personnel within these aid organizations. For example, humanitarian organization policy makers want “big picture snapshot” analysis in order to understand the issues, to make decisions on providing assistance, and to be alerted to problems and obstacles. Field personnel and project and desk officers in aid organizations, on the other hand, need more detailed operational and programmatic information in order to plan and implement humanitarian assistance and reconstruction programs.

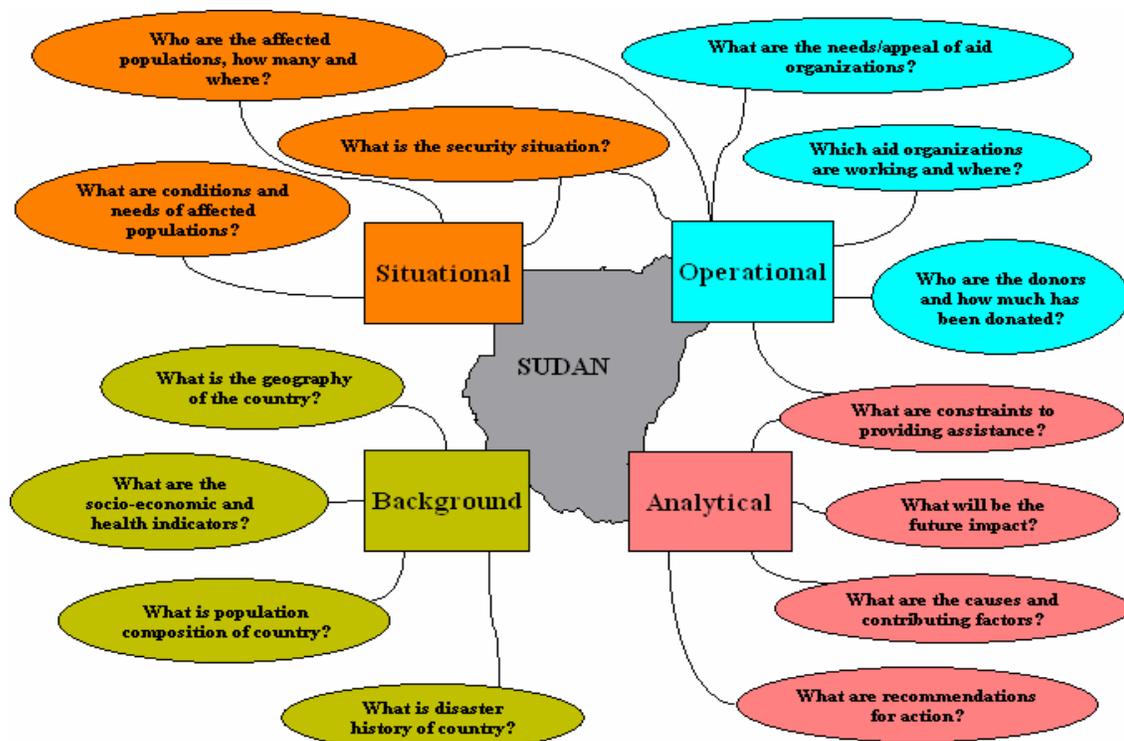


Figure 1. Knowledge Map: Questions that need to be answered

Most humanitarian information needs can be divided into four basic categories:

**Situational awareness:** Aid organizations need to know the latest about the situation on the ground and information about the conditions, needs, and locations of affected populations.

- What is the latest/current humanitarian situation in the country?
- What are the most recent severity indicators? (death tolls, mortality rates, malnutrition rates, economic impact, infrastructure damage, etc.)
- Who are the affected populations (refugees, IDPs, children and other vulnerable groups, resident populations, etc), how many are there, and where are they located?
- What are the conditions and humanitarian needs of the affected populations?
- What is the assessment of damage to infrastructure? (transport, buildings, housing, communications, etc)
- What is the latest/current security situation in the affected areas of the country?

**Operational/Programmatic:** Information necessary in order to plan and implement humanitarian assistance programs.

- Where are and what are the conditions of the logistical access routes for delivering humanitarian assistance?
- Who's Doing What Where? What humanitarian organizations are working in the country, what are their programs, what are their capacities and where are they working?
- How is the host country/government responding and can it provide more?
- What are the programmatic/financial needs of the humanitarian organizations?
- What and how much is being provided to the humanitarian response organizations and who are the donors?

**Background:** Background information is needed to provide knowledge about the unique history, geography, population, political and economic structure, infrastructure and culture of the country. Baseline data are also necessary for aid organizations in order to be able to compare the emergency situation and conditions to previous normal conditions.

- What is the country's population (national, province/state, city/town) and its composition (ethnicity, religion, age cohorts, urban/rural, political, etc)?
- What is the geography of the country?
- What are the country's past disasters and natural hazards?
- What are the most recent annual baseline health indicators for the population? (Crude Mortality Rate, Infant/Child Mortality Rates, HIV adult prevalence, malnutrition, etc)
- What are the annual economic indicators? (GDP, GNP, agricultural/food production, staple food prices, etc)

**Analysis:** Humanitarian information needs to be interpreted in context and related to other thematic information. Analysis can include evaluations of issues and responses, projections about the future, and recommendations for policies and actions.

- What are the causes and contributing factors of the emergency?
- What are the constraints to providing humanitarian assistance? (insecurity, inaccessibility, government interference, etc)
- How effective are humanitarian assistance programs and responses?
- What are the future impacts of the emergency?
- What are the options and recommendations for action?

#### WHAT ARE THE GAPS IN HUMANITARIAN KNOWLEDGE?

Providing the answers to these questions is not easy. Natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies are, by their very nature, complex and dynamic situations. They are multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary, incorporating both the physical and social sciences. *Information* is constantly changing, comes from a multitude of sources and is often incomplete or contradictory. In some cases, there is an overload of information and, in other cases, there are complete gaps in what we know. Collecting information is often difficult, if not impossible, because of inaccessibility to the affected areas due to natural hazards, insecurity or government restrictions. Furthermore, much of the "available" *data* are actually estimations, based on selective sampling or extrapolations of dated statistics, such as census information, projected growth rates, and proxy indicators.

There is also a certain amount of misinformation and disinformation generated about natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies. Governments and aid organizations may publish inflated or high estimate data about a natural disaster or humanitarian emergency in order to appeal for higher amounts of international humanitarian assistance. Furthermore,

governments may purposely conceal information about the situation in a country in order to mislead the international community. Decisions about providing humanitarian assistance in response to natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies often must be based on the best available information and insufficient *knowledge*.

Another problem is the inconsistent use of standardized *meta-data* when collecting and providing humanitarian information. All incoming and outgoing data and information should include the source and the date or time-stamp, so that other users can determine the credibility and currency of the content. Likewise, it is important to make sure that ambiguous terminology is clearly defined and methodologies and indicators explained, so that others can use the data and information correctly. Finally, data and information should be geo-referenced to include the latitude/longitude, geo-code, gazetteer place name, administrative unit, etc., so that the data can be entered into a Geographic Information System (GIS) and mapped. If these standards are followed, data and information provided by many different humanitarian organizations can be effectively pooled, compared, contrasted, validated and used for analysis and mapping.

### WHERE CAN HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS FIND WHAT THEY NEED TO KNOW?

The emergence of the internet in the last ten years has revolutionized the availability and dissemination of humanitarian information. E-Mail has greatly facilitated the transmission of information between the headquarters of the humanitarian aid organizations and the personnel, teams, and programs located in the emergency-affected countries. The World Wide Web provides a vast, virtual library of information to users with internet access. At the same time, the internet has added to the overload of information and the increasing difficulty in locating, extracting and verifying the answers to the critical questions.

Situational information is reported in the news, but more directly in the situation reports and field assessments from the humanitarian response organizations working in the affected countries. These humanitarian organizations also produce and issue appeals, proposals, and project monitoring documents that provide operational and programmatic information. Useful background/baseline information can be found in country profiles, maps, databases, and chronologies. Analysis is derived also from evaluations, lessons learned, research studies and policy recommendations.

Not everything that aid organizations need to know, however, can be found in databases, documents and visual products. There is also *tacit knowledge* that is usually not documented, but derived from expertise, collaboration and field experience. This knowledge is often imparted from briefings, discussions, and first hand observation. "Seeing it for oneself" adds a great deal to one's knowledge and understanding of any humanitarian emergency.

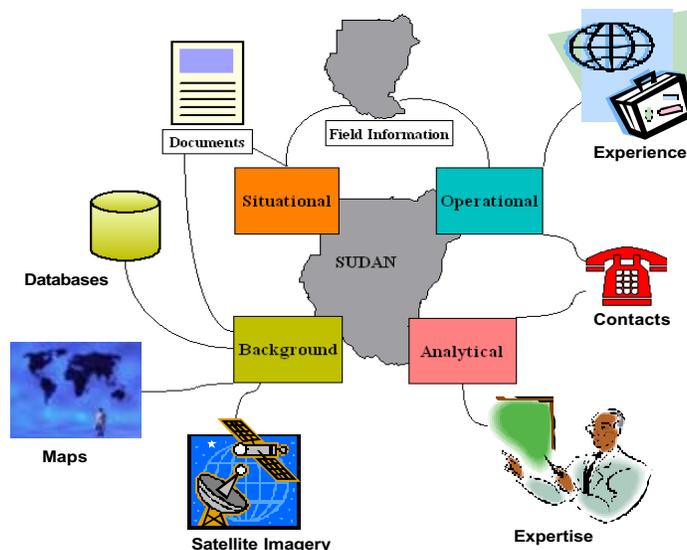


Figure 2: Knowledge Map: Where is knowledge located?

## WHAT IS HUMANITARIAN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT?

*Knowledge Management* is the systematic process and strategy for finding, capturing, organizing, distilling and presenting data, information and knowledge for a specific purpose and to serve a specific organization or community. In complex humanitarian emergencies, there is usually an overload of information in the form of reporting, but there is a lack of systematic collection of standardized data that is stored in retrievable databases. There is also a lack of documentation of knowledge and application of lessons learned and best practices for decision-making. The challenge of humanitarian knowledge management is compiling and synthesizing the accumulated data, information and knowledge, storing and organizing it so it can be easily retrieved and disseminated, and then presenting and sharing it using effective methods and systems.

Knowledge management places a high value on *collaboration* as a means of capturing and sharing knowledge. Collaboration networks are created for common interest communities that include participants who belong to different organizations, separated by time and location. These collaboration networks facilitate the sharing of working-level data, information and knowledge through instant messaging, expertise directories, calendars that announce upcoming briefings, on-line webcam meetings and threaded discussions on specific topics and issues.

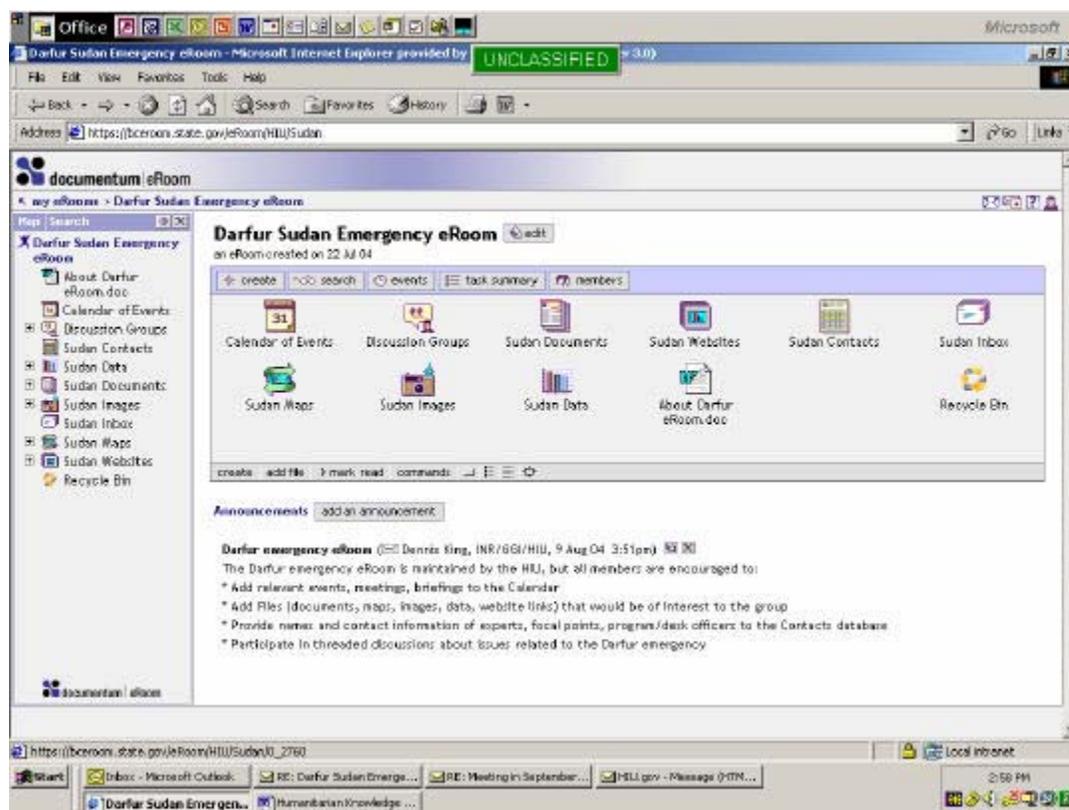


Figure 3: Sample Collaboration Community of Interest

The sharing of information is critical for humanitarian emergencies because no single entity can be the source of all of the necessary information. Making critical information widely available not only reduces duplication of effort, but also enhances coordination and provides a common knowledge base so that critical information can be pooled, analyzed, compared, contrasted, validated and reconciled. Collaboration networks should be designed to dismantle institutional stovepipes, facilitate the sharing of information among organizations, capture lessons learned and best practices, and provide a common knowledge base for the community of interest.

Another important knowledge management tool is *visualization*. Visualization is used to display and convey data, information and analysis in an effective and easy-to-comprehend picture. Graphs, charts and timelines are ways of visualizing aggregated data in order to see relationships, contrasts and patterns. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) enable the viewer to select and display geo-spatial data and answer the “where” questions. *Knowledge maps*, such as the two used in this document, are often pictures depicting the knowledge resources in an organization. These visualization tools can enhance the presentation of narrative or verbal information and analysis.

## WHAT ARE SOME HUMANITARIAN KNOWLEDGE BEST PRACTICES?

- Conduct an assessment of information needs and existing knowledge resources in advance, and identify the gaps in data, information and knowledge.
- Provide standardized meta-data (source, date, geo-reference, definitions) along with all collected and shared information, so that it can be pooled, compared, verified, mapped, and used for analysis.
- Establish and use collaboration networks to create communities of interest among individuals in multiple organizations as a means to capture and share tacit knowledge and dismantle organizational stovepipes.
- Employ visualization to represent complex data and information, display patterns and relationships, and depict a geo-spatial common operating picture.
- Demonstrate the practical applications of new information tools and technologies and use collected data and information to answer questions and respond to identified information needs.
- Recognize the value of tacit knowledge gained from field experience, collaboration and learned expertise.
- Promote the use of new tools and technologies, such as Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), Global Positioning Systems (GPS), Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and virtual collaboration networks and provide advance training in order to ensure that personnel use them effectively and routinely in their work.

## CONCLUSION

Effectively collecting, compiling, analyzing and disseminating timely and relevant information is one of the primary challenges for humanitarian organizations. Better humanitarian information and knowledge management can improve the effectiveness of humanitarian response and assistance. The faster humanitarian organizations can identify, collect, analyze and disseminate critical information, the more effective the response becomes and the more lives are potentially saved and human suffering reduced.

## APPENDIX: DEFINITION OF TERMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

**Collaboration:** the process for capturing and sharing tacit knowledge, derived from group interaction, shared expertise, and collective wisdom.

**Data:** a collection of related facts usually organized in a particular format, such as a table or database and gathered for a particular purpose.

**Information:** data that has been interpreted, verbalized, translated, or transformed to reveal the underlying meaning and context.

**Knowledge:** the internalization of information, data, and experience. **Tacit Knowledge** is the personal knowledge resident within the mind, behavior and perceptions of individual members of the organization. **Explicit Knowledge** is the formal, recorded, or systematic knowledge that can easily be accessed, transmitted, or stored in computer files or hard copy.

**Knowledge management:** the systematic strategy to collect, store and retrieve knowledge and then help distribute the information and knowledge to those who need it in a timely manner.

**Knowledge Mapping:** Locating important knowledge in the organization and then publishing a list or picture that shows where to find it. Knowledge maps typically point to people, documents and databases, showing users where to go when they need expertise.

**Meta-data:** Data about the information that provides source, date, location, definitions, methodology (who, when, where, how, what, etc.)

**Visualization:** the process of representing abstract data and complex information as images that can aid in understanding the meaning.

## Bibliography

Dilley, Maxx and King, Dennis. "How to share information in a complex emergency", Humanitarian Affairs Review. Summer 2001, pg. 10 – 13.

Final Report on the Symposium on Best Practices in Humanitarian Information Exchange. 5 – 8 February 2002, Geneva, Switzerland.

Powell, Mike, Information Management for Development Organizations. Oxfam Press, Oxford, UK 2003

Tiwana, Amrit. The Knowledge Management Toolkit Prentice Hall PTR, New Jersey. 2000

UN Geographic Information Support Team SHARE: Structured Humanitarian Assistance Reporting. New York, NY  
April 2000.



## **HIU Highlights Report No.7:** **Dec. 1, 2004 – Jan. 31, 2005**

*The Humanitarian Information Unit serves as a USG interagency center to identify, collect, analyze, and disseminate unclassified information critical to USG decision makers and partners in preparation for and response to humanitarian emergencies worldwide, and to promote best practices for humanitarian information management*

This report describes select initiatives underway, recent collaborations, key meetings, and upcoming items of interest.

### **Status of Select Initiatives:**

#### **Indian Ocean Tsunami**

##### **(a) Tsunami Humanitarian Information Sharing (THIS) Working Group:**

State cable 2707, 6 January 2005, designated the HIU as the coordinator for the Tsunami Humanitarian Information Sharing (THIS) Working Group. This group was established to facilitate the management of interagency geospatial information and to coordinate support for field needs related to tsunami relief efforts. State cable 8983, 14 January 2005, identified the Pacific Disaster Center's web site ([HTTP://WWW.PDC.ORG/TSUNAMI](http://www.pdc.org/tsunami)) as the primary repository for USG-purchased commercial imagery of the affected areas. Host country governments, international organizations, and NGO partners all were granted access to data hosted on this site. The THIS Working Group determined that Indonesia's heavily damaged Aceh Province should be the focus of its initial efforts and expedited the provision of digital data from the National Geo-spatial Intelligence Agency (NGA) and USGS/EROS Data Center to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and UNOSAT (UN Office of Satellite Technology). INR/GGI/GIU produced a digital map atlas of the Aceh region and provided it to field elements operating in Indonesia, including the UN's Humanitarian Information Center (HIC) that was set up in northern Sumatra. (POC: Alan Davis)

##### **(b) Indian Ocean Tsunami eRoom:**

The HIU created an Indian Ocean Tsunami eRoom, an inter-agency collaborative tool that hosted a network for capturing, organizing and sharing information on the disaster. Over eighty invited participants representing the State Department, USAID, USGS, NASA, US Army Corps on Engineers, DOD/PACOM, 96<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs units, and other agencies can access and add files to this common web-based workspace. The eRoom includes a calendar; contacts directory; GIS databases; repositories of analyses, maps, and satellite imagery; links to related websites; and provides a forum for requesting data and exchanging information.

The Tsunami eRoom has become an important platform for sharing information among THIS Working Group members. Four “Communities of Interest” (COIs) were established under THIS and linked to the Tsunami eRoom. COIs function as virtual communities to address issues, requests, and problems and to discuss new ideas related to a specific theme or expertise area. If you would like an invitation to the Tsunami eRoom, please contact Dennis King at [kingdj2@state.gov](mailto:kingdj2@state.gov).

THIS Working Group Communities of Interest and contacts:

--**Remote Sensing and Satellite Imagery:** Carol Christian, DoS, [christianCA@state.gov](mailto:christianCA@state.gov)

--**GIS Mapping:** Tiffany Hill, DoS, [hilltl2@state.gov](mailto:hilltl2@state.gov)

--**Interagency Information Sharing and Collaboration Tools:** Dennis King, [kingdj2@state.gov](mailto:kingdj2@state.gov) or COL Doug Nash, [nashde@state.gov](mailto:nashde@state.gov)

--**Science and Early Warning:** POC: Pete Chirico, USGS, [pchirico@usgs.gov](mailto:pchirico@usgs.gov)



### c) Common Operating Picture (COP) Maps:

The HIU created a series of multi-thematic “Common Operating Picture” maps of northern Sumatra. COP maps present a snapshot assessment of different sectors affected by the tsunami via displays of geo-spatial, tabular, and temporal information. COP 1, on the right, focuses on the human impact of the tsunami, relief constraints and early USG deployments. COP 2, on the



left, provides information on displaced populations and health. The HIU produced two additional COP maps assessing the tsunami’s economic impact, infrastructure damage, and USG-furnished commodities and technical assistance. All these maps are available on the HIU website (see logon details on page 5) or via the Indian Ocean Tsunami eRoom (POCs: Dennis King and David Springer).

### d) Support to the Humanitarian Information Center in Sumatra:

Kathleen Miner, HIU senior geospatial analyst, was seconded to UN/OCHA for two months to establish its new HIC located in Banda Aceh. HICs produce maps, provide advice on survey design and implementation, and help organizations systematically collect data that can be shared with the broader humanitarian community. Besides providing support for emergency relief efforts, the Sumatra HIC is also developing a data infrastructure that will become a valuable future resource for the people of Aceh as they rebuild their devastated province. HICs operate in coordination with a number of regional partners, including the UN Joint Logistics Cell and USAID’s Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). The Sumatra HIC website is: [www.humanitarianinfo.org/sumatra/](http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/sumatra/).

## **Populations at Risk Information Project**

Two significant milestones were reached under the Populations at Risk Information Project (P@RI). First, the HIU has now received commitments from a number of partner USG agencies sufficient to fully fund a National Academies of Science/National Research Council (NRC) study to evaluate the uses of sub-national demographic data and decision-making tools to more effectively assist populations at risk. Second, with financial support from NGA, the National Technical Alliance (NTA) has agreed to collaborate with the HIU on the development of prototype country decision support packages to demonstrate the value of more accurate sub-national information for responding to crises. These country packages are an important initial input to the NRC study. Data that the HIU have collected on Mozambique, Mali, and Haiti – three countries initially selected for prototypes – will be delivered to NTA for inclusion in the packages. The P@RI project is a HIU-led interagency initiative stemming from recognition that the USG needs better capability to more accurately estimate sub-national population information in crisis-prone and data-poor countries. (POC: Lewis McCulloch)

## **Iraq Clinic and Hospital Reconstruction Status Map**

At the request of the National Security Council, the HIU prepared a prototype map on the status of USG-financed health facility rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in Iraq, displaying the percentage of facilities planned, started, and completed by governorate. USG agencies engaged in these activities in Iraq will use this model to report further progress to the NSC.

## **Collaboration Efforts:**

### **HIU Geospatial Assessments in Mali**

Responding to a field request, the HIU sent two team members to assess geospatial information collection efforts at the USAID Mission and US Embassy in Bamako, Mali from Nov. 27 through Dec. 5, 2004. The team also met with host country government representatives, World Food Programme officials, and technical assistance contractors to discuss their geospatial initiatives underway in Mali. The HIU report recommending next steps to be considered to institutionalize the system at USAID/Bamako is available on the HIU website and may prove useful to other partner agencies interested in establishing geospatial capabilities. The U.S. Embassy in Mali has initiated actions to obtain geospatial software recommended by the HIU team. (POC: Tiffany Hill)

### **Participation in USAID's Annual PVO Conference**

As part of an outreach effort to the NGO community, the HIU manned a booth at the DCHA/PVC Annual PVO Conference held in Washington, D.C. on January 13-14. HIU website capabilities and map products were displayed in an effort to demonstrate some “best practices” in the information management of complex humanitarian emergencies. (POC: Victoria Jabara).

## **World Conference on Disaster Reduction**

Dr. Melba Crawford, HIU science advisor, was a member of the USG delegation to the January 18-22 World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR), held in Kobe, Japan, to commemorate the tenth year anniversary of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. Originating from the 2002 Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development, the conference was designed around a common theme of building resilience to natural disasters. The tragic effects of the December earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean focused much of the attention of the conference participants on discussing ways to prevent such tragedies from recurring. The conference provided a preliminary forum for a discussion of a global multi-hazard early warning system, in addition to the adoption of longer term, broad-based strategic goals focused on disaster risk reduction. (POC: Melba Crawford)

## **Exercise Terminal Fury 2005**

HIU team member Colonel Doug Nash on December 7-9, 2004 participated in the US Pacific Command's (PACOM) Annual Capstone Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff *Exercise Terminal Fury 05*. This exercise was designed in support of the full-spectrum Joint Interagency Coordinating Group (JIACG). The JIACG is a joint DoD-DoS-USAID initiative to better integrate all instruments of national power into theatre-level strategy. HIU and other USG interagency partners were able to utilize the collaborative tool Info Work Station (IWS) to participate remotely from Washington DC with the JIACG and PACOM's Headquarters (located in Hawaii). The HIU produced GIS map products that depicted the USG Interagency Common Operating Picture, which was part of the live exercise carried out using IWS. The exercise highlighted the importance of applying best practices standards for the collection, sharing, and use of humanitarian data and information. (POC: Doug Nash)

## **CDC's Consultation on Global Disease Detection**

On December 8-9, 2004, HIU team member Dr. Deborah Belsky participated in the CDC's Consultation on Global Disease Detection (GDD) in Miami, Florida. This event brought together a variety of health experts, including business leaders, cooperating government health ministry officials, academics, and USG and UN experts to discuss ideas in accordance with CDC's Congressional mandate for global disease detection, specifically infectious diseases. (POC: Deborah Belsky)

## **Participation in Military Operations Research Society Conference**

HIU staff, from November 30-December 2, 2004, participated in a seminar on analysis of political instability and crisis, as part of a symposium on The Global War on Terrorism: Analytic Support, Tools and Metrics of Assessment, held at the US Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. During the proceedings of this DoD-sponsored symposium, Dennis King provided perspectives on humanitarian emergencies and their effect on political instability. (POC: Dennis King)

## **HIU Website**

As mentioned in the last Highlights Report, the HIU website is now operational. HIU partners are encouraged to log on and spread the word to their colleagues. The latest addition is a Tsunami information links page, which is a comprehensive list of websites that contain data, products, and news in relation to the Tsunami crisis. (POC:Tiffany Hill)

The URL, user name and password are:

<http://hiu.state.gov>

**User name** : User12

**Password**: password

## **Other Items of Interest:**

On 26 January, DAS Jeb Nadaner, Chief for Stability Operations, ASD Stability Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (SOLIC) and several of his staff visited the HIU. They were briefed on the HIU mission, core competencies and initiatives. The new HIU website and collaborative tools currently in use were demonstrated.

### ***HIU Welcomes New Staffers***

**Lewis McCulloch, Presidential Management Fellow:** Mr. McCulloch joined the Humanitarian Information Unit in December 2004 for a six-month Presidential Management Fellowship rotation. Most recently, Mr. McCulloch worked at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Satellites and Information Service, where he served as a Management and Program Analyst. While at the HIU, Mr. McCulloch will work on a variety of activities including the Populations at Risk Information Project.

**Heather Phelps, GIS Database Administrator:** Ms. Phelps serves the HIU as its GIS Administrator for the Unit's geographic database and website applications. She is involved in initiatives to organize and document the varied data sources the HIU receives and to set up a mapping website for dissemination of these data to partners. In addition, she provides GIS analysis and mapping support as needed.

### **Upcoming HIU Executive Steering Committee (ESC) Meeting:**

The next ESC meeting (invitation only) is scheduled for 10:00 AM on Thursday, February 17th, 2005 at the HIU. HIU welcomes Jed Meline (NSC), John Kelmelis (USGS), Jeb Nadaner (ASD/SOLIC), and Brian Fila (ASD/NII) as new members of the HIU Executive Steering Committee.

**HIU Contact Information:**

Humanitarian Information Unit  
Department of State  
SA-44 Room 602  
301 – 4<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20547  
(Office Fax: 202-203-7790)  
[HIU\\_info@state.gov](mailto:HIU_info@state.gov)  
<http://hiu.state.gov>

**HIU Direct Telephone Lines & Agency Affiliation:**

Alan L. Davis, Director (USAID):	202-203-7771	Cynthia Dial (DoS secretary):	202-203-7778
Fred Smith, Deputy (DoS):	202-203-7783	David Springer (NGA):	202-203-7789
Col. Doug Nash (DoD):	202-203-7779	Victoria Jabara (STG contract):	202-203-7784
Dennis King (DoS):	202-203-7782	Deborah Belsky (DoS):	202-203-7776
Melba Crawford (DoS):	202-663-0032	David Dodson (DoS):	202-203-7910
Kathleen Miner (USAID contract):	202-203-7780	Lewis McCulloch (NOAA):	202-203-7773
Tiffany Hill (STG contract):	202-203-7791	Heather Phelps (STG contract):	202-203-7787

## Contacting/Working with the HIU:

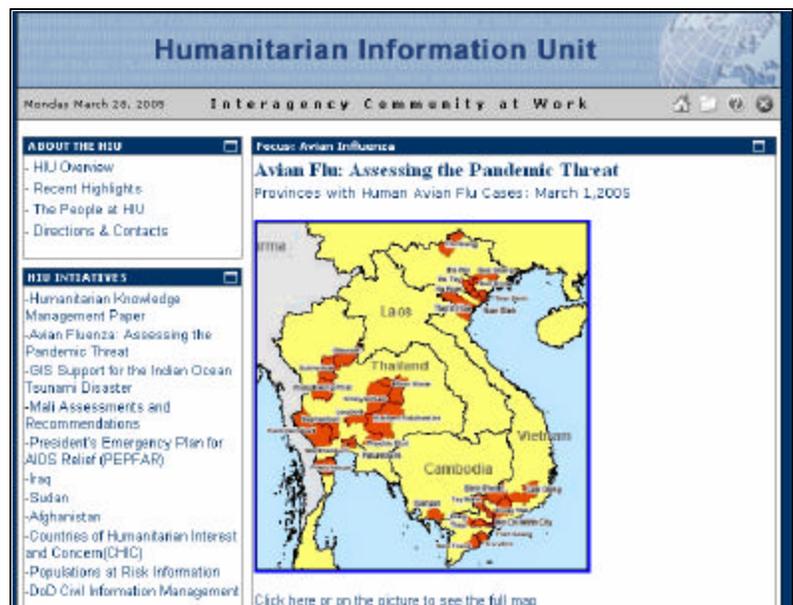
Alan L. Davis, Director  
202-203-7771  
[DavisA@state.gov](mailto:DavisA@state.gov)

Fred Smith, Deputy Director  
202-203-7783  
[SmithFA@state.gov](mailto:SmithFA@state.gov)

[HIU\\_INFO@state.gov](mailto:HIU_INFO@state.gov) (for general inquires)

Address:  
Department of State  
301-4th Street, SW, Suite 602  
Washington, DC 20547

Visit us on the web at:  
<http://hiu.state.gov/>  
User Name: user12  
Password: password



***The HIU also has space available for temporary location of personnel to work on joint projects.***