

Post Tsunami Park Redevelopment in India

Community members, including children, in Cuddalore and Nagapattinam, India, designed and built playgrounds to replace parks destroyed by the devastating tsunami that ravaged the Indian coast in December 2004.

To plan the project, more than 300 school children ages 8-12 drew pictures of their ideal playground, and these drawings formed the basis for designs that were approved by both communities during stakeholder meetings.

The playgrounds were then built by hand, with close to 1,200 person-days of labor donated by women, children, and other community volunteers. Community members also collected money through door-to-door solicitations and sponsored three meals a day for the workers.



The ICMA CityLinks program, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, partnered the two Indian cities with experts from Palm Bay, Florida, who provided planning and construction assistance. Public-private partnerships also helped alleviate the cost of construction. Leathers & Associates, a U.S.-based firm that specializes in designing community playgrounds and in supervising “community playground build” events, billed for only a portion of their design and construction assistance.

To ensure sustainability, the CityLinks team worked closely with local carpenters, providing training in power tool operation and donating leftover materials to the two cities for use in maintaining the playgrounds in the future. In addition to providing playgrounds for the children, these activities helped rebuild a sense of community following the disaster. Both cities made commitments to continue maintenance of the parks in the future.

Park redevelopment was just one component of a larger Post-Tsunami Recovery Program that included

- Development of CAD base maps
- Drainage improvements and other flood mitigation efforts
- Improvements in the quality and reliability of potable water supplies
- Identification of new revenue sources for the two cities.

ABOUT ICMA

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