

What is Resilience

Resilience as I have learnt from war
and tsunami



War female Survivors

- Rajini –32. Displaced six times during the 30 year old ethnic war in Sri Lanka that ended in May 2009
- She works as head teacher at Trincomalee Sewing Centre.
- She is the main breadwinner in her family—mother and two siblings.

What did she tell me about resilience —being able to bounce back

- Her family—trust
- Her religion—positive thinking
- Her friends and community--collaboration
- Herself—self esteem

Chandra--Tsunami survivor





What she told me about resilience

- Her family—seeking and given emotional support
- Her religion— seeking and given emotional support
- Her friends and community—seeking and given emotional support/optimism
- Herself— self-esteem
- Knowledge about tsunami— she attended tsunami workshops and learnt more about tsunami. This led to her accepting that nature and humans are a couple and not enemies

How to develop resilience in your work

- 1. Look for what is already on the ground — — trust and collaboration.
- 2. Local Wisdom— traditional knowledge, ancestral knowledge, small successful examples— have been forgotten. Relearn them.
- 3. Resilience is about people. Human beings change, they are unpredictable, they need to be heard to build adaptability. This is a key to resilience.
- 4. We cannot build resilience in isolation. Sustainable resilience is the incorporation of many things. No one is in control.

Science and Technology

- Human returns vs natural returns– we do not live in a predictable environment
- Challenging entrenched ways of interpreting what is around us
- Learning from tradition and culture

Women`s view of Resilience

- Cultural—Women are the backbone of family, community
- Identity— religion and ethnicity
- Emotional support to give and receive
- Physical— providing and having safe place to sleep and eat— a home

Learning from Rajini and Chandra

- Quotes on loss— “I will never forget. Something is gone forever. I still cry and it is okay to cry with my family.”
- Quotes about community— “I am thankful to my family and community. Without this support I am not alive today.”
- Quotes about Church/temple— “going to Church gave me hope because of physical and emotional advice.

Her hopes today

- “I live for my family”
- “I want to contribute to my community”

Quotes from modern competitive society—

“ I am angry about what happened.”

“ I cannot cry in front of others.”

“ I am alone and must help myself.”

“ I want revenge.”

Hindu Temple



Church

