



# SUCCESS STORY

## Humanitarian Transportation Bridge Enables Tsunami Response to Remote Islands

**USAID funding enabled transportation of 2,100 metric tons of relief commodities to tsunami-affected communities.**



*USAID partner IOM overcame logistical challenges, poor infrastructure, and adverse weather conditions to connect donors with beneficiaries in Indonesia's remote Mentawai Islands.*

Within seconds, a disaster can devastate communities—a situation that becomes exacerbated when a disaster strikes a hard-to-reach location.

Late on October 25, 2011, a magnitude 7.7 earthquake occurred off the coast of West Sumatra, Indonesia, generating a 10-foot tsunami that struck 10 coastal villages in the remote and sparsely populated Mentawai Islands. In addition to causing hundreds of deaths, the earthquake and tsunami forced thousands of families to flee to evacuation centers, where many arrived without food, blankets, cooking supplies, or other basic necessities.

Responders quickly discovered that the geographic remoteness and poor transportation infrastructure of the Mentawai Islands presented significant logistical challenges in providing relief supplies to those in need. In response to these challenges, USAID supported the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to provide transportation and logistics assistance.

With funding from USAID, IOM established a transportation pipeline between the port city of Padang, West Sumatra, and the North Pagai Island town of Sikakap, separated by 125 miles of sea. IOM secured local cargo boats to transport commodities between Padang and Sikakap. In addition, IOM established a system using smaller cargo boats, trucks, and all-terrain vehicles equipped with trailers to transfer commodities from Sikakap to locations throughout the Mentawai Islands. In the six months following the tsunami, IOM transported nearly 2,100 metric tons of emergency relief commodities for 71 relief organizations, including via 150 boat trips between Padang and Sikakap and nearly 840 trips by land.

The USAID-funded humanitarian transportation bridge enabled the timely and efficient delivery of emergency relief commodities—including food, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene items—to thousands of tsunami-affected people. IOM's logistics and transportation system remained useful beyond the emergency phase of the response, as relief agencies and the Government of Indonesia continued to use it for early recovery efforts.