



## Coping with 12/26: They Will Overcome



*“It was so brutal, so quick, so extensive, that we are still struggling to fully comprehend it,” said UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.*

*Fishers and fisher communities were bewildered, disoriented. The sea was their mother, their protector. How could she do this? The tsunami of 26 December 2004 that struck 12 countries in the Indian Ocean area was more than a killer (at least 220 000 people) and destroyer (property worth several billion dollars). It deprived fishers of their families and livelihoods and shattered their confidence.*

*“Depression loses its power when fresh vision pierces the darkness,” said Peter Sinclair. A tsunami of relief overwhelmed fisher communities, reflecting the richness and nobility of the human spirit.*

*Their terrible tragedy has given fishers and governments an opportunity to recreate a new world from the ruins of the old. “Build back better” is the motto of reconstruction.*

*This is what sustains fishers and fisher communities, a tribe whose everyday life is full of adventure. On the first anniversary of the tsunami, they recalled the event with prayers, flowers, candle-light ceremonies and sirens. They look to the future with trepidation — and hope. Encouraged by the dedication and compassion that governments, individuals and institutions have shown.*

*They will overcome.*

