

Boxing Day Earthquake of 2004 – Impact on Sri Lanka

Sarath ABAYAKOON, The Institution Of Engineers, Sri Lanka, Western, Sri Lanka
WFEO

Sri Lanka was severely affected by the impact of tsunami waves triggered by the Boxing Day earthquake of December 2004. Waves that have reached heights up to 15 m inundated almost the entire coastline of Sri Lanka up to a distance of 1.5 km from the beach. The confirmed death toll of 35000 people amount to about 65% of total recorded deaths outside Indonesia. An estimated direct economic loss of nearly US\$ 1.0 billion was caused by destruction of assets and infrastructure only.

In addition to recovery efforts after the event, Sri Lankan engineers responded by way of developing national tsunami hazard and vulnerability assessments, training of officials through workshops, seminars, field programs etc., by revising engineering curricula through introduction of relevant modules, development of early warning systems and educating general public on emergency responses. These efforts are summarized in the presentation.