



Special Edition

on ILO/UNIDO **Pelagandong Project**

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Reducing Poverty and Building Peace for a **BETTER MALUKU**

THE MALUKU ISLAND are an archipelago that is composed of 1,412 islands with a total population of 1.35 million and where 92.4 per cent of the regions are covered by sea. The islands are located near the borders of three countries: Australia, Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea. Maluku was also one of the first provinces of Indonesia, beside Aceh and Jogjakarta that was recognised following independence in 1945. The province was divided into two provinces, Maluku and North Maluku, in 1999.

Most of the islands of Maluku are mountainous, some with active volcanoes. Also known as the spice islands, the vegetation of the small and narrow islands, encompassed by the sea, is very abundant, and includes sago, coconut, cacao, rice and famous spices—nutmeg, cloves and mace, among others. The ethnic composition of the province comprises of local people and immigrants from South and Southeast Sulawesi, Java and other islands.

People of Maluku region, however, have suffered to a great extent due to ethnic, religious and group conflict which took place from 1999 – 2003. The conflict took the toll of nearly 9,000 lives and displaced more than 400,000 people (more than 30 per cent of the local population), severely affecting economic activities. The conflict also destroyed properties, businesses, crops, livestock, fishing boats, equipment and more than 40,000 houses. As such, Maluku remains one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia, with the highest poverty and unemployment rate in the country.

MOST OF THE ISLANDS OF MALUKU ARE MOUNTAINOUS, SOME WITH ACTIVE VOLCANOES. ALSO KNOWN AS THE SPICE ISLANDS, THE VEGETATION OF THE SMALL AND NARROW ISLANDS, ENCOMPASSED BY THE SEA, IS VERY ABUNDANT, AND INCLUDES SAGO, COCONUT, CACAO, RICE AND FAMOUS SPICES—NUTMEG, CLOVES AND MACE, AMONG OTHERS.

Nearly 80 per cent of the Maluku's population work mostly in agriculture, fishery and in the informal economy. They still make use of traditional tools and customs and do not have access to financial resources, and generally lack the necessary entrepreneurship skills to gain access to credit and to expand their business. As a result, their daily incomes are uncertain and most of the time are not sufficient to fulfil their daily needs for food, clothing, basic health care and their children's education.

Although the trend in economic growth for Maluku is increasing, the general economic situation in the region is still considered to be low compared to the situation at the national level as well as in comparison to other provinces in Indonesia. The people and Maluku Provincial Government continue to face multi-dimensional problems in stabilizing the fragile peace situation since social stability and security are inseparable from their economic condition. 🌸



Empowering Local Communities for Better and Peaceful Lives

TO ASSIST the revitalization of the economy and social stability in Maluku, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) developed a joint Project called "Realizing Minimum Living Standards for Disadvantaged Communities through Peace Building and Village Based Economic Development." This Project is popularly known as the Pelagandong Project. The meaning of Pelagandong is cooperation and brotherhood, traditional values that have been maintained by local communities in the region over centuries and unites people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds.

In this Project, the ILO contributes to the development of management skills, while UNIDO is responsible for technical skills development. "UNIDO took lead on village selection, resource identification, problem identification, development of training modules, procurement of inputs and technology transfer, whereas the ILO has focussed on supporting local economic development initiatives and training on conflict management and business management as well as entrepreneurship development," explained R. K. P. Singh, Technical Project Advisor of the ILO/UNIDO Pelagandong Project.

Funded by the Government of Japan through the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), the Project has been running since 2009 and will finish in 2012. Its main goal is to contribute to poverty reduction and peace building processes in the Maluku Province through the development of sustainable livelihoods and strengthening of local economic activities in selected communities. This reflects and enhances the Development Strategy of the Maluku Provincial Government to provide support to potential industries and small medium enterprises.

The main goals of the project have been translated into four interconnected components:

1. Village organization and empowerment;
2. Sustainable livelihood enhancement through education, technology transfer and local economic development (LED);
3. Peace building and conflict management; and
4. Improving the overall living and occupational and health conditions.

Applying a participatory community-based approach, the Project is implemented in close cooperation with the Provincial Planning Development Agency of Maluku (Bappeda Maluku) and with other relevant line departments, such as the Provincial Industry and Trade Office, and the Provincial Manpower and Transmigration Office. The Project also works closely with local community groups from different ethnic, religion and occupational backgrounds.

Ambon City, West Seram and Central Maluku Districts were chosen as the target areas due to the very high levels of poverty found there as a result of the conflict. From these three selected districts, 21 villages were identified as project target locations. These villages were carefully selected based on the following criteria: commitment to actively participate in the activities of the Project; directly or indirectly affected by the conflict; presence of internally displaced persons (IDPs); poverty levels of more than 15 per cent; availability of natural resources; and recipient of minimum assistance from government and other organizations. ❀



Head of Provincial Bappeda of Maluku **Ir. M.Z. Sangadji, MSi:**

People of Maluku are motivated to turn potential commodities into businesses

What are the impacts of the ILO/UNIDO Pelagandong Project to the people of Maluku?

The programme activities conducted under the Project have brought boosted our poverty reduction efforts and have motivated people to be more economically active in business development and income generation. The Project has enhanced the entrepreneurial spirit and skills of the people of Maluku. As a result, they are now being more active and creative in turning potential commodities in their villages into businesses as ways to improve their income. This, in turn, will reduce unemployment and create more job opportunities.

How does the Project support the government programmes in improving the livelihoods of Maluku?

Two per cent is an ideal rate of entrepreneurship in Maluku Province. The target of Bappeda Maluku is 1.5 per cent by 2013. People of Maluku have benefitted from interventions by the Project which have, in turn, prompted changes in people's mind-set about entrepreneurialism. The economic empowerment activities under the Project have significantly contributed to this.

However, since the scope of the current project is still limited to only three districts out of 11, the project has not yet acted as a stimulus for local government to conduct similar programmes and activities. I hope that the project

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can be expanded to other districts and be synchronized with other relevant governmental programmes. Both Maluku and North Maluku are rich in maritime resources, it is thus important to be more focused on fisheries and sea cultivation.

What is the main challenge still faced by people of Maluku?

The main challenge is to change the mind-set of the people, particularly at the level of the bureaucracy and decision-makers, so that our programmes and policies will be well-planned and implemented, and local communities will be empowered. Without any of these, our programme activities will have no impact. The other challenge is to develop livelihoods programmes not only for people of Maluku in the land, but most importantly in the islands, particularly the isolated ones.

In your view, how does the Project contribute to the peace building of Maluku?

The Project has supported the peace building efforts in the region. When people have jobs, they are less prone to racial or religious jealousy or to think about conflicts. Through the working groups built in the villages, a teamwork spirit to develop businesses has now grown among communities. As a result, they have built a system of good communication among themselves. Community members interact with one another as they need to support each other to ensure the sustainability of their businesses. In the pilot areas, they now have hope. This same hope is also needed in other areas. 🌸



Understanding Village Organizations

and Clan Structures of Maluku

TRADITIONAL village organizations and clan structures play an important role in the traditional culture and customs of Maluku. Most villages in Maluku have some form of local customary practices for social organizations and cultural representation called adat. Control over the land and marine territories and their resources are vested in a social institution that has a code of conduct, rules and regulations.

To better understand the role and functions of these traditional community based institutions and organizations, the Pelagandong Project conducted a diagnostic study of existing traditional village organizations and clan structures in the nine selected villages of Ambon City, West Seram and Central Maluku Districts. The study was also aimed to examine changes in the institutions over a period of time, to learn the process of decline and revival and to understand the pela-gandong (inter-village alliances) system.

The study reveals that there is no traditional organization whose values match or apply to all villages. In general, most villages have their traditional organizations with an important role to control natural resources and community behaviour. The study also reveals that most villages are divided into traditional villages called negeri led by a king and modern villages called desa developed by the government and led by head of village (kepala desa). However, to date, the government through a new regulation in 2004 has been revitalizing the concept of negeri with the king as the leader.

The study recommends that the Project should involve the customary leaders, the kings and their boards, in the selection process of the village productive groups and to select members of the village productive groups based on representativeness of the clan and sub-clan groups. The study also recommends that appointed professional facilitators should live in the targeted villages so that they can effectively promote changes through bridging people's access to technology, innovation, market and information. ●

MOST VILLAGES IN MALUKU HAVE SOME FORM OF LOCAL CUSTOMARY PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATION CALLED ADAT. CONTROL OVER THE LAND AND MARINE TERRITORIES AND THEIR RESOURCES ARE VESTED IN A SOCIAL INSTITUTION THAT HAS A CODE OF CONDUCT, RULES AND REGULATIONS.

Empowering



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AFTER the village selection, a series of participatory meetings were conducted by UNIDO with the village heads, clan and community leaders. The meetings were designed to identify resources available in the village for income generation as well as to facilitate discussions with the technology institutions and other stakeholders to identify appropriate technology for added value and processing of resources that would be managed by the project beneficiaries under the village productivity groups (VPGs).

To date, a total of 88 production groups have been established in the Ambon Island and another 154 groups in the Seram Island, representing 25 different product lines. In Ambon Island, the VPGs focus on a variety of potential products, such as nutmeg juice, pineapple juice, honey, sago flour, cassava chips, gepe, banana chips, spinach chips, chilly powder, palm sugar powder and organic vegetable production. Meanwhile, in Seram Island, the VPGs focus on, among others, the cultivation of seaweed and the production of copra, cacao, wet sago, vegetable, resin, cajuput oil and virgin coconut oil.

John Sisinupuy, Secretary of Nuruwe Village, West Seram District, admitted that local communities are not accustomed to working in groups. They tend to work individually and use traditional farming methods. Yet, after participating in the activities of the Project, the condition has now changed. There are no longer individual workers working alone, all the people of Nuruwei Village now work in a group. There are 25 groups have been established: 19 groups for seaweed cultivation, 2 groups for dammar, 2 groups for copra and 2 groups for sago flour.

Main Activities Conducted

Local Communities of Maluku

Technology transfer through provision of equipment and training has also been conducted by the Project to ensure the exploration of value addition to each potential product of the village as part of the effort to enhance the livelihoods of the VPGs. As of May 2011, a total of 1,234 VPG members have been trained on the production of various value added products, of which 806 are female.

"We greatly appreciate the equipment and technical training given by the ILO/UNIDO Pelagandong Project to help us transform our potential commodities into valuable products. We never received this type of assistance before. Now, for example, we can produce nutmeg juice from nutmeg fruit, which was considered as waste before," said Andrias Wihlem Tehupeiori, the King of Hutumuri Village, appointing to one of the women's group in his village and who has been successfully established a cooperative to produce and market nutmeg juice (refer to "Women Cooperative in Hutumuri Village Transform Waste to Wealth")

The technical trainings have also improved the way in which the VPGs do their work. They have learned new techniques that help them multiply their harvests and increase their products' quality. "At first, I had no idea how to cultivate, maintain and care for my orange farming

"My income has increased after joining the VPG"

Rahim Kaimudin, 30 years old, comes from a farmer family at Telaga Kodok Sub-Village, Hitumessing Village, Central Maluku District. He has been a farmer as long as he can remember. He is now managing the Telaga Lega Group, one of, and the head of, the six VPGs at Hitumessing Village under the ILO/UNIDO Pelagandong Project.

Together with 15 members from the Group, he manages 23 hectares of land with approximately 1.5 hectares per member. They work together as a group, planting and cultivating the 23-hectare land for organic vegetables. Utilizing the seeds, tools, organic pesticides and equipments (sprayer) given by the Pelagandong Project, each member of VPGs is able to harvest a total of 15 tonnes or one ton per member, earning up to Rp 7 million per member.

Rahim admitted that before most of the farmers in his village preferred to work by themselves. They were not used to working with a group. "But the Project has changed our lives. Through group work, we can cultivate larger land and yield more harvest. By myself, I could only open about 2 hectares of land and get barely 300 kilograms per month. With a group, we talk about tonnes, not only kilograms," said Rahim who is also a father of five children.

As a group, he added, they can share experiences, jointly solve the farming problems and develop a better marketing strategy. They also feel closer to each another. To date, members of the group share responsibilities to ensure that they can get the best selling price and better market penetration.

"Our village is the source of vegetables for Maluku. However, individually we could not manage our business well. With a group, we can handle more tasks together. We have members appointed to take care of administration, manage marketing and pricing and to take care of farming related issues. The middlemen cannot fool us anymore with lower prices and the most important thing is that we can save some money for our children's education," said Rahim, adding that the group regularly meets every month.

to produce nice, round looking oranges. With the new techniques, the harvest period is also increased from just once to twice a year," said Jaban Palisoa, the king of Masika Jaya Village, West Seram District. 🌸

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Maluku Product Logo

To establish an identity for the Maluku products in general and for promoting products produced by the VPGs, a common product logo has been developed in close cooperation with the Provincial Maluku Government and business stakeholders. The common logo will play an important role in strengthening promotion and marketing of the quality of products from Maluku within and outside the province. "By seeing the logo, it is hoped that people will be reminded that the products are the original products of Maluku, made by the local communities of Maluku. Meanwhile, for people outside Maluku, the logo will be a reminder about Maluku and its huge potentials," explained RKP Singh, the Pelagandong Project's Technical Advisor. 🌸



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Women Cooperative in Hutumuri Village Transform Waste to Wealth

NUTMEG is one of the main plantation crops of Maluku. However, the people of Hutumuri only use the nutmeg seed and its mesh, and throw away the outer cover which is called nutmeg fruit. The fruit itself was considered a waste until a women's group decided to produce nutmeg juice from the nutmeg fruits.

The initiative to produce the nutmeg juice began in the Central Maluku District as a successful innovation of UNIDO under its Maluku Economic Recovery Project. This initiative was then expanded to a women's group in the Toisapu sub-village under Hutumuri village, Ambon City District, established by the Pelagandong Project. Through this Project the women's group received training on group dynamics and

cooperative management, basic entrepreneurship skills and training on production of nutmeg juice. They also received a set of equipment like grater, stove, digital scale, cooking pans, bottles and other packaging materials for starting their business.

Initially the group started producing only about 40 – 50 bottles per months, but keeping up with demand meant the production has recently rose to more than 2,400 bottles per month and the net income of the group has increased to Rp 4,000,000 per month. They have sent their products to Netherlands, Jakarta and other cities in Indonesia through their relatives and through direct orders. They have also actively promoted their products through bazaars.



Creating Enabling Environment for Entrepreneurship

TO BUILD the capacity of the VPGs on entrepreneurship, the Pelagandong Project has conducted a series of entrepreneurship trainings, using the ILO's basic modules of Start Your Business (SYB). Members of VPGs have learned how to, among others things, identify business ideas, translate the ideas into a business, prepare business plans, develop a marketing strategy and administer book keeping. To date, more than 1,000 beneficiaries (of which 600 are women) have received the SYB training, enabling them to create and manage a business. In addition to the formal training, informal based trainings using counselling and monitoring have also been conducted at homes of the beneficiaries to reach illiterate groups.

Together with the Provincial Cooperative Office, the Pelagandong Project has also organized trainings on cooperatives and micro-finance. These were aimed to support the establishment of the cooperatives in the targeted villages and to strengthen the micro-finance mechanisms. Five villages have committed to establish cooperatives in the format of, among others, women cooperative, youth cooperative and Islamic cooperative. The trainings have

"I am glad to get involved in nutmeg juice production because previously, people threw away the fruits and only a few were used for making dried fruits. Moreover, during harvesting season price of the fruit is also very low. Thus, producing nutmeg juice during harvest season will bring more profit to the group," said Genova Mercilyn Maliombo, Secretary of the Sejuk women cooperative.

The membership of the cooperative has also grown, from 15 to 25 members. In the month of December 2010, the group was linked to the Cooperative and Small Medium Enterprise Department to get legal registration for the cooperative. "The registration will open our chances to expand our business. We are now planning to establish a multi-purpose cooperative to start a saving and credit scheme and for the sale of daily domestic goods, etc.," said Nova. With the assistance of the Pelagandong Project, the group is now the process of getting the legal certification from the National Agency of Drug and Food Control for their nutmeg juice.

To provide better protection for its members, the cooperative is going to join social security programmes managed by the PT Jamsostek. "It is not only for the future protection, but also for the future investment of the cooperative as we can benefit from the Jamsostek credit scheme, especially when we are planning to expand our business activities to bread production, accessories and fresh water fishery," explained Nova. These women are now able to generate more income for their families with full support from their husbands and other family members. ❀



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reached a total of 617 VPG members, of which 371 are women.

Jaban Palisoa, the king of Masika Jaya Village, said that he values the support given by the Project to revitalize village cooperatives. Prior to the conflict, most of the villages had established cooperatives; yet, most of the cooperatives were destroyed during the conflict. "Now, we have one women's cooperative in the village, providing daily needs," he said. Villagers of Nuruwe are also eager to formally register their cooperative. "The villagers are very enthusiastic to be part of the village cooperative. Under the cooperative, we can strengthen our bargaining position when marketing the seaweed," stated John Sisinupuy, the Village Secretary. Nuruwe village is famous with its high quality of seaweed. ❀

Strengthening Economic Development through LED

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THE PELAGANDONG

Project had conducted a series of local economic development (LED) workshops targeted to beneficiaries in 2009 and 2010. This concluded with the establishment of LED Forum in the three districts. The Forums allow representatives from the government, the private sector and the community to communicate and collaborate in designing and implementing activities which can develop the local economy. The Forums that consists of government officials from different ministries, entrepreneurs, community leaders, workers' and employers' organizations, financial institutions and other relevant stakeholders emphasized in a "bottom up" process approach to ensure sustainability for local economic development in the field.

LED visions of each district are as follows:

- ♦ West Seram: To create a better standard of living for West Seram community through LED and to achieve it by 2016.
- ♦ Central Maluku: To reach Central Maluku as a smart, independent and competitive region through LED.
- ♦ Ambon City: To create a prosperous society in Ambon through sustainable economic development.

To improve the effectiveness of the LED process in Maluku, the Pelangandong project organized a study tour for key representatives of the Maluku LED Forums to East

Java in May 2011, visiting Surabaya, Sidoarjo, Pasuruan and Malang. The tour was aimed to provide an opportunity for the Forum representatives to see and experience the successful programs of the East Java LED Forums first hand. During the tour they visited the Puspa Agro, the leading market established by the Provincial Government of East Java to help local farmers have better access to market and directly interact with nation-wide buyers. They also visited the clinic of small medium enterprises (SMEs), community cooperatives, and local businesses in fishery and tourism sectors.

Valuable lessons were gained by participants on the tour. Ferdinand Matitaputty, the Head of Ambon LED Forum who is also the chair of Maluku Chamber of Commerce, remarked that by learning from the experiences of East Java, he hoped that the Ambon Forum could better assist

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“Local Government Has Allocated Rp. 100 Million for LED”

Sofian Sitepu, Head of Provincial Planning Bureau (Bappeda) of West Seram District

They begin to come to the Bappeda office and look for us. It is such an interesting progress for me.”

What is the working progress of LED Forum in West Seram District?

As the Head of Bappeda in West Seram District, I directly supervise the coordination of the LED Forum. We conduct regular coordination meetings, involving relevant government offices and other relevant partners including financial institutions. My office has also allocated Rp. 100 million for LED operational activities, including for reporting and monitoring. We have also started the monitoring process at the village level to ensure the effectiveness of the local community development.

What changes have been made in local communities?

I have witnessed some positive changes in the local communities of West Seram. Their entrepreneurship capacities have been improved and I have started to see the change of orientation. They started talking about profit and capital, and they learnt to work as group. They are also more aware about the importance of consultation and information.

What are the main challenges still faced by West Seram District?

Before, it was difficult to conduct socialization and awareness raising activities. My staff had to go door to door to gather people together. Now, the villagers with their own initiatives come to us for consultation. Most of them are concerned about their future programme development, the usage of technology, maintenance and weather. Their other concern is the fluctuation of price. It is very important for the communities to be able to manage the market and control the price.

What is your hope for the future?

The seaweed cultivation will be the main commodity of West Seram. This sector provides substantial job opportunities and can absorb a high number of workers. The local government has a vision to make West Seram District an industrial and business zone. However, before we can achieve that, we have to enhance the capacities of local communities to be more competent in technology, industry and marketing. 🌸

sub-district authorities and heads of villages in developing entrepreneurship programmes, cooperative management and tourism development.



Meanwhile, the King Hutumuri, Andrias Wihlem Tehupeiori, said that the tour has given him new insights. “We have been so spoiled by the wealth of the natural resources but we can no longer take the natural blessed for granted. The tour has motivated me to move forward, to be creative and to think outside of the box. We can do more with all the resources that we have, adding added values and creatively producing a variety of products that, in turn, will generate more income for local communities.” 🌸

THE FORUMS THAT CONSISTS OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS FROM DIFFERENT MINISTRIES, ENTREPRENEURS, COMMUNITY LEADERS, WORKERS’ AND EMPLOYERS’ ORGANIZATIONS, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS EMPHASIZED IN A “BOTTOM UP” PROCESS APPROACH TO ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE FIELD.

Promoting Tourism Potentials of Maluku

TOURISM is one of the key sectors identified by the Maluku Province Government and the LED Forums as a sector that can support the economic development of Maluku and promote further investment. To support the promotion of local tourism, with the assistance of the Project, the Ambon Tourism Board was developed in 2010, involving relevant stakeholders such as hotels and restaurant associations, tour agent associations and airline companies. It is hoped that the Board would strengthen coordination among relevant stakeholders to promote tourism for local economic development.

In addition, a cultural festival was conducted in May 2011 in Hukurilla village, South Leitimur Sub-district. The first of its kind, the festival was also designed to promote local products produced by the village productivity groups assisted by the ILO/UNIDO Pelagandong Project. The festival was attended by more than 1,000 people, including 10 international tour agents from the Netherlands. During the festival, local communities from seven villages demonstrated various captivating traditional arts and music.

"Based on the participatory mapping conducted by the ILO with local communities, 69 community-based tourism sites have been identified, ranging from beaches, waterfalls and fruit gardens to historic objects, local culinary and arts. To promote these potentials, tourism profiles have been developed and distributed to travel agents and other relevant partners as part of the promotion of the community-based tourism," said Tavvik Muhamad, the ILO's Programme Officer. 🌺

Unlocking the Tourism Potentials of Maluku

THE MALUKU Province, in particular Ambon City, demonstrates great tourism potentials. A.G. Lathuero, Secretary of the City Government of Ambon admitted that the first festival was still limited to the area of South Leitimur and the city government of Ambon is planning to expand the scope of the festival to include all villages or negeri. "We have great tourism potentials waiting to be unlocked. During the festival the Mayor M.J. Papilaja stated that the festival would be conducted annually. We hope that we can organize a Festival of Ambon, involving the whole area or negeri of Ambon," he said.

He also hopes that the tourism potentials, such as local culinary delights and handicrafts, that already existed and were developed prior to the conflict, would be able to flourish again. "I also hope that local commodities that are now being developed like nutmeg juice or pineapple juice can be promoted as part of culinary tourism. I believe that if the tourism objects are well-developed and promoted, this in turn would be able to help local communities generate employment and better incomes. This will also help the local government improve its revenue," he added.

However, he admitted that some challenges still need to be overcome, particularly the preparedness of local communities to manage community-based tourism and develop community tourism packages. "We still have a lot to do. We need to build the capacities of the local communities to, for example, develop home stays as well as to build and maintain infrastructure for tourism. That is why we need all the support that we can get, including the support from the ILO/UNIDO Pelagandong Project not only to promote local tourism, but also to enhance relevant skills," he said. 🍌

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Building the Peace

Preventing Conflict

"NOBODY wants to be involved in conflict. Conflict only destroys us, and makes us suffer. I can say that Ambon is now safe. No more borders, no more clashes and brawls," exclaimed A.G. Lauhero, Secretary of Ambon City Government. Meanwhile John Sisinupuy, Village Secretary of Nuruwe, West Seram District said that the Nuruwe villagers refuse to be involved in the conflict. "We do not want the conflict to ruin us. We maintained our neutrality and our village, in fact, provided shelters for refugees, especially the ones from North Maluku. Even after the conflict ended, some refugees prefer to stay," he added.

To ensure the establishment of peace building and conflict prevention mechanisms, the Pelagandong Project in collaboration with Tifa Damai Foundation, recently conducted an assessment in selected potential conflict areas. The assessment was conducted to examine the conflict situations and its underlying causes in the following cases: Lokki Vilage and its sub-village Ketapang, Salemang Village and Horale Village and Suli Village and Tial Village. The assessment showed borders and lands have been the main causes of conflict. The assessment has recommended the appointment of peace agents at the village level to prevent future conflict.

As an immediate follow-up, the initial 'peace agent' training was conducted for 25 selected agents from ten villages. The peace agents were directly selected by the king or head of village and work directly under the supervision of the king or head of village. In the training, the agents were taught negotiation and mediation skills. The agents were also trained on early warning and early detection systems developed by Tifa Damai Foundation based on their experiences in handling conflicts in several provinces of Indonesia, such as Aceh, West Kalimantan and Maluku.

"Together with other relevant organizations, we have initiated early warning and detection systems that have already been found to be effective in overcoming and preventing conflict. They have proven to be effective in maintaining peace and preventing conflict. Thus, all peace agents should be skilful in detecting problems and in providing warnings to local authorities to find solutions before it gets worse," explained Justus Patti Pawae, Executive Director of Tifa Damai Foundation.

Having experienced the negative and lasting impact of the conflict, Genova Mercilyn Maliombo, a peace agent from Hutumuri Village, is committed to build peace in her village. "Before I knew nothing about this, yet I learned so much from the training. Through the role plays and simulation, I have learned how to detect conflict, to be aware of conflict potentials and to find the best solution possible for all parties involved," she said.

After completing the training, Nova, her nickname, had a chance to practice what she learnt. She managed to solve internal conflict among members of a women's cooperative. "I practiced what I learned from the training. I listened to all parties involved and I asked them to sit down together, to mediate a solution," told Nova, adding that she has received full support from her family to be an agent. 🌸



Maintaining Peace through Dialogue in Lokki Village

LOKKI VILLAGE, located in the West Seram District, experienced two days of rioting during the Maluku conflict in 1999. The hardships that the people of Lokki had to face in the wake of the conflict were severe. Cash crop small-holdings such as cloves and nutmeg, the mainstays of the local economy, were all but destroyed in the rioting. All the school buildings were destroyed, and children's education was completely disrupted, particularly at the elementary level.

To date, Lokki Village has shown an encouraging commitment to restoring inter-communal relations. After 30 years led by the governmental system of head of village, they recently in January relived the traditional Maluku system of village governance and elected a king as its hereditary leader. The first action taken by Richard Purimahua, as the new elected king of Lokki, was to conduct dialogues with his communities.

"The first thing that I do is to conduct dialogues with my people. I regularly gather them, listening to their aspirations, building trust and knowing the real situation of the village. All decisions should be made with the knowledge of the people. Before, for 30 years Lokki had been led by governmental head of village coming from outside the village. They never lived here, opened communications with locals and attended communal events," said Richard.

In addition, he has also made some cultural changes as an effort to maintain peace and diffuse conflict by prohibiting people of Lokki to aimlessly hanging out, reducing their drinking habit and applying curfew. "I encourage my people to focus on redeveloping Lokki and creating better lives for everybody. Activities conducted by the Pelagandong Project have also helped people rebuilding their livelihoods and building better interactions and collaboration as they have to work in groups. We have started replanting cloves and some people have witnessed an increase of income," he continued.

Although, Lokki is still vulnerable to tensions due to its land and border conflict with one of its sub-villages, Ketapang which demanded its separation from Lokki, Richard claimed that the condition of Lokki is considered safe, particularly with the recent appointment of local peace agents in Lokki. "My only wish is to have a peaceful village. We are going to take legal steps to overcome the current land conflict with Ketapang as we refuse to get easily provoked by this situation." ●

NOBODY WANTS TO BE INVOLVED IN CONFLICT. CONFLICT ONLY DESTROYS US, AND MAKES US SUFFER. I CAN SAY THAT AMBON IS NOW SAFE. NO MORE BORDERS, NO MORE CLASHES AND BRAWLS.

Improving Occupational and Health Conditions

AS PART of the efforts to promote occupational safety and health (OSH), the Pelagandong Project, in close collaboration with the Provincial Manpower Office of Maluku conducted OSH orientations in the targeted villages. A series of OSH orientations have been conducted since October 2010, covering a total of nine villages in the three targeted districts. The orientations are aimed to reduce work injuries and illnesses, increase awareness of the local communities on workplace safety and sanitation and improve environment friendly workplace.

JOHNY HALAPIRY,

an OSH expert from the Provincial Manpower Office, has for more than 30 years dealt with OSH issues. He believes that OSH should be everybody's concern. In 2004 he was transferred to West Seram District as the Head of Labour Inspection for OSH in the District Manpower Office. "It is necessary for the people to understand the importance of OSH in their daily work. OSH management systems are not only for the big companies in the formal sector, but are also applicable in the informal sector," he said.

Together with the Pelagandong Project, he has conducted a series of OSH orientations in the three districts. He has developed a practical guideline that is easy to use and directly apply by the communities. It includes information on issues such as the safe use of knives, shovels and other daily equipments that are regularly used by the local communities in their daily activities. As the master trainer of the ILO's Start Your Business (SYB), he has also applied participatory and interactive SYB techniques to OSH related awareness by providing practical case studies.

A practical guideline of 10 OSH steps for ensuring a safe and healthy environment for OSH has been developed for village productivity groups. The guideline was adapted based on the actual conditions of the villages. These steps have been promoted during basic entrepreneurship training and business counselling. 🌟

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Combining practical OSH with the working conditions of villagers

"The local communities are very enthusiastic learning about practical OSH solutions. What I have taught them is actually related to the work that they do every day but they are not aware of the risks and danger associated with their work. They just take their daily tasks for granted and do not even think of the cost consequences if accidents happen. By involving them in the case studies, they learn to find practical and applicable solutions for all OSH problems they encounter," said Johny, adding that he promotes safe work with maximum results and low cost. 🌟