

Reflections on the Role of the National Cluster for Displacement and Protection (Klasnas PP) in the COVID-19 Response

SIAP SIAGA's CBDRM expert, Kristanto Sinandang reflects on why the cluster system is important for disaster management in Indonesia.

The cluster approach was introduced at global level as a part of humanitarian reform in 2005. In Indonesia, this system was first introduced during the response to Yogyakarta Earthquake in 2006. The Indonesian Government and civil society adopted and adjusted this approach to disaster response. Government (in this case, the National Disaster Management Agency/BNPB) issued Decree by Head of BNPB No. 173/2014 that regulated this cluster system and emphasized its commitment to use the system during an emergency and to develop an Indonesian version of the system, including deciding cluster categories. There are eight clusters: Education, Health, Search and Rescue, Logistic and Equipment, Displacement and Protection, Structure and Infrastructure, Economy and Early Recovery.

The Coordinator and Vice-Coordinator of the Displacement and Protection Cluster are the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and Indonesian National Police respectively (Polri). MoSA established the Displacement and Protection Cluster through Decree by Minister of Social Affairs No. 26/2015 on Guideline for the National Displacement and Protection Cluster, which provided a mandate to improve coordination among government actors, communities, and private sector to mobilize resources to fulfill the rights of and provide protection for those who are impacted by a disaster in a comprehensive and responsible manner.

When compared to, or aligned with the global cluster system, the National Displacement and Protection Cluster covers four global clusters at the same time: Protection; Shelter; Water, Sanitation and Environmental Health (WASH); and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM).¹

An assessment undertaken in 2016 showed that, structurally, this interconnection is inherently weak. Furthermore, according to the assessment, to ensure that it is well functioning, the global cluster system is designed based on the existing global humanitarian system. Logically, each country that adopts a cluster system must design its own governance structure. This means that while it is relatively easy for UNICEF to take responsibility of WASH cluster under the global system, for the Government of Indonesia functions and responsibilities related to WASH are usually divided among several ministries and agencies. Hence, control of water quality may be in the hand of State Potable Water Company

(PDAM) and the Ministry of Health while water infrastructure may be the responsibility of the National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS) and the building may be under the mandate of the Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing. The function to coordinate public awareness on waste management and health environment will also be divided. This means that there are at least half a dozen ministries that are mandated to address WASH, making it more complicated to identify which actor will be the (lead) coordinator. The same can also be applied to other clusters such as Shelter, CCCM and Early Recovery.

Internal and external coordination

The latest data shows that the Displacement and Protection Cluster (KlasNas PP) has 140 partner organizations located in 34 provinces across Indonesia, consisting of national and local NGOs, international NGOs, UN bodies, universities/research centers, communities, and Indonesian Red Cross. Some of these organizations are more active and pro-active in supporting MoSA in coordinating the cluster. To facilitate the coordination as a whole, MoSA is supported by International Organization for Migration (IOM).

It is not easy, however, to coordinate a cluster like Klasnas PP because of its size and extensive activities. This cluster consists of eight sub-clusters and two working groups as depicted in Figure 1.

Responses implemented by each sub-cluster during an emergency require clear strategies that complement the work of other sub-clusters. In practice, each of the sub-

About SIAP SIAGA

SIAP SIAGA is a five-year partnership program between the Governments of Indonesia and Australia. The program aims to improve the management of disasters and increase community resilience in Indonesia and in the Indo-Pacific Region. Our approach is measured, reflective and forward-leaning which helps us to deliver the best results for DFAT and Indonesia's communities.

clusters is quite mature and has the autonomy to implement its own activities, so that the role of MoSA as coordinator is more to facilitate and empower the contributions of each sub-cluster. At the cluster level, a strategy has been agreed as reflected in the acronym of *WADAH SINERGI* (Vehicle of Synergy), which is a strategy for the management of Klasnas PP members and partners for activities conducted by sub-clusters and working groups.¹

Other Functions of Klasnas PP

Klasnas PP has determined sub-clusters have following functions:

1. Support for coordination: to coordinate its members and partners and contribute to a bigger coordination platform.
2. Mobilization of resources: to mobilize human, financial, and other relevant resources in their own cluster to help fulfill the needs for responses.
3. Technical support: to provide technical/mentoring supports for response teams.
4. Additional (Surge) Capacity: only when required and at the initial stages of an emergency to provide additional support for disaster response by operational actors without losing the intention to still build capacity of (local) actors.

These functions are also implemented by the Logistic Cluster, of which MoSA is the Vice Coordinator and was involved in the design and adoption of a Description of Duties and Responsibilities of the Logistic Cluster that includes the articulation of the abovementioned functions.

Role of MoSA in Covid-19 Response

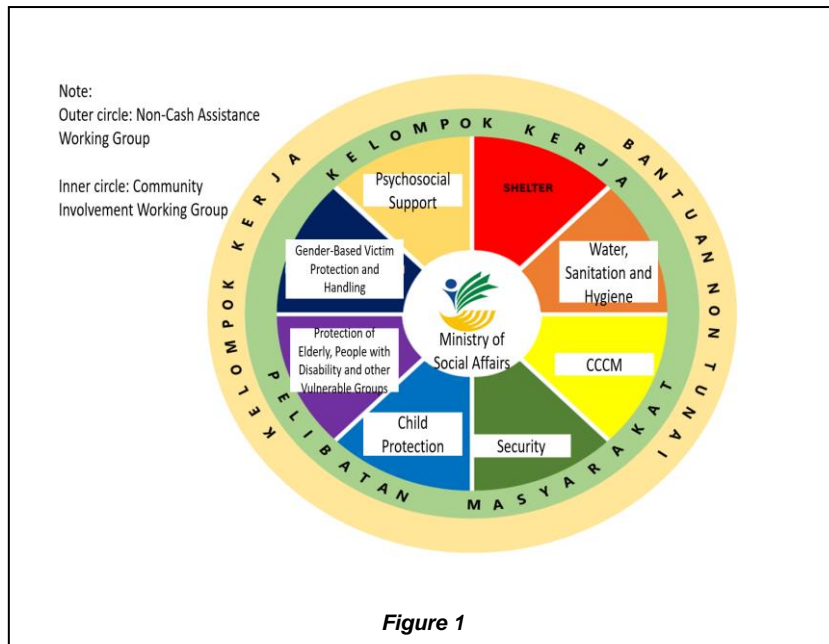
The COVID-19 Response Acceleration Team at the Ministry of Social Affairs was established through a Decree by the Minister of Social Affairs Number 861/1/KP.08.01/3/2019 Year 2020 and has following assignments:

- a. To prepare and establish an operational plan to prevent and respond to COVID-19.
- b. To monitor personnel and beneficiaries in relation to the prevention and spread of COVID-19.
- c. To coordinate and control the implementation of COVID-19 prevention and response activities.
- d. To direct all forms of resources for COVID-19 prevention and response activities.
- e. To report the implementation of these activities to the Minister of Social Affairs

These five assignments are carried out through operations in eight activity areas. One of the activity areas is an actualization of the role of MoSA in prevention and response of COVID-19, through the mobilization of social pillars (such as social workers, TAGANA (see below), TSKS (Tenaga Kesejahteraan Sosial Kecamatan (Sub-district Social Welfare Worker), Karang Taruna (Youth Group), and students from the Social Welfare Polytechnics Bandung). In relation to the activities and roles of these guides and resources, MoSA, as Coordinator of Klasnas PP, was not limited to the resources provided by these pillars but also able to use resources from members and partners Klasnas PP.

Lessons from Klasnas PP COVID-19 Response

Harmonized communications and messaging



¹ Emergency Response Preparedness in Indonesia: A Consultation Report prepared for the Humanitarian Country Team, April 2016

A benefit of the cluster approach is that each cluster is mandated to mobilize resources: human, financial, and other types of resources related to the cluster's area of responsibility that can help fulfill needs for disaster response. Responses from interviews with members of the cluster during the COVID-19 response varied: some members claimed that financial resource mobilization by Klasnas PP members had been excellent in terms of the number of activities as well as area coverage, while others believed that these achievements were not maximized as there were a lot of gaps in coordination at the sub-national level that had not been captured and addressed.

What is clear is that resource mobilization seems to be an extraordinary challenge in this disaster. Disasters are frequent in Indonesia; and it is true that these clusters have come together and have good strategies and recommendations, but in the end, this disaster needs to be managed by the people themselves. Hence, this is a disaster in the mobilization of communication efforts and sharing of messages for the public was a main priority. **The cluster approach has an advantage in that it can ensure one voice and uniformity of approaches among cluster members/partners.** Championing the same message will create a big difference and this needs to be utilized.

However, the Operational Plan/Action Plan that was prepared to ensure 'one voice' on communications and messaging has not been used as a reference in discussions, implementation, and monitoring. One of the key obstacles was the fact that there was a **lack of data that created bottlenecks for information management.** The mapping of gaps in needs could not be undertaken and resulted decision on needs being taken sporadically based on available, often incomplete, information.

Improving knowledge management processes

Klasnas PP members **produced a series of guidelines to prepare for and respond to Covid-19.** There are at least 19 guidelines, including Non-Cash Assistance Distribution Guideline, Community Based Shelter for Isolation Guideline, and Community Involvement Guideline, Procedures for Data Sharing. However, the **development of these guidelines was not accompanied by a good dissemination plan** and therefore impact of the guidelines was minimal. This is reflected in the many questions raised from the field regarding guidelines on topics that had already been produced and officially launched, however mostly shared through communication channels such as WhatsApp. Dissemination is needed not only to members and partners of Klasnas PP, but also to external parties, as well as other units in MoSA that are not involved in the cluster. One practical suggestion is that these various guidelines can be published in various MoSA media, reaching a wider public audience as well as MoSA's own staff.

Data management for improved alignment of social assistance programs

Another important role of Klasnas PP was the use of Non-Cash Assistance for existing social assistance programs. This assistance is provided to fulfill and ensure basic needs as well as to improve living standards of the beneficiaries of social assistance programs. Social assistance programs for the people such as Program Indonesia Pintar (Smart Indonesia Program – PIP), Jaminan Kesehatan Nasional (National Health Insurance Program – JKN-KIS), Program Keluarga Harapan (Family Hope Program – PKH), and Bansos Rastra (Rice Social Assistance)/Non-Cash Food Assistance are primarily managed by MoSA. In response to COVID-19, **these programs became central to the government's commitment to adaptive social protection system (PSA).** PSA creates a safety net that will help in the recovery of individual livelihoods and minimize further household crises due to economic losses.

Various humanitarian organizations/institutions working in the areas of non-cash assistance or cash and voucher assistance (CVA) have joined the BaNTu Working Group, one of the Klasnas PP instruments, to formulate various non-cash assistance implementation strategies in Indonesia, especially by non-government humanitarian organizations/institutions. One of the biggest challenges is **how to synergize various BaNTu programs implemented by non-government organizations with government social assistance programs, especially in relation to beneficiary data and geographic and thematic intervention areas to minimize the risk of overlap among donors.** This remains an ongoing issue, and further studies on the suitability of using existing social protection programs as a modality for humanitarian assistance are needed.

Alignment of government and non-government technical support at the community level

Klasnas PP also provides mentoring and technical support for teams implementing emergency response in communities. During the COVID-19 response and within the context of Klasnas PP, Taruna Siaga Bencana (Youth for Disaster Preparedness - **TAGANA**²) and local social affairs offices have been the leading response units. There have been many technical support activities undertaken by TAGANA as a first responder, including shelter training, CCCM localization, and dissemination of guidelines. However, with many other actors, both government and non-government, in the group, **more alignment in the sequencing, scheduling of technical support** is necessary.

² Please see SIAP SIAGA's Thought Series No. 2 on the Role of TAGANA in the COVID-19 response.

For more information:

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Other recommendations include **improved coordination process** between subclusters on technical assistance activities. Another issue to be considered is the extent to which support is driven by need (demand driven) or existing partner capacity (supply driven).

Definition of 'disaster'

When **COVID-19 was declared as a non-natural disaster, it complicated the role and contribution of Klasnas PP in the wider government response**. The national disaster management and response of this non-natural disaster lies in another directorate. Coordinators and participants of Klasnas PP are constrained in their interactions and meetings with personnel of the other directorate unfamiliar with them in addition to social distancing limitations. The coordinator of Klasnas PP at MoSA is the Directorate of Social Protection for Natural Disaster Victims (PSKBA), while the MoSA representative in the National COVID-19 Task Force is not a coordinator of Klasnas PP.

Moreover, Klasnas PP responses were impacted by the fact that **COVID-19 is a slow-onset, not a rapid-onset, disaster**. When Klasnas PP members were asked about sub-phases of the COVID-19 disaster response, per the Disaster Emergency Management Response Command Systems (see SKPDB³), their responses varied. Some felt that the sub-phases were evident while others did not see any clear shifts or statements regarding these sub-phases.

It is becoming clearer that Indonesia is better prepared for rapid-onset disasters than it is, for a slow-onset one. Government and civil society stakeholders will not act unless a phase is stated, as they are not clear on what to do and who has the authority to do what and when. In addition, another factor that has made this disaster even more complex is that it does not have a specific sub-national geographic focus. In a disaster like earthquakes or flooding, the national team can be sent with national authority and budget, but this cannot be applied in a disaster of this scale.

Conclusion: Certainty and Space for Coordination and Synergy

Feedback from members of Klasnas PP has centred on the benefits and results of this cluster during the COVID-19 response, which have outweighed the shortcomings that need to be addressed. Klasnas PP has demonstrated that the cluster system can run well and provide benefits in a highly complex and ever-changing disaster response environment, and most members praised the achievements of the cluster due to the leadership displayed by the coordinators, including MoSA.

At the time when a Disaster Emergency Reduction Plan (RPKB),⁴ often referred to as a National Disaster Response Framework, does not yet exist and there is no clarity in the implementation of the Disaster Emergency Response Command System (SKPDB), the roles of clusters become even more important in providing a framework for participating organisations. The predictability is important for humanitarian actors, especially those working on displacement and protection. A joint movement guided by a shared goal and realized by optimum coordination will produce more effective disaster response. As illustrated by one of the cluster activists, "singing from the same notes" will make a big difference and this needs to be utilized. When a more system-based disaster response coordination mechanism, such as SKPDB and RPKB, is in place, the cluster system will become a main element that will facilitate the implementation of these supra systems.

³ Regulation by Head of BNPB Number 3 / 2016 concerning Disaster Emergency Response Command System (SKPDB) mentions three sub-phases: emergency preparedness, emergency responses and emergency transition towards recovery.

⁴ RPKB is mandated by Law Number 24 / 2007 concerning Disaster Responses, especially in Article 45, Clause 1 and 2.

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