

SIAP SIAGA Real Time Learning Brief No. 2

Insights from the SIAP SIAGA Pulih Bersama Program: Creating Adaptive Capacities at Village Level to Increase Community Resilience

Background

SIAP SIAGA - The Australia and Indonesia Partnership in Disaster Risk Management is a five-year program implemented from 2019 to 2024 funded by the Government of Australia - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The goal of the SIAP SIAGA program is to strengthen Indonesia's management of disaster risk, and engagement between Australia and Indonesia on humanitarian issues in the region. The outcomes of this investment have both a domestic focus on improving disaster management system to build national preparedness and deliver disaster management services at the sub-national level, and a regional focus to strengthen cooperation between Australia and Indonesia on regional humanitarian preparedness and response.



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.

Together with its partners, SIAP SIAGA works towards four End of Program Outcomes (EOPOs):

1. BNPB's organisational systems are strengthened resulting in better domestic leadership of DM.
2. Target provinces, districts and villages are better able to prepare for, prevent, respond to and recover from disasters.
3. Strengthened cooperation between Australia and Indonesia on regional humanitarian preparedness and response.
4. Strengthened learning, innovation, cooperation and inclusion for DM.

Key aspects of the SIAP SIAGA program are implemented through grant partners, both nationally and in SIAP SIAGA's four target provinces of East Java, Bali, NTB and NTT. In 2022, SIAP SIAGA has managed a portfolio of grants under the **'Australia-Indonesia COVID-19 Emergency Response Package – Pulih Bersama (Recover Together)' program**.

The objective of the assistance package is to ensure that 'Australian support for local-level COVID-19 responses delivers enhanced health and social services for the affected population in hard hit regions and builds community resilience to pandemic impacts.' The expected outcomes related to the SIAP SIAGA program are:

1. Sub-national and community **health responses** are enhanced to prevent, detect, treat and manage the spread and impact of COVID-19.
2. Local communities, including marginalised people, have improved access to **livelihoods support** to meet basic needs (including food and nutrition).

In line with SIAP SIAGA's emphasis on learning and knowledge management, grant partners are included in SIAP SIAGA's problem driven iterative adaptation (PDIA) process (try, review, learn, adapt) including regular evaluation and reflection points. SIAP SIAGA implements Real Time Evaluation (RTE) and Real Time Learning (RTL) with all of its grant partners. Monthly RTE provides rapid analysis of the progress from Pulih Bersama Partners. Based on these results, RTL creates space for partners to identify what is working well, what is not, and identify opportunities for the continual improvement of the project approach or activities in order to achieve outcomes and deliver more sustainable impact. RTL is an important tool to ensure that projects can adapt to changing context and stakeholder needs.

Based on the second quarter RTE results, peer learning has been undertaken on emerging lessons and challenges across all partner activities. The thematic topics for first Pulih Bersama RTL were:

1. How to promote technology use among communities (and MSMEs) to improve local resilience
2. Approaches to capacity building of community facilitators for local resilience programming

Emerging Findings and Reflections

1 Adapting to technology use to increase community resilience

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, several SIAP SIAGA partners turned their attention to supporting local communities, and in particular MSMEs, to make use of digital platforms to sustain their economic activities, as well as improve data collection and planning the community. In theory, this should be a straightforward process, considering the accessibility to smart phones, and well-known platforms such as Tokopedia, Shopee, GoJek and Grab, as well as the increasing use of GIS and easy to use data collection tools like Google Forms.

However, the road to a digital community is not a smooth or straightforward one. Issues of digital literacy, data privacy, internet availability, as well as data errors, were the most common challenges faced by SIAP SIAGA's partners.

Technology for local economic resilience. One of the benefits of technology adaptation for e-commerce is more inclusion, particularly for MSMEs which are often run by vulnerable and marginalized groups. In

many ways, **e-commerce applications increase the ability of many women and people with disabilities to take part in the local economy.** However, there are still some hurdles to overcome. For example, MDMC highlighted that their app for data collection does not currently support audio guidance and therefore cannot be accessed by blind people, and therefore requires further developments. LPBI NU has experienced similar challenges when supporting the digital transformation of MSMEs by assisting their registration and use of e-commerce platforms. Tutorial videos are available, but are not effective for the blind, which requires organisations supporting these types of activities to ensure offline engagement and support as well.

Nonetheless, support provided for digital transformation of local economies allows for more inclusive economies. As noted by LPBI NU, even though most beneficiaries, including people with disabilities, found the e-commerce applications complicated, with tutorials and support, they eventually felt comfortable using it and appreciated that it allowed them to better understand demand, as well as their income and profit. It allows for more access to the market for people with disabilities in particular as they can operate their business from home or easily accessible locations.

Technology for disaster data management and planning. With the explosion in available applications – including the use of different applications for data collection by different institutions, there is a great opportunity to expand data management from the district down to the village level, and support the routine updating of village data platforms (SID) and their integration into national data management systems. However, the biggest challenge faced by both government and community members is the overwhelming task of knowing what app is to be used for which issue, causing confusion and the perception that the same data is being entered across different apps, with no clarity on how that data will be used and by whom.

Adapting to technology use for development and resilience in communities requires a focus on integration of data management across actors, use of data by local organisations for planning, beneficiary identification, and coordination at the village level. It also requires data integration into the district and national level. This requires village data management policies, including ownership and use of data, data management, and data integration requirements.

Organisations working at the village level on community development need to **ensure that any data platforms or apps they develop and/or use can be integrated with government data management system**. For example, MDMC has coordinated with BPBD, Health Office and COVID-19 Task Force at the district level to ensure that their app and data have good interoperability, so that data can be provided to BPBD in different formats. Similarly, LPBI NU conducts geospatial data collection and the data is handed over to village government, which means that it has to be collected in a format that the village government can use, particularly when determining the delivery of assistance such as livelihoods support, cash assistance, or social welfare support.

2 Reevaluating the Role of Community Facilitators

Community facilitators have traditionally been viewed as actors to support government planning processes and symbol community engagement in community development projects. However, as dialogue around resilience and inclusion deepens and strengthens, and is increasingly engaging with communities, and the importance of **community facilitators as potential agents of change** is gaining greater recognition.

However, in order to shift the mindset of organisations and government which routinely engage the services of community facilitators, there are many challenges which need to be overcome. These, whilst already well known, have been highlighted during the COVID-19 response.

- ▶ To be effective agents of changes, facilitators need to understand the make up of the community – particularly the presence, and need for acceptance, of vulnerable and marginalised groups. Skills to facilitate their engagement and address social gaps in the community are necessary. Please see SIAP SIAGA Real Time Learning Brief No. 1 for more information on this.
- ▶ Facilitators need to be able to educate community members on issues related to both development and the need for inclusion if progress towards improved resilience is to be successful and sustainable. Most have not been trained in public communication and relationship building, which hinders their capacity to carryout these types of mandates.
- ▶ Facilitators need to be able to coordinate across actors and organisations, to support effective and coherent implementation of programs and activities. They also need to be able to coordinate as a group of facilitators across sectors and balance the priorities of organisations and

governments against the needs and capacities of communities.

- ▶ Facilitators are also faced with time bound mandates for the programs or activities they are recruited to support. This means that they cannot, or are limited in their capacity to, provide ongoing assistance to beneficiaries, while beneficiaries change from one program to the next.
- ▶ Facilitators are often faced with communities or members of the community which have low levels of literacy or language disparities (particularly among the elderly who may only speak the local language).

Organisations engaging the services of community facilitators need to provide support and necessary coordination structures for those facilitators to **more effectively carry out their roles**. Soft skills such as communication, engagement, negotiation, building confidence of community members to participate in discussions, coordination within and across sectors and initiations are all necessary for facilitators to be effective and support sustainable change in the community. The absence of these skills made supporting COVID-19 response an uphill battle for community facilitators and many were unsuccessful in combatting misinformation, supporting the enforcement of health protocols and facilitating vaccine roll out. .

As such, the role of the community facilitator needs to be reevaluated – and reimagined. **Building resilience and having inclusive community development requires champions – individuals who are more than facilitators but also have a vision for the community's development**. They bring some, if not all of the soft skills, detailed above, and are engaged with the community in the long term, providing ongoing support for activities or initiatives even after a project has closed. They should be members of the community and fully understand community needs and priorities so that coordination with other programs and across sectors is effective and meaningful. They should be trusted enough by the community to facilitate the engagement of vulnerable and marginalised groups in the community's development..

Reimagining the role of a community facilitator instead as an agent of change - or local champion - means that organisations need to seek out individuals who are present in the community and fit the profile. They **should not treat facilitators simply as an extension of the project staff but rather as a member of the community and an interlocuter with the project teams** – creating more space for

transparent and accountable activities, feedback and adjustments based on community needs, capacities and priorities. This small shift in thinking – from facilitator to champion – can facilitate longer term visions of development within communities themselves which projects can support, as the results of the activities can be taken up by the champion for long-term application in the community, meaning more sustainable results and long-term impacts.

Key Take Aways and Emerging Lessons

The workshop resulted in two important observations and insights on the issue of inclusion and community resilience.

The first was that **e-commerce applications can ease the ability of persons with disabilities to take part in the local economy**. However, in order for technology to be effective at community level and to contribute to economic and social development and resilience, it needs to be rolled out systematically – focusing on the integration of data management across actors, developing policies or regulations on the use of data by local organisations for planning, beneficiary identification, and coordination at the village level, as well as ensuring that any data platforms or apps utilised by organisations or groups in the community can be integrated with government data management system.

The second was that community resilience is about sustainable change, and therefore **community**

facilitators need to be viewed as potential agents of change, especially related to shifting mindsets for a long-term vision of community development and resilience which is both inclusive and sustainable. In keeping with the long-term approach required to increase resilience, organisations should not treat facilitators simply as an extension of the project staff but rather as a member of the community and an interlocuter with the project teams. Building resilience and having inclusive community development requires champions – individuals who are more than facilitators but also have a vision for the community's development. Organisations engaging the services of community facilitators need to provide support for those facilitators to more effectively carry out their roles, helping them to build soft skills such as communication, coordination and engagement techniques.

SIAP SIAGA has partnerships with the following organisations under the Pulih Bersama program:

- **In Jawa Timur:** PDTC ADEMOS Consortium; Save the Children Indonesia-Wahid Foundation Consortium
- **In Bali:** Yayasan Kerti Praja (YKP); Save the Children Indonesia-IDEP Consortium
- **In NTB:** ADBMI-LGBS; Konsepsi NTB-Mitra Samya Consortium
- **In NTT:** Swara-Parangpuan Consortium; YAKKUM-SOPAN SUMBA-KOPPESDA Consortium
- **Nasional:** LPBI NU; Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Centre (MDMC)

