

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN MEULABOH - ACEH BARAT: INTERIM REPORT FOR ARUP

THE PROJECT

In April 2013, ARUP partnered with Mercy Corps to help vulnerable communities in Meulaboh, Aceh Barat District, to improve their resilience and preparedness to cope with natural hazards. The “Resilient Environment through Active DRR Initiatives” (READI) programme, co-financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development, aims to help households, communities and institutions to reduce the likelihood and mitigate the impact of natural hazards; as well as improve their capacity to take swift action should a disaster occur. The project will run until May 2014.



Despite broad awareness of the hazards and positive steps taken by the Government of Indonesia in promoting disaster risk reduction (DRR), there are many vulnerable communities that still have no basic preparedness measures in place for disasters, especially in schools. The Education Office of Meulaboh has developed a DRR curriculum but teachers have not been trained to implement it. Teachers do not have the skills and experiences to talk about DRR, to develop school disaster preparedness teams, and to train students in how to evacuate if disasters occur, and how to develop standard operating procedures in schools. Arup funding is therefore contributing to the development of workshops, training for teachers, formation and training of school disaster preparedness teams, developing standard operating procedures, and running disaster simulations in schools.

Mercy Corps would like to thank ARUP for supporting this important project, which will benefit over 1,500 students. By implementing this programme in Meulaboh, Aceh Barat, many schools have received life saving knowledge and skills in disaster preparedness and risk reduction. Please contact Marisa Charosky, Corporate Partnerships Manager at mcharosky@uk.mercycorps.org, or on +44 (0) 20 7812 0572, if you have any queries regarding this project.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The project aims to benefit a total of 176 teachers and 1,583 students in 10 elementary schools in Meulaboh. The following project activities will be carried out:

- a. *Teacher training*; Curriculum implementation, including the causes of disasters and disaster preparedness. Teachers will be responsible for developing a school-based disaster preparedness

plan that includes evacuation routes and procedures. They will also be responsible for disseminating the plans throughout their schools, training other teachers in curriculum implementation and conducting an evacuation simulation.

- b. *Forming and training school disaster preparedness teams;* The teachers and school administrators will select student representatives to form disaster preparedness teams (12-15 people on each team). Once the participants are selected, teachers will train students in the causes of hazards, and disaster preparedness.
- c. *Developing standard operating procedures;* Teachers and disaster preparedness teams will be responsible for developing a school-based disaster preparedness plan that includes evacuation procedures and routes. They will provide basic training and raise awareness throughout their schools.
- d. *Simulation;* The teachers and disaster preparedness teams will be responsible for disseminating plans throughout the school and conducting an evacuation simulation.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION & IMPACT

To date 18 teachers from 10 schools have taken part in the teacher training programme. These teachers will now go on to train other teachers in their schools in the above Disaster Risk Reduction best practices. In addition, 4 participants from the Aceh Barat District Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), and 1 participant from the Aceh Barat Education Office, also took part in the training programme.

Project activities have been carried out with the full support of local government, in particular both the BPBD Aceh Barat and the Education Office. There is therefore potential for the government to replicate these activities in other disaster prone areas.



Teacher training programme

The teacher training programme included the following activities:

Day 1 – Introduction and purpose of the training; geological configuration and potential disasters in Aceh Province; concept of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in schools; disaster risk reduction materials in schools; concept of disaster preparedness in schools; developing disaster preparedness in schools; group discussion.

Day 2 – School-based evacuations; group discussion on a school action plan for disaster preparedness; group presentation; simulation preparation.

Day 3 – School simulations, including tasks and responsibilities; developing and organising school-based evacuations.



Running a disaster simulation in the school yard

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

Over the next six months, teachers will train other teachers in their schools in DRR best practices and form school disaster preparedness teams. These disaster preparedness teams will then:

- Conduct vulnerability and capacity assessments.
- Develop school evacuation maps.
- Develop evacuation procedures.
- Develop early warning systems.
- Share information with their communities.
- Conduct evacuation simulations.

BENEFICIARY STORY



Al Misna (above), one of the 18 trainee teachers, feels very lucky to have been selected to represent her school in the training activities funded by ARUP, and has learned many new things relating to disaster preparedness and response:

"I knew that every time there was an earthquake it's important to hide under a table while protecting our heads. I thought all the tables could be used as shelter but I was wrong. Because of this training, I now know that only tables with strong construction are safe to take shelter. So I have homework now, I must explain this to my class."

Usman Basyah, Head of the Education Office Aceh Barat said: "This activity is great because it supports teachers in implementing and enriching their DRR knowledge in the curriculum, and we will follow up in the work plan and programme of Education Office for elementary education in 2014".

Joni Nurianto, Head of the Preparedness and Mitigation Division of BPBD Aceh Barat said: "This activity should be supported because the school can be self-sufficient in terms of preparing while directly easing the task of BPBD in the event of a disaster occurring, in particular, the threat of a tsunami."

Dharmawan, Head of the Program Division at BPBD Aceh Barat said: "This school training in disaster preparedness was very effective and should be implemented by BPBD in the greater community."