

Community Resilience in West Seram Regency

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Nasiri hamlet which is located in West Seram regency, Maluku province, is one of the areas prone to floods as well as landslides, due to its geographic condition as it is located between steep cliffs. Flash floods usually happen in the rainy season and these cause destruction in the hamlet. In order to address those issues, UGM is trying to conduct capacity development for disaster risk management for the local community through the Community Resilience and Economic Development (CaRED) program.

“There are several activities that have been conducted in this hamlet for the past three years. We aim to develop community resilience, so that they are aware of the disaster risk and can anticipate it,” said Ir. Adam Pamudji Rahardjo, M.Sc., Ph.D. the program’s leader on Monday (9/10).

CaRED is a collaborative program between UGM and New Zealand’s government which aims to encourage development in many regions in Indonesia, one of them being Seram Island. The program, which was started in 2015, is an effort to decrease the disaster risk through various programs including research and problem identification, dissemination, as well as education and capacity development for the local community and government.

Adam said in the first year, the program focused on research as well as identifying potential



disasters, while in the second year it focused on community development as the best strategy to decrease the disaster risk.

In the third year, the CaRED team conducted several activities regarding the community's development, in the form of training as well as workshops, including how to operate and maintain an Electronic Early Warning System (EEWS) for the disaster alert team, as well as visits by scholars who collaborated with the Regional Disaster Management Agency.

"In addition, we conducted emergency training for staff at the medical services center and several volunteers," he added.

Adam said he and his team faced many challenges when initiating this program, both from the local community, who did not open up to the team, and the local government who did not yet have a disaster management agency. Three years later, he said he had seen significant changes, both in the local community and the government, which makes CaRED well implemented and worthwhile.

During the program, Adam visits Nasiri hamlet many times in order to directly interact with the local community and government, as well as monitor the program's implementation. Some time ago, Adam also monitored the EEWS and evaluated its utilization, including a socialization event regarding a disaster alert which was conducted by broadcasting it through the local radio station.

The secretary of the Disaster Alert Team in Nasiri hamlet, Sirda La Dani, appreciates the CaRED program that has been implemented for the past three years, which has also including dispatching dozens of students to perform community service programs in the hamlet. This program, according to Sirda, has had many positive impacts on the community.

The Head of the Disaster Management Agency of Maluku, Farida Salampessy, also delivers their appreciation. She said the training and EEWS from UGM have helped them monitor the condition of regions that are far from the central city. Farida also hopes UGM can keep cooperating with the local government as a form of support for the region's development, particularly in its disaster management capacity.

"I hope this program continues to be implemented, not only here but also in other villages in Maluku that are prone to disaster," said Farida.

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