

## UGM Gives Psychosocial Treatment for IDPs from Sinabung

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YOGYAKARTA - Universitas Gadjah Mada sends a team of psychologists to give help in terms of psychosocial issues that emerged in 42 shelters for IDPs following the eruptions of Mt. Sinabung in Tanah Karo, North Sumatera. The UGM batch gives help to other teams from Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU) and Universitas Medan Area that had arrived there previously. "Firstly, we will send up to 20 students and two lecturers for rapid assessment," Dean of Faculty of Psychology UGM, Prof. Dr. Supra Wimbarti, told journalists on Tuesday (4/2).

The program will be made sustainable. UGM will further send professional psychology students to address psychological stress and trauma affecting the IDPs. Supra assumes that IDPs often experience depression and stress, added by the feelings of uncertainties following the disaster that happened. Other symptoms are trauma and grief.

Reportedly, a displaced person from Sinabung had tried to commit suicide in the shelter. "Generally, they have not been able to accept things as they are and find the sufferings

tormenting,” she explained.

Supra said UGM would soon send the psychology expert team to do rapid assessment in coordination with UGM students hailing from Karo. “This will be easier to do as there won’t be the language barrier,” she said.

UGM Field Supervisor for Student Community Service for Sinabung disaster, Prof. Dr. Langkah Sembiring, announced that in shelters of Kabanjahe and Brastagi there are 30 thousands evacuees from over 40 villages. “Not only do they flee from danger zone but also outside the danger zone as they fear the volcanic ashes would be flown to their area,” said the man from Tanah Karo.

Deputy Head of UGM Institute for Research and Community Service, Ir. Irfan Dwidya Prijambada, M.Eng., Ph.D., said the UGM students would also do cultivations around the shelters to suit to the type of job the IDPs have. This aims to reduce their boredom whilst staying in the shelter. “We will do vertical agriculture and give training on polyback plants. We have cooperated with the local government,” he said.

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