



2019 STORIES OF HOPE AND STRUGGLE

The Stories of Hope and Struggle 2019 are snapshots of the lives of Communities engaging with Samdhana Institute, bringing faces to individuals who strive to nurture their environment and ecosystems and persist in creating a better life. Here are short stories from Partners in Indonesia and the Philippines, coming together, inspiring us in Samdhana to consistently renew our energies for the vision of a Southeast Asia region that values natural, cultural and spiritual diversity.



Jambore Nusantara in Ketambe, Southeast Aceh

More than 100 participants gathered during this 3 days Jambore Nusantara event. Photo by Anggit Saranta/SAMDHANA.

Ketambe village in Ketambe subdistrict, Southeast Aceh is located close to the National Park of Leuser Mountain.

It is the largest tropical rainforest in Indonesia, and second largest in the world after the Amazon.

Ketambe village is also located next to the protected forest of the *masyarakat adat*. So it was fitting that Ketambe village hosted the Jambore Nusantara, held on 23-26 July 2019. More than 100 participants - woman leaders, indigenous youth and community members from 11 areas in Indonesia gathered during the 3-days event. The participants came from Papua, West Papua, South Sulawesi, West Kalimantan, Maluku, West Nusa Tenggara, East Nusa Tenggara, Bali, Central Java, West Java, and Aceh.

Tarmizi Alba, the Jambore committee representative in Ketambe appreciated the involvement of indigenous peoples, especially the women, from Sabang to Merauke. He said that he was grateful, that through the Jambore Nusantara, the participants gathered were willing to mutually forge their strengths to achieve an excellent civilization.

“We have a mutual goal here, to link the government and communities surrounding forest areas, through communication and information, to optimize management of

the protected area, for the sake of forest preservation and people’s wellbeing,” stated Tarmizi, who is also the founder of the non-government organization Sekolah Ekologi Leuser.

Jambore Nusantara became the venue to exchange vast experiences and lessons on forest protection and management from the different places, to enrich knowledge and expand cooperation amongst network communities. The Jambore design aimed to capture community knowledge and their initiatives in addressing their socio-ecological problems, in adaptation and survival through their natural assets and human resources.

The Jambore opened with speeches from guests on the first day. There was also a presentation of stories of leaders and their change movements.

The speakers were Dicky Senda (East Nusa Tenggara), Ni Luh Yeni Arianti (Bali), Slamet Diharjo (Banyuwangi), Arifin (Central Java) and Augusta Maria Wanggadipa (Papua).

The second part was the public dialogue on conservation partnership with the General Director of Natural Resource and Ecosystem Conservation from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Ir. Wiratno, M.Sc. The conservation partnership programme involves communities inside and around the

conservation site. The programme places the people as the lead actor in managing the land to be productive, as well as protecting it to keep its bounty.

Wiratno highlighted Ketambe for their orangutans, which become a research object. His main message was to intensify the existing management of the area, and not to expand the conservation site. The programme allows collaborative management in natural preservation area. "The forest not only contain woods.

"We are all responsible for the God-given nature because animals in the forest also provide us with many intangible benefits," he added.

Inspiration classes on the topics sovereignty, independence, and solidarity, were also held during the Jambore. The classes provided inspiration to the participants in formulating their plans. On the last day of the Jambore, the participants and local residents were entertained by saman dance, bines dance and several cultural performances by the visiting participants. ###



COVER STORY

Food, Agroforestry, Social Inclusion in 2019 Samdhana Partners Meeting

The 2019 Samdhana Partners Meeting, 11 to 13 October 2019 in Pagerharjo Village, Samigaluh, Kulon Progo, Jogja was attended by around 50 participants, organizations and communities partner of Samdhana, from Sumatera, Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Nusa Tenggara, Molucca, and Papua. The meeting provided for participants and the community of Pagerharjo Village, who served as host and organizer of the event, a sharing, doing, and reflecting opportunity on food sovereignty, agroforestry, social inclusion, and the rights and livelihood of indigenous peoples and local communities.

During the three day event, the village youth organization AKRAPP Karang Taruna, the village's tourism group, and the Village Government took the participants to producing and consuming local and healthy food and crafts, and promoting and marketing them in Sempulur Market, the

village's plastic free, local and healthy, traditional market. In this market that runs every Saturday ever since, and in meetings with village administration and local organizations, exchanges and learning took place in farming and agroforestry: rootcrops, coffee, tea, cacao, vanilla, cloves, spices, palm and coconut, timber, sago, illipe nuts, pala (nutmeg), sorghum, and many more; in edu-tourism; and in social inclusion in exploring and promoting inclusive policies and programs in the village.

The discussions, the Agri-Cultural Market, the Edu-Tourism, and all the culinary, art, and cultural happenings of The 2019 Samdhana Partners Meeting is a gathering of learners and doers in reviving culture and indigenosity, knowledge and systems in managing lifescapes, culture and arts for sovereignty, dignity, and prosperity of indigenous and local communities.



Traditional life in Aceh will stand or fall with special autonomy

By Syafrizaldi

Simple life: Alpaci and his sister, Putri, follow their father across a paddy field. Photo by Syafrizaldi

This story was first published on thejakartapost.com on December. 17, 2019

Eight-year-old Alpaci and 7-year-old Putri Alisawere were covered in mud, partly drying out on their backs.

Their father was plowing his paddy field with a hand tractor. The two children followed him, collecting worms as bait for fishing in an irrigation ditch.

“Mother will cook the fish if we get it,” said Alpaci.

Alpaci and Putri went farther down to a bigger irrigation channel, where they were pushing a small fish into a corner without any tool, before catching it and putting it into a can. Ignoring the heat of the sun over the Mukim Lamteuba region in Aceh Besar regency, Aceh, they brought the fish home for their family.

Their mother, who had been waiting for them at home, began cleaning the fish.

“Mom’s going to cook it, after dad finishes plowing and returns home, we’ll be dining together,” said Alpaci.

A call to prayer was heard from the mosque of Lamteuba at sunset as farmers were passing blang (paddy fields).

One of the farmers, Fatmi, 37, said there were at least 43 blang areas in Mukim Lamteuba, scattered across eight gampong (villages).

“The location zones are managed by the mukim [subdistrict] administration,” said Fatmi.

“We’re planning to hold a khanduri blang

ritual. Next month, our paddy crops will be two months old.”

Khanduri blang, according to Fatmi, is a ritual to express gratitude for God’s blessings. The Lamteuba people conduct at least three khanduri blang ceremonies.

“The first is done before sowing, the second when the crops are two months old and the third when the harvest time arrives,” she explained.

The ritual consists of a prayer service and community dinner. It is also a common tradition in many other regions of Aceh.

The ritual strengthens social bonds and gives villagers a better understanding of the proper management of natural resources, such as water.

“We should protect water sources,” Fatmi said.

The water for irrigating paddy fields in Lamteuba come from springs in a forest zone in the Seulawah mountain range. Locals have acknowledged that forest conservation helps them in the management of resources to sustain their life.

In Lamteuba, stretches of paddy fields are separated by hills and even by clusters of settlements.

Like other Aceh communities, the Lamteuba people live in harmony within the local administrative unit called mukim, which comprises of several villages.

A mukim has territorial borders and natural resources that are autonomously managed on the basis of time-honored ancestral norms and values. In present-day public

administration, a mukim ranks below the district level and above villages.

On Aug. 15, 2005, the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement signed a memorandum of understanding known as the Helsinki memorandum of understanding (MoU), which gave Aceh special autonomy status.

A principal provision of the MoU is that the qanun (Muslim bylaw) of Aceh is formulated to show high regard for the history and traditions of Aceh and reflect the latest legal requirements.

Law No.11/2006 on the Aceh administration, providing the basic framework for social life of autonomous province, authorizes the Aceh administration to issue regulations on the reordering of local customs, traditions and administrations. The administration announced the qanun of Aceh No. 10/2008 on customary institutions, which includes the mukim administration.

One of the organizations involved in strengthening the mukim administrative level from the outset of the peace process in Aceh is Yayasan Rumpun Bambu Indonesia (YRBI).

YRBI executive director Sanusi Syarif said Aceh's special autonomy should be rooted in the traditions and culture existing at the mukim level.

Smile: The women of the Lamteuba region take a selfie during a lunch break after working in the fields.

"The mukim administration should be the management center of customs-based governance and be tasked with assisting the government from the regency to national levels. The important point is that the regional regulation also guarantees that the mukim administration controls the ecological function and natural resource management," said Sanusi.

The imeum (chief) of Mukim Lamteuba, Bahrum, affirmed that the YRBI had helped his administration formulate custom-based

rules connected to water management and irrigation. The mukim administration is striving to create rules to protect water sources and ensure the even distribution of water.

The imeum, along with the village heads, the keujruen blang (mukim head's assistant in charge of paddy field management) and other community representatives are working on and introducing custom-based rules to this effect.

The customary institution Bahrum directs is revitalizing the functions of relevant personnel as well as customary directives, prohibitions and sanctions. Furthermore, a custom-based dispute settlement system is being formulated and intervillage cooperation in water and irrigation management is being arranged.

"Most importantly, based on customary consensus, we involve women," Bahrum said.

Women like Fatmi have the role of selecting seeds.

Bahrum added that women also had a vital part in khanduri blang and meu uro, which covers all activities having to do with paddy planting, maintenance and harvesting.

The cold but dry air of Lamteuba swept over the expanses of paddy fields at the foot of Mount Seulawah.

Alpaci and Putri had relished the delicious fish fried by their mother. The water irrigating their father's field had also been shifted to the other fields needing water supply, as already arranged by the mukim administration for equal distribution.

Village life goes on as water flows through the irrigation channels. It is the life Alpaci and Putri are growing into, but will their generation continue to enjoy happiness under Aceh's special autonomy, or are they going to reverse it and face conflict in a new form?.



Growing the Social Enterprise Ecosystem in Eastern Indonesia

Some participants took picture after workshop in Jayapura. Photo by Taofik Rifai

Yakob, 20 years old and a Papuan, observed how his peers discussed and exchanged ideas about how to develop entrepreneurship in Jayapura. Clearly visible on his face was a sense of confusion and lack of confidence, brought about by his inability to follow the conversation. From the beginning of the session to the end, he was just silent, watching, listening, and occasionally scribbling on paper.

Yakob is not a young person who lives in a remote inland village of Papua. He is a high school graduate living in the outskirts of Lake Sentani, 30 minutes from downtown. He works daily to help his neighbors produce virgin coconut oil. Although he lives not far from the city center, in fact, Yakob does not have the same opportunities as other

teenagers in urban areas due to structural and environmental conditions that do not provide the opportunities for young people to develop themselves properly. Even so, Yakob believes that one day he will become a businessman. “The reason is that we want to change the economy of Papuans for the better,” he said.

Yakob is just one of the many stories of young Papuans who do not get the same opportunity to achieve a better life. If a distance of 30 minutes from the city center alone can make a difference that results to inequality, then what of those who live even further?

Because of this reality, local organizations in partnership with Samdhana Institute,

endeavor to bring about an inclusive social enterprise ecosystem in Eastern Indonesia.

On 27 November - 3 December 2019, the program on Developing Inclusive Social Enterprise Ecosystem in Jayapura was launched, led by The Local Enablers, an inclusive social business ecosystem activator, and businesses in Jayapura Kitong Bisa Enterprise, and Samdhana Institute.

The program consisted of a series of “bootcamps” and workshops, and culminated in the launching of the social business ecosystem in Jayapura.

The bootcamp was attended by young Papuans interested in entrepreneurship. It aimed to enable them to drive and inspire local businesses, to continue to grow and sustain enterprises that will provide local jobs; increase the value of local products and create business ecosystems are facilitative of the growth of startup businesses or small - medium enterprises (SMEs).

The launching event in Jayapura was titled “Kitong Talks Series: Entrepreneurs in Jayapura” and held on 3 December 2019. The event was attended by more than 100 young Papuan entrepreneurs and representatives from government institutions, academe, community, and media.

Gracia Billy Mambrasar, Founder of Kitong Bisa and also the Special Staff of the President for Millennial and Innovation, opened the Kitong Talks. In his presentation, Billy shared his journey as a student at Institut Teknologi Bandung and Oxford University until it led to the decision to become a social entrepreneur. Billy hopes that the entrepreneurial ecosystem that was initiated can become a vehicle for young Papuans to grow as nationally and internationally recognized inspirational figures.

Inspirational workshops by successful native Papuan entrepreneurs, networking with invited stakeholders, and business model canvas workshops with The Local Enablers rounded off the Kitong Talks.

Realities in Papua

- Papua is the most impoverished region in Indonesia, more than 27.53% of the population live below the national poverty line (Source: BPS)
- Unemployment in Papua increased from 2.91% to 3.42% in February 2019 (Source: papua.go.id)
- As of February 2019, the total population of working Papuans was 1,808,848 individuals. Majority of them were as unpaid workers/ family workers at 30.11%, and non-permanent / unpaid workers at 29.90% (Source: papua.go.id).

This activity received enthusiasm from the community, from entrepreneurs and local SMEs owners, and especially from young people who want to have a growing business and need an inclusive business ecosystem that can also be a place for learning and developing novice entrepreneurs.

Taofik Rifai from The Local Enablers stated that, “The entrepreneurial ecosystem is critical because it will maintain the enthusiasm and idealism, so that the creation of young entrepreneurs can be carried out sustainably”. In order to sustain the initiative, in January 2020, a cascading program will be held where young people who are interested in entrepreneurship are mentored intensively for one month through several learning programs, as well as online mentorship.

With this, hope grows that an inclusive social enterprise ecosystem can provide better opportunities for the people of Papua, for them to become part of the solution to alleviate poverty and the economy. ###



Man-ai Youth Led Nursery Establishment

Man-ai Youth planning activity. Photo by Samdhana

Higaonon Youth of Sitio Man-ai

‘Natural leaders emerge from a time of need.’ As is the story of how the Higaonon Youth of Sitio Man-ai¹ came about. The Man-ai Youth were organized as part of the Barangay youth organization in Brgy. Tignapolloan. As a “sub-sector” in the youth organization, the Man-ai Youth felt that they were receiving less support. A contributing factor is that Sitio Man-ai is ten kilometers away from the village center. They also felt that their representation in the whole organization was often left unheard, and they always needed to fight for funding allocation for their own activities.

Drian, a *Sangguniang Kabataan Kagawad*² of Brgy Tignapolloan, together with Man-ai National Highschool student officers thought of organizing their own youth group independent from that of the Barangay youth

organization. Organizing the Man-ai Youth was a bit easy since most of the officers are family relatives. Other Higaonon youth in Man-ai were encouraged by their elders and parents to join groups that could uplift their cultural rights and practices. Soon enough, parents of non-Indigenous youths also encouraged their children to join the Man-ai Youth. The Higaonon Elders approved this with some conditions, to ensure that respect for the Higaonon culture will foremost be upheld.

Nursery Establishment

The Man-ai Youth proved to be a very valuable asset during the conduct of the Indigenous Youth Eco- Cultural Camp held last May 2019 in Man-ai National Highschool. It was the first ever youth camp that was held especially for Indigenous Youth in Misamis Oriental. During the Youth Camp, they realized the

¹Sitio Man-ai, Brgy. Tignapolloan, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines

²A Kagawad is a Member of the Sangguniang Kabataan Council, which is the government-established organization to represent the Youth in the Local Government structure.



Members of Man-ai Youth assist in the logistical preparation of the Indigenous Youth Eco-Cultural Camp 2019



Narig tree nursery of the Man-ai Youth, grown from collected wildlings

importance of forest conservation, and how relevant it was to them, given that they still have remaining forest areas in their Barangay. They also realized that their culture is closely connected to the forest, and as the younger generation following the footsteps of their parents, have a very important role. The future of their culture, including the conservation of the forests that they connect to, lies in their hands.

Immediately after the camp, they planned to do tree-growing activities. The first challenge was the lack of funds to buy the seedlings. With a little encouragement and the guidance of their Elder's wisdom, they realized that forest holds a wide array of endemic species which they can collect seeds from. With the help of their elders, they collected narig (Red Lawaan) seeds and wildlings. They borrowed a small area from one of their member's family farm and established a small nursery with 200 seedlings. Six months on, the Man-ai Youth now have more than 2,000 seedlings of narig. They were also able to share seeds of mangongkong to the seed exchange program of Samdhana.

Aside from the fun they have when collecting seeds, they are learning a lot from the activity. They learned to identify seeds and wildlings, identify trees and plants in

the forest, learn about the growing and blooming seasons of particular trees, and the simple science of seeds and wildlings propagation. *"Nangolekta mi ug wildlings, pero didto ra namo gi bagging sa sulod sa lasang, unya gihinay hinay namoug balhin para dili sya mabag-ohan sa klema gawas sa lasang. Kay katong una namo gikolekta kay nangamatay, murag nakuratan to sa klema. (We collect wildlings, but we bag them inside the forest, and transfer them (to the nursery) at a later time, so that the seedlings do not get shocked by the change of climate outside of the forest. The first batch we collected died, maybe because of the sudden change of climate.)"*

Currently, they are in the process of identifying conservation areas with their elders, so that they can transplant the seedlings they have grown. The aim to make the tree nursery a source of income for their other activities. The Man-ai Youth hope that they can also share their experience and learning to youth groups in other Barangays inside their Ancestral Domain. The leadership and active participation of the Man-ai Youth, and the encouragement of their community leaders, makes them a group with strong potential for sustaining their own programs, for more youth activism in cultural identity and forest conservation.



Ensuring the Future of Monom

Monom literally means weaving, a handcraft of the Teduray and Lambangian tribes in Mindanao, using rattan, bamboo, *nito*, and similar materials from the forest. This art of weaving, however, is slowly fading because of the cheap and readily available plastic materials now widely used for storage. Plastics have even replaced the traditional mats with machine-produced sheets.

The Teduray communities in Upi, Maguindanao, under the Center for Indigenist Development in the Philippines, Inc. (CIDEV), have initiated a project that puts importance on the transference of their weaving knowledge to the new generation.

Foremost in the strengthening of monom is its direct link to the protection and preservation of the forest, especially the cultivation of non-timber products. Indigenous traditions and lifestyles are necessarily linked with the environment, which has been their source of materials. The replacement of man-made materials over their naturally-resourced goods has little by little eroded the younger generation's appreciation for environmental

protection. By revitalizing the craft of weaving, CIDEV hopes to instill in the young the importance of nature. An appreciation for traditional weaves will also translate to the rejuvenation of its market. So, not only will it be ecologically viable, it will also provide livelihood to local communities.

Under the Samdhana-supported project, they are piloting the establishment of three nurseries for rattan, bamboo and similar plants. Two are clan-based forest reserves, while one is a community forest reserve. These areas are in Barangay Rempes, Barangay Bayabas, and Barangay Darugao all in the municipality of Upi. Even as they wait for the seedlings to grow, they will already be holding a *Monom* conference that would include the training of young weavers, with guidance by the skilled elders.

For the sustainability of the environmental initiative, the Teduray communities are at the same time lobbying for an ordinance that would institutionalize and integrate their traditional environmental protection system in their local government units. ###



The Regional Forum on Indigenous Knowledge in Rights-based Sustainable Development was held last October 2019 at Jogjakarta, Indonesia. It was attended by more than a hundred participants from Southeast Asia Region



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