



FOOD CRISIS AHEAD, EVERYBODY CAN GROW FOOD



Activity in Saritani Village. They were working on the fields to grow the local people's basic food such as sweet potatoes and corns. – Photo documentation of Sugeng Sutrisno from Agraria Institute.

In the last mid April, Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) gave a warning of a worldwide food crisis due to Covid-19 pandemic. Joko Widodo, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, immediately asked the ministers, governors, regents- mayors, and the authorized institutions to anticipate the FAO warning. In the Indonesian context, what is actually occurring and how to anticipate it?

“The food crisis occurred not due to insufficient supply, but because there were problems with distribution chain as the impact of territorial restriction to prevent the pandemic expansion,” Tejo Wahyu Jatmiko, from Indonesia Berseru Association, said when taking a role as a moderator of *Terasmित्रa (TM) Share (or Relaxed Discussion)* Volume 2, which theme was “Watch Out, Food Crisis is In Sight” on the last 24th April.

According to Tejo, as a country actively importing, Indonesia must pay serious attention on this distribution problem. Particularly because many countries prioritize food for their own people's needs. For examples, Vietnam has stopped exporting rice and Rusia has protected wheat for its own people.

Import is one problem. However, there are also obstacles in the distribution inside the country. When transportations were restricted in the beginning of pandemic and the enforcement of Large Scale Social Restriction (PSBB), farmers in villages had difficulties to bring their crop yields to markets in cities. Restriction to enter certain area hampered food distribution. “Whereas, in March a lot of plants in gardens and farms were harvesting, from rice to tubers,” Erry Damayanti, activist in Kaoem Telapak, Bogor, said.



The left photo, one of the villagers in Gorontalo was harvesting the taro tubers in his field. These tubers later will become the alternative food to substitute their basic food. The right photo, the farmers in Gorontalo were harvesting the corns and will sell the yields to the animal feed factory. – Photo documentation of Sugeng Sutrisno from Agraria Institute.

Distribution restriction causes prices at the farmers level plummeted because they have no alternative transportation options. Besides, farmers no longer have harvest storage system like granary in the past, and they also cannot process the crop yields into other commodities.

In addition, other problems arise. The closure of many offices and companies in big cities has brought economy crisis to many villagers who have been dependent on their families' income in cities. Work termination (PHK) has also caused many people returning home become food burden in villages. It is added with the increasing needs during the fasting period and the Eid al-Fitr. Food crisis seems to be inevitable.

Covid-19 Pandemic has also opened “the scab” of the Indonesian agricultural system all this time. Orientation on the economic growth (read: export) caused the farmers in villages disconnected between production and consumption. “The plants grown in the garden are not for their own consumption needs, but to support the industrial needs. For example, in Gorontalo the farmers planted corns to be sold to the animal feed factory. Whereas, for their own needs, they had to buy. Consequently, when they had no money because the crops were not absorbed by the factory, it was difficult for the farmers to buy the basic food,” Sugeng Sutrisno, from Agraria Institute, Gorontalo, said.

Other problems contributing to the chance of hard food crisis are crop failure and decrease in product yield. In Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) for example, a crop failure occurred some time ago. “In Timor Tengah Utara (TTU) about 14,000 hectares failed to grow, in Ende hundreds hectares failed to grow, then there was a pest attack in Kupang Regency that caused 4,000 hectares failed to harvest,” Pantoro Tri Kuswardono, the Director of Association of PIKUL, Kupang, who is familiarly called Torry, said.



The farmers in Kupang were starting to sow the seeds in the field. Previously they failed to harvest because their plants were attacked by the pests. – Photo documentation of Perkumpulan Pikul.



One of the fishermen in Kupang was fishing in the sea. – Photo documentation of Perkumpulan Pikul.

Torry added, the problems are not only in agricultural sector. Motion restriction due to pandemic also caused the decrease in the fishermen's catch. "Besides due to the restriction, it also caused the decrease in purchasing power. Many fishermen discarded the catches due to being unsold in markets," Torry said.

It was predicted that the food problem will be getting worse, either during or after the pandemic. The warning signs of FAO will come to reality; it has been so clear in sight. It is either due to the expansion of pandemic spreading area (that makes restriction enforced in many places), also because the dry season will come, which may cause the agricultural products drastically decrease in the middle of the stalled import, the faltered distribution, many people lose their jobs, indiscipline citizens make the pandemic not over, and any other causes. The situation is getting harder because the government still has no significant efforts to overcome the food crisis. "Distribution is under chaotic condition, so is the production, and the selling price is going down. If these are ignored, this will become problems in the future," Tejo said.

"There are not thoughts yet of the way out from the crisis. Webinar conducted nowadays only discuss the impact of the crisis, but not thinking yet how to create new jobs for people terminated from their jobs, how people can run good production and consumption, and how to build production-consumption clusters," Tory said.

So, what is the solution to anticipate the prediction of food crisis?

Long term programs or strategies that really think of the food security in this country should become the priority because until today nobody can ensure when this pandemic will be over.

One strategy that should be built is having food diversification, which means that dependence on rice will begin to diminish. "The government should deliver a policy that ensures the process of food diversification, such as diversification of sorghum that is full of high carbohydrate source," Uumbu Wulang from WALHI said.



Sorghum crop yields in Kupang. In that place such kind of food has started to be campaigned as one of basic food alternatives. – Photo documentation of Kupang Batanam.



Local processed food from Kupang made from sorghum and corns. – Photo documentation of Bacarita Pangan Lokal.

Actually, this food diversification program has been launched by the government since 2009. However until today it still becomes a big homework. “It requires serious support from this country, not only from the government but also from us as citizens,” Tejo said.

In simple practical level, food diversification is other food alternatives from the farmers’ gardens. There is an interesting example in Corontalo. The farmers have enough diverse food supply in their land even in the nature, like tubers, sago, palm sugar, and others. “Those plants seem to be allowed to grow wild, but actually they are used by the people during the long dry season. The strategy of that community is very useful in this pandemic situation,” Sugeng said.

In order to build such food diversification, an initial step must be carried out, which is mapping inner food condition in participatory manner. The founder of School of Democratic Economics (SDE) Hendro Sangkoyo ever said that we should begin to map the blue nexus and the green nexus, food production, and security vulnerability of citizens. The mapping is not carried out by the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), but it is conducted and declared together with the citizens.

In addition to diversification and participatory food condition mapping, other strategies should be carried out to anticipate the food crisis due the impact of Covid-19 pandemic, as follows:

- Reducing the dependence on external food consumption by utilizing the existing potential at the local level, such as tubers and corns as the substitute or mixed into rice.
- Expanding the planting zone in the abandoned lands or the lands having slope level by using terracing method.
- Searching investors to support the community food business.
- Agricultural movement in cities becomes a priority as the safety net for vulnerable groups.
- Intervention to the community to grow the basic food and the fast harvest crops to guarantee the supply.
- Producing the organic fertilizers and vegetable pesticides to increase the soil nutrients and to reduce the spending of plantation production cost.
- Making production-consumption clusters so that the distribution is not too far and may run fluently.
- Building distribution points and marketing in cities to sell the garden products and the food plant seeds from villages. Being able to cooperate with either individual or groups in cities.

- Rebuilding family food barns in urban and rural communities.
- Conducting post harvest processing.
- Firmer campaigns about production-consumption, health, and local food.

One more thing no less important is beginning to eliminate the rural urban scaled dichotomy. Ida Pardosi from *Indonesia Berseru* said, we should not be able to think that food only exist in villages. It just shows how vulnerable our food system is today. Everybody can grow food, either in cities or in villages. (Tim Terasmitra)



Farmer groups in Gorontalo independently made organic fertilizer to fertilize their agricultural land. – Photo documentations of Sugeng Sutrisno from Agraria Institute.

TM Share: Ajang Berbagi Pengetahuan

Publication poster of TM Share #6

Since April 2020, after the government has asked the citizens to work from home (work from home/WFH), *Terasmitra* has made a daring sharing program entitled *TM Share*. This program uses two platforms those are IG Live *Terasmitra* and Zoom application. The IG platform is usually carried out on Thursday, while the Zoom application is on Saturday, once a week. Until the end of May 2020, *TM Share* has been held twelve times. Besides, *Terasmitra* also cooperates with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) to hold *Pojok Iklim* webinar.

The twelve themes of *TM Share* and *Pojok Iklim* that have been hold are as follows :

- *TM Share* #1: Healthy Food as a Strengthening Immune System
- *TM Share* #2: Watch Out, Food Crisis is In Sight
- *TM Share* #3: MSME Tips: Adaptive Innovation
- *TM Share* #4: Sweet Business of Coconut Sugar in Bitter Period
- *TM Share* #5: 3 Heart Mirror : Watching Together and Relaxed Chatting with Actor/Actress and Film Director of Empu Movie
- *TM Share* #6: What the Ancestors Said about Local Food
- *TM Share* #7: Learning from the East (Wakatobi)
- *TM Share* #8: Launching of Donation Movement for Food Independence
- *TM Share* #9: Learning from the East: Sorghum in Semau Island
- *TM Share* #10: When Your Life is not as Sweet as Honey
- *TM Share* #11: Indonesian Millennial Farmers
- *TM Share* #12: Melangut Tarsius and Batu Belitung Beach
- *Pojok Iklim* #1: The Impact of Climate Change Related to Local Food Production and Women
- *Pojok Iklim* #2: The Role of Indigenous People in Facing Climate Change in State Level

LAUNCHING OF DONATION MOVEMENT FOR FOOD INDEPENDENCE (FUNDRAISING AND DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD DONATION GRANT)



Publication poster of the Launching of Donation Movement for Food Independence.

Covid-19 Pandemic has caused emergency condition of food availability, especially fresh and healthy food. It is not only basic needs, but it is also an important element to build the body endurance from the virus (WHO, 2020).

Food crisis occurred not only due to distribution problem from the food center to places need it, but also a potential of the cessation of production process due to the Large Scale Social Restriction (PSBB) Policy.

For Indonesia, which has 24.79 millions of poor people (9.86 millions in cities and 14.93 millions in villages on September 2019, BPS.go.id), a combination between food crisis and nutrient crisis with Covid-19 pandemic will trigger prolonged impacts.

As an effort to overcome the food crisis, *Indonesia untuk Kemanusiaan (IKa)*, *Terasmित्रa*, and *Perkumpulan Indonesia Berseru* have launched **“Donation Movement for Food Independence”** on Saturday, 16th May 2020, 10.00 -12.30 via Zoom application on *TM Share* program Volume 8.

The launching of this movement presented Latipah Hendarti from *Detara Foundation* and

GEF SGP National Steering Committee as the keynote speaker, and it was continued with a discussion entitled **“Solidarity for Food Independence”** with the following speakers: Ukke Kosasih (*Indonesia untuk Kemanusiaan*, food independence activist), Tejo Wahyu Jatmiko (*Indonesia Berseru*, food sovereignty activist), and Slamet (Terasmित्रa Representative - Brejonek Organic Agricultural Community) with Annisa Hertami (Actress in *“Empu”* movie - nominee of Citra Trophy) as the moderator.

Donation Movement for Food Independence is a mechanism of collecting and also distribution of food donation for communities need it in the middle of Covid-19.

This movement is carried out to build a collaboration in assisting and answering the challenges of meeting diverse and healthy local food needs that are getting more difficult to access today and in responding to the possibility of food crisis in Indonesia, by seeding stronger community food system, strengthening recognition to the farmers or the seed growers in villages, including the community initiative to supply food independently and to facilitate the technical assistant community.

Furthermore, **Donation Movement for Food Independence** has two work programs those are: first, *carrying out the fundraising* and second, *distributing the fund via the grant fund* called **“Pundi Hijau.”**

1. Fundraising Program

Carrying out public fundraising:

- The fund will be raised openly from various sources including individuals, communities, and companies via online information spreading
- The fundraising period is since 16th May 2020 until 30th November 2020
- **The donation support can be transferred via an account of Bank Mandiri Salemba Tengah branch on behalf of Yayasan Sosial Indonesia untuk Kemanusiaan (Account number. 123.00.05300.001)**

2. Grant Fund Distribution Program

a. Program

Facilitating seed exchange/adoption or food seedling among the followings : (1) Local food seed starter communities; (2) Communities that want to start or strengthen the local food system; (3) Technical assistant communities.

b. Selection Mechanism and Fund Distribution

1. Selection mechanism will be carried out by three institutions involved.
2. The grant fund is about Rp 3 - 5 millions per community.
3. Considering this fund is the short term fund to respond to Covid, so the application for sending proposal is opened any time to the extent that the fund has been collected to distribute.
4. The grant fund recipients will be announced via social media and website of each holding organization.
5. The grant fund recipients must send narrative progress and financial report and some supporting information such as photos, quotes, etc. after the grant fund period is over.

c. Criteria of Grant Fund Recipient

1. Organisations / groups in communities born in the society covering local food seed starter communities, communities that want to start or strengthen the local food system, and technical assistant communities.

PUNDI HIJAU

DONASI UNTUK KEMANDIRIAN PANGAN

Indonesia Berseru | terasmitra | INDONESIA untuk KEMANUSIAAN

Solidaritas untuk Kemandirian Pangan

Program Pundi Hijau Indonesia untuk Kemandirian pangan berkolaborasi dengan Perkumpulan Indonesia Berseru dan Terasmitra melakukan inisiatif penggalangan dana untuk mendukung kemandirian pangan sebagai respon kemungkinan krisis pangan yang disebabkan pandemi Covid-19. Sekaligus menjadi kesempatan menata sistem pangan komunitas yang lebih adil, berdaulat dan berkelanjutan.

Dana yang terkumpul akan digunakan untuk memfasilitasi:

1. Komunitas pemulia benih pangan lokal
2. Komunitas yang ingin mulai/ingin memperkuat sistem pangan lokal komunitas
3. Komunitas pendamping teknis pangan

Anda dapat menjadi bagian dari gerakan ini dengan mengirimkan donasi:
Bank Mandiri Cab. Salemba Tengah
a/n. Yayasan Sosial Indonesia untuk Kemanusiaan.
No Rek. 123.00.05300.001

2. Carrying out organizing as an effort for household to community scaled food plant seed/seedling.
3. For the organizations / groups that recently start to plant, they should have assistant organization / individual that can provide increase in capacity.
4. The fund can be used to get food crop seed or seedling, vegetables that can be harvested in 3 - 5 month period of time, means of processing waste to be planting container, composter, cost for preparing land and on certain cases to help providing
5. Having clear control and work system.
6. Located in urban / rural areas throughout Indonesia.
7. Berada di wilayah kota/desa di seluruh wilayah Indonesia
8. Enclosing two references from the net.
9. Not having yet access to large donor.

d. Fundraising Mechanism

The fund can be transferred to the following account :

Bank Mandiri Salemba Tengah branch on behalf of Yayasan Sosial Indonesia untuk Kemanusiaan
Account number. 123.00.05300.001

Donation Movement for Food Independence:

1. Indonesia untuk Kemanusiaan (IKa)
2. Terasmitra
3. Perkumpulan Indonesia Berseru

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- Ida Pardosi -