

Eastern Dawn to Twilight of Islands:

Anthology of the Quest for Taste on Four Regions



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Acknowledgement

DEAR readers, this is a book containing stories and experiences of our the partners from four working areas of GEF SGP phase VI. The book is published with support, participation, and contributions of many parties. Entitled 'Eastern Dawn to Twilight of Islands: Anthology of the Quest for Taste on Four Regions', the book was born from a zoom discussion between Wisanggenig1 team and Catharina Dwihastarini, Mein-ar Sapto Wulan, Hery Budiarto (secretariat of GEF SGP Indonesia) and Dicky Lopulalan (co-founder of Teras Mitra). The idea emerged from the experiences of 82 partners from community groups, NGOs, research institution, private companies, and central and local government of four regions in Eastern Indonesia; all of which are rich and can be used as learning opportunities.

From the discussion, it was agreed to compile a learning book for GEF SGP Indonesia partners phase VI in four areas of Wakatobi Islands in Southeast Sulawesi, around Paguyaman Gorontalo river, Semau Island, East Nusa Tenggara and Nusa Penida Island in Bali and a book about the potential of Wakatobi.

In early November 2020, the team and GEF SGP Indonesia requested the host of each region to send 3-4 potential representatives who were interested in writing. They were invited to participate in 'reflective, argumentative and storytelling' writing training conducted on 12, 14, 16, 19 and 23 December 2020. From the training, 11 people were committed to writing while two refused to be named after the script editing process.

During the process, we faced several technical and non-technical issues such as signal instability, *Eid al fitr* holidays, busy activities to sad news from the writer's family. In the end, all of these problems became a great lesson. In addition, the different writing colors and characters of each author represent a rich variety of experiences. We realize that writing is not an ordinary job and in the future each partner needs to think about preparing human resources in knowledge management from an early age.

We extend our deepest respect and gratitude to GEF SGP Indonesia National Steering Committee (Laksmi Dhewanti, Latipah Hendarti, Zainal Arifin, Brigita Isworo, Ikatri Meynar, Julia Kalmirah, Martha Tilaar, Fransiscus Welirang, Yani Witjaksono, Y. Purwanto, Agus Prabowo, Heru Wardhana, Anton Sri Probiyantono) for their trust in carrying out the idea of writing this book. We also thank the Secretariat team of GEF SGP Indonesia Catharina Dwihastarini, Mein-ar Sapto Wulan and Hery Budiarto and friends of Terasmitra who always encouraged us to finish this book.

Acknowledgement

Our appreciation also extends to the hosts (PIKUL Association for the work area in Semaui Island, East Nusa Tenggara; FORKANI in Wakatobi Islands, Southeast Sulawesi; Wisnu Foundation in Nusa Penida, Bali; and JAPESDA in Gorontalo) and GEF SGP Indonesia Phase VI partners for all the information, support and assistance given to us. This book would not exist without the authors: Edi Harto, Semaui Consortium I and Semaui Consortium II, Brigita F A Rumung, Bambang Mamangkay, Sugeng Sutrisnno, Fatra Hala, Ni Made Puriati, I Wayan Karta, Fransiska Natalia and Ning Palupi who have participated from beginning to end in the process of writing this book.

Thank you to Samiaji Bintang and Linda Christanty, who worked tirelessly as book editors. This book is enjoyable to read because of their chilly touch. To Dicky Lopulalan who always kept our members in a good spirits, to our family, the big family of Wisanggenig1 who always supports the writing process, and to all of our friends and other parties we cannot mention one by one, thank you and thank you. Hopefully, many people will find this book useful.

Finally, through this book, let us enjoy and flow together in the stories of GEF SGP Indonesia partners. teman-teman sekalian, buku ini dapat memberikan manfaat bagi orang banyak.

Batubulan, September 2021

**Drafting team
Wisanggenig1**

Preface

SINCE 2017, the 6th phase of the GEF SGP Indonesia program has been implemented in four regions of Eastern Indonesia including Nusa Penida Island- Bali, Semaui Island-East Nusa Tenggara, Wakatobi Island- Southeast Sulawesi, and areas around the Paguyaman Gorontalo river. A total of 82 partners from Community Groups, Non-Governmental Organizations, Universities, Research Institutes, Private Companies, Local Governments, and National Governments were involved in this program.

Initiating activities related to community is not as easy as formulating a strategy on paper. The twists and turns emerged and had to be encountered one by one. Various methods and approaches were applied. Sweat, failure and a smile were parts of the success of GEF SGP Indonesia partners in the field interaction with the community.

Bringing together many elements, interests, and thoughts to become a community- based program is not as easy as turning the palm of the hand. Various steps were arranged. Strategies deemed accurate and effective along with prayers were implemented so that goals could be achieved. One of the goals was "The designed program can run and proceeded well together with the community. The program benefits can be enjoyed by the community and the program can continue even after the GEF SGP funding has been given."

From the idea of retelling the story of GEF SGP Indonesia's partners in implementing the program through descriptive and reflective narrative versions, we collaborated with Wisanggenig1 to compile a book of learning entitled, 'Eastern Dawn to Twilight of Islands: Anthology of the Quest for Taste on Four sRegions'.

In this book, each partner writes in a different writing color; distinctive one. The difference in speech style reflects various perspectives and ways in which GEF SGP Indonesia partners engage in activities with the community. The diversity emerged in behavior, steps, patterns, and strategies when dealing with communities. Diversity made the local communities empowered, open and have a bargaining value on life, environment, and territory.

This book is about the partners' journey in finding agent of change. It is simple to articulate yet difficult in implementation. All stories are told flowly that makes us immersed in the plot; as if we are involved in feeling, the sweat and smiles of the authors in their daily lives.

Preface

The 11 authors deserve our gratitude: Brigita F A Rumung, Semaun Consortium I, Semaun Consortium II, Edi Harto, Bambang Mamangkay, Fatra Hala, Sugeng Sutrisno, Fransiska Natalia, I Wayan Karta, Made Denik Puriati, and Ning Palupi, as well as to the facilitators and editors for making this story enjoyable to read (Samiaji Bintang, Linda Christanty, and Dicky Lopulalan).

We would like to thank the members of the GEF SGP Indonesia National Steering Committee (Laksmi Dhewanti, Latipah Hendarti, Zainal Arifin, Brigita Isworo, Ikatri Meynar, Julia Kalmirah, Martha Tilaar, Fransiscus Welirang, Yani Witjaksono, Y. Purwanto, Agus Prabowo, Heru Wardhana, Anton Sri Probiyantono) who have given the trust to carry out the idea of writing this book. We would like to express our gratitude to the Wisanggenig1 colleagues, the GEF SGP Indonesia secretariat (Meinar Sapto Wulan and Hery Budiarto), and Terasmitra for their tireless efforts in turning the vision become a reality. Finally, we want to express our gratitude to our partners, colleagues, and friends, whom we cannot name individually.

Finally, through this book, let us enjoy the flow and participate in the process with GEF SGP Indonesia partners.

Jakarta, Agustus 2021

Catharina Dwihastarini
GEF SGP Indonesia Coordinator

Introduction

Stories of Community Facilitators

Author: Samiaji Bintang N

(Lecturer at the Faculty of Communication, Multimedia Nusantara University)

AMBULANCE SIRINE blared. The car splitted the road, forcing other vehicles to pull over. The driver seemed to be racing against time; beting for life. It was getting more common for me to see ambulances speeding along the highway not far from where I lived in Bogor City. Eighteen months after President Joko Widodo had announced the first Covid-19 case in Indonesia, I still frequently witnessed ambulances speeding along the highway.

Every time I saw an ambulance passing, I imagined a sad news. "Who again today?"

During the craze of the new coronavirus outbreak, almost every day I saw ambulances passing by; morning, afternoon, evening. Due to social limits, I could still hear the sound of this vehicle's siren shrieking even after a peaceful sunset.

Early July 2021, an ambulance parked not far in front of my house. The vehicle came from a special lung hospital in Cisarua, Bogor. That night two helath officers in hazmat suits with transparent face shields and masks pushed the gurney. They took my next door neighbor, a man in his 50s into the ambulance.

My neighbor was a man working as a crew member of an airline in Jakarta. He was diagnosed as positive for Covid-19 after undergoing a medical test. His family had treated him at home, self-isolating but his condition continued to deteriorate. A week after being taken to the lung hospital, his family received the news that he died. Not much I knew about his funeral because everything was taken care of by the hospital. The family just resigned to the report that the funeral was completed at a cemetery in the Parung area, Bogor.

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He was just one of the residents who died due to the corona outbreak. Until the end of August 2021, more than 131,000 people from 4 million positive cases lost their lives. The pandemic did not only claim the lives of many people. This health crisis spread and triggered other wider problems. Various social activities of the community were paralyzed. Almost all sectors of the economy and the public, private and government sectors were badly affected. Not only in urban areas, some people in rural areas also faced the impact.

The media reported a slowing economy as well as business bankruptcies. The number of layoffs and unemployment increased. Tourism sector, which was originally a prima donna in business was suddenly hit by the zero visit of tourists. Chairs in restaurants to hotel rooms were empty of guests.

There are lessons to be learned from this pandemic. The government was compelled to improve its public-sector policies. People, on the other hand, are exhorted to alter their outlook and manner of life. The protracted pandemic has taught us about balance and a healthy lifestyle, as well as the importance of working together to safeguard the environment and care for wildlife. Both are frequently a source of natural medications as well as a vital antidote for the community in the face of the rampaging pandemic.

It's not that the general populace lacked access to information regarding the pandemic. Indonesia has suffered a number of epidemics throughout its history. Historical documents, on the other hand, are frequently disregarded. In the book *The War Against Influenza; The Spanish Flu Pandemic in Colonial Indonesia 1918-1919* written by Ravando (2020), the policy and response of the Dutch East Indies government in handling the pandemic was bad, ignoring the opinion of scientists, resulting in a wider spread of disease and high mortality rates on a number of islands at that time. This also seemed to happen at the present pandemic.

The current pandemic should be considered an important lesson. It is a source of new knowledge that must be recorded, written down, and disseminated. Through knowledge, we can avoid mistakes and the worse effects of a pandemic.

DECEMBER 2020. The government planned to launch a vaccination program. This program was eagerly awaited and needed by many citizens who were frustrated with the pandemic. The total number of mortality had reached 20,000.

230 of whom were from health workers. With vaccination people are expected to have a better immune system. While waiting for the arrival of millions of vaccines imported by the government, social restriction policy in a number of areas was still imposed.

By the end of the year I was invited by Ning Nirmala Palupi and some colleagues from Wisanggenig1 community to share knowledge in writing. We gathered with dozens of colleagues from a number of regions in eastern Indonesia in a writing training forum. Some of them were from Gorontalo, Kupang, Kaledupa, and Denpasar. The program received funding support from the Global Environment Facility -Small Grants Program (GEF-SGP).

We did not violate the regulations regarding health protocols since the class was set in virtual space, virtual classroom. We were very far from each other. I was in Bogor, the others were in their respective homes.

I saw Linda Christanty, a columnist for Kompas daily, a journalist, and a writer who won many awards. In 2021 she won an award from the International Organization of Creativity for Peace, an institution in the field of education and culture based in London, England. Her works are sometimes witty and voice human values. In the virtual forum, she shared her knowledge and experience about writing stories.

The process of writing stories is similar to that creating knowledge. The activity can start from an attempt to absorb simple information available around us, including where we live, garden, beach, or office where we work. The process of absorbing knowledge is usually driven by curiosity; curiosity about something that is equipped with sensitivity and foresight.

Take, for example, our trip. We pass through fishing villages on the route. Take a minute to pause, then pay attention to and examine the environment around you. Meet one of the fishermen there and inquire about the best technique, process, and time to catch a large number of fish, as well as the tools to use.

Remember to inquire about motives as a writer. Inquire about the name, form, and features of the fish the fisherman has caught. We can ask the fisherman to show us where the tools are housed to learn more about them and how they are utilized.

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Conversation is the act of absorbing information. When you have successfully collected and compiled the information, facts, and thorough explanations on a regular basis, you may write the knowledge under the subject "7 Ways to Get Lots of Fish from a Wise Fisherman."

The process of absorbing the knowledge above is an excavation through questions and answer; an interview. You ask questions and listen to explanations, gather facts and testimonies from someone who builds fishing knowledge based on years of routine and experience.

In addition to direct question-and-answer to people who have experience, we can also gain knowledge through reading books, notes and documents and various other media. For example, visiting libraries in the area where we live, searching and opening sites on the internet related to certain knowledge. Another knowledge absorption technique is to practice the knowledge that has been gathered. Through practice and experience, we will gain knowledge we have never known and experienced.

My friends who are from different regions are institutional activists who assist various communities in their area. They actively assist corn farmers, marine fishermen, weavers, villagers, teenagers and housewives. Over the years, most of these communities have built and formed knowledge in managing nature and utilizing natural products. However, the knowledge and good practices they employ are not recorded or written as sources of knowledge. The knowledge may only be passed on to family members through chat in the dining room, or to neighbors through coffee talk.

During the pandemic, these villages became a lifeline for people in other parts of the country. Farmers and fishers provide many of the food sources and botanicals required during the pandemic.

When Covid 19 vaccine had not been invented by scientists and produced in large volumes, anxiety stroke the citizens. Many residents in the city hunted for various supplements that could improve their health. Natural, organic food sources without the addition of synthetic elements were increasingly hunted by people. The consumption of organic food was one of the efforts to increase the body's immunity to avoid the epidemic. Consumption of vegetables, fruit, honey, and various organic foods increased during the pandemic.

The need for herbal plants and various spices has also increased. A British media, British Broadcasting Company (BBC) in November 2020 reported that global demand for the spice had skyrocketed during the pandemic. Many consumers stockpiled the herbs for long periods of home cooking. A number of spices such as cinnamon, cumin, and black pepper suddenly became essential ingredients in households.

The effect, according to a government report, the production of agricultural and plantation grew positively during the pandemic which is also in line with the growth in food consumption during the pandemic. Before the pandemic, agriculture and plantations were taken for granted. The government had more attention on tourism, manufacturing, transportation, and infrastructure development projects.

However, the condition reversed during the pandemic. The community returned to gardens, rice fields, and revive the abandoned land. Soilless gardens such as hydroponics were easily found in the yard.

To February 2021, the Central Statistics Agency reported that of the top six highest economic contributors, only agricultural sector recorded positive growth. Meanwhile, other sectors including industry, trade, construction, transportation, accommodation, food and beverages recorded negative growth.

Prior to the pandemic, the majority of young people in rural areas went to the cities for jobs either as laborers or small traders. During a pandemic, the situation changed. Villages in a number of districts become centers of food production. Farmers, ranchers, fishermen, along with medical personnel became the focus of urban residents. The supply of food sources during the pandemic was partly supported by farmers, ranchers, and fishermen. This change becomes a source of knowledge that will be useful later.

THERE IS abundant of knowledge available around us. The systems and cultural elements of indigenous peoples are forms of traditional knowledge that are commonly known in many parts of Indonesia. Over the years the community has nurtured various traditions passed down through oral literature, dances, ceremonies, celebrations, and so on.

These traditions are valuable and offer valuable information. Each region is unique in terms of population, language, social system, traditions, regional geography, landscapes, and so on. Therefore, it is important for us to recognize

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who, what is around us, and the process of the activities being carried out. All of them are important to write and tell, especially to those who are born later.

In the absorption of knowledge, in my opinion, there are at least three points of focus. First is the actor. Knowledge is generated through actions and real work carried out by individuals or a number of individuals in groups, organizations, or institutions. They are people who have advantages, privileges, experience and expertise. They are the actors who possess and create knowledge.

These people generally practice, possess pioneering values, become pioneers, have leadership characteristics, are actively involved and spawn various initiatives. Those who become the source of this inspiration can be from among men or women's groups in areas far from the city and have never been reached by the mass media.

These people are involved and mobilize institutions and organizations in their area. The community organizations or institutions they manage have important roles and functions in the management of local knowledge and wisdom.

The second focus is the process carried out by the characters. In writing, the process that the characters go through is a chronology that can become a storyline. Therefore, we need to record the chronology of activities involving these figures and write down the implementation steps of the activities carried out by the actors in routine activities. These activities can have positive and long-term positive impacts or vice versa.

For example, the process of managing and maintaining a mangrove ecosystem in an area. Good mangrove management can increase fish catches. Therefore, it is important to note the planning process, the steps involved, the dynamics and constraints during mangrove management. Alternative techniques and methods of sustainable fishing in mangrove ecosystems can also be compiled as field notes.

On the other hand, records of policies and activities for the destruction and destruction of mangrove forests can also be a source of knowledge.

The third focus is the result of activities sourced from local wisdom and knowledge. For example, local wisdom regarding the prohibition of fishing for certain months in a fishing community. This practice of local wisdom aims to give

fish time to reproduce, lay eggs and raise young fish. So that in other months, fishermen are expected to get bigger and more catches to create natural balance. These benefits and good results should be recorded as knowledge.

The benefits of knowledge management can be in the form of objects, material, increase in harvests or fish catches etc. Non-object benefits can also be noted, for example a neat and effective way of organizing fishing communities, democratic deliberation processes that involve women in formulating a common agenda, as well as other socio-cultural systems.

Then, what are the benefits of recording knowledge from local wisdom and learning outcomes? Why is telling other people so important?

There are several benefits to gain. Learning that focuses on positive experiences and good practices from good ideas can optimize planning and work processes in the future. These records can help the work process to be more targeted and costs saving.

Conversely, knowledge in the form of stories of unpleasant experiences, such as failure and negative impacts can be beneficial to correct mistakes, reduce risks, and anticipate unwanted failures at different times.

In a virtual class, Linda Christanty shared the power of stories based on facts in the field. According to her, in the story the reader can find emotion, humor, and tension that stir our emotions. Drama is indeed present, yet it is not dramatization because a story talks about things that are close and real in human life.

A story-telling eliminates the use of technical terminology and jargon that are common in formal report materials. It also helps to prevent stiffness and boredom. The author's voice, point of view, and critical assessment of the writer participating in the activity process can all be found in the writing.

The word "I" in story writing, still according to Linda, may be used by the author. The author is a narrator who experiences, records and also tells the experiences of others, witnesses to events and a series of activities during the program. The narrator invites the reader to follow the story he is telling. The "I" figure in story writings is a sign that what is told is a fact of life, facts, truth and is not at all an imaginary story or dream.

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FEBRUARY 2021. After attending the writing class session, the writers began to write stories from the field. Each author wrote a rich storytelling with descriptions of the diversity of languages and regional terms.

During the writing process, some writers had to manage their time well as they still had to work with the community in their area. This made the writing process took longer for some. They had to continue to carry out other activities, visit communities, discuss with community leaders, hold deliberations with heads of farmers' associations, fishermen, and carry out training for women's groups. It was these people who later became important figures in their respective writings.

Despite the pandemic, the writing process continued. All who were involved and participated in this writing program had an agreement, even if it wasn't written. These stories were important to publish because there is abundant of knowledge and important lessons. The stories, struggles, creativity in solving problems in the field, as well as the writer's fatigue and joy while assisting the community in this book need to be known by the public.

After a few months, the drafts were collected. Linda and I took turns editing the drafts sent by our co-writers. Editing was done here and there and this is the job of the editor. Most of the writers wrote formal reports while writing stories should be a different one.

Long-distance communication and coordination via e-mail with the authors in the regions was not always smooth. Sometimes our emails were replied after two or three weeks or even more. This is because each writer was also struggling to achieve the target of community assistance and this target must be reported to other parties who supported the implementation of the program. Another obstacle was internet connection.

Edi Harto, for example, writes a story about Bajo fishermen in Mantigola, not far from Kaledupa Island. As one of the fishermen's companions, he shared his experience of living in a fishing village where for years was socially and politically isolated. Now the fishermen are learning to be independent. They are also struggling to formulate policies so that the sea which is the source of life can be managed together and provide economic benefits in the long term. The declining fish population, competition with fishermen from outside the islands, the

monopolistic practice of fish trade by middlemen, and the feuds in the contestation of local political leaders have made the struggle of the Mantigola fishermen even more difficult.

Meanwhile, Made Denik Puriati, the Director of the Wisnu Foundation and Fransiska Natalia who served as Program Coordinator for the Village Ecotourism Network, raise another side and the struggles of villagers on Nusa Penida Island in the tourism sector before and after being affected by the pandemic. The corona epidemic that hit tourism industry has changed the way people view and treat natural resources.

Still in Nusa Penida, I Wayan Karta, the Chairperson of Taksu Tridatu Foundation talked about initiatives based on knowledge and local wisdom to save the ecosystem in Nusa Penida. This included citizen-based waste management. Portraits of plastic waste that once littered parts of the coast in Bali and circulated on the internet can be a worrying problem for the tourism industry.

From Gorontalo, Fatra Hala, a staff member of the Wire-G organization talked about the processes and challenges in supporting women's independence, involvement and important struggles in dealing with disasters. Bambang Mamangkay who worked in the research and database department at the Japesda Association told story about transmigrant farmers from Java who often suffered as a result of national agricultural policies that eventually harmed farmers.

The mentoring process did not always go as planned in this book. Ning Nirmala Palupi, a member of Wisanggenig1, said how efforts to reforest protected forests and establish food crops were hampered by other issues, like as a pandemic, causing the green initiative to halt.

Sugeng Sutrisno, Coordinator of the Agrarian Institute wrote a story about the local knowledge and wisdom of the farming community in Gorontalo which had long been removed because they were considered magical, occult and contrary to industrialization policies in the agricultural sector.

Brigita F A Rumung, Program Coordinator of the Alfa Omega Foundation in Kupang, underlines efforts to protect ecosystems and coastal natural resource management areas from natural exploitation efforts that can harm the community

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on Sema Island. The members of the Sema Consortium I and II teams who asked not to be named write stories about the challenges of organizing in efforts to strengthen food self-sufficiency and security. The community is encouraged to grow local plant varieties typical of Nusa Tenggara. This of course takes a long time and hard work.

THE STORIES in this book try to convey learning outcomes from the field. Of course, not all of the lessons they give are success stories told at breakneck speed, such as those found in motivational books that leave readers awestruck and fantasizing.

From this book, it is conceivable that readers may learn many anecdotes of struggles to overcome hurdles, such as policies that do not support communities.. This is attributable to a variety of factors, including the current pandemic.

This is similar to the struggle of thousands of health workers who are still assisting locals in their fight against the disease, as well as ambulance crews who pick up and transport residents to hospitals. Even if hundreds of doctors and nurses lost their lives in the end, their passion and heroism during the lengthy struggle should be written down and given as a lesson.

The story of this struggle becomes important knowledge. In the future, the stories written here will rise a hope.**





Does Everyone Want Semaui?

The efforts of the community of Semaui to manage their island which is rich in natural resources have been hindered by the interests of private sector and entrepreneurs.

Author: Brigita F. A. Rumung, Yayasan Alfa Omega

A **LFA OMEGA** Kupang Service and Community Development Foundation or usually abbreviated as YAO was established on March 1, 1985. The foundation, led by Pastor (Pdt) David A. N. Fina was initiated from the Evangelical Christian Church in Timor (GMIT). As a church association, he provided services in the form of training that focuses on providing and building community capacity in the fields of agriculture, fisheries, animal husbandry, clean water supply to carpentry and workshops. Over time, the association turned into a foundation and legal entity. This foundation develops and provides services in various sectors including collaborating with various parties.

My introduction to YAO began in October 2018. I was a bit surprised that I was accepted as a project coordinator with a scope that was completely new to me. On the other hand, I was grateful to be given the opportunity by the institution. I remember well the day after the interview I was asked to come to the office located on Jalan Timor Raya. The day was so bright; my heart blossomed as I got another job after two months off from my previous job.

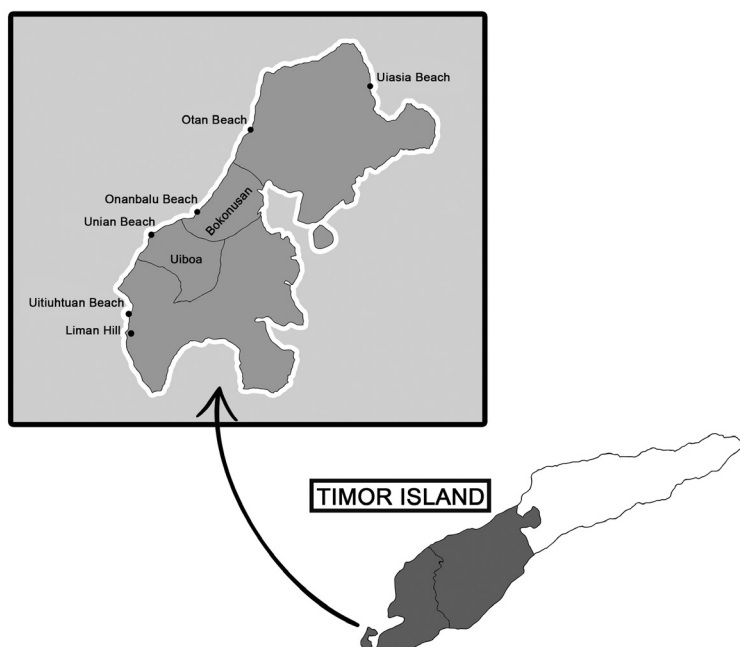
YAO was selected as a partner institution that received funding support from the Global Environment Facility through funding the Small Grants Program (GEF-SGP). Together with several other institutions, it was one of the institutions selected to participate on the 4th phase program of consortium on Semaui Island.

"Semaui Island has great potential, especially from its nature," said Pastor David, our director.

Does Everyone Want Semaui?

"Moreover, we can see now that the road to Semaui is getting better. Tourism is good. When people come to our place, make sure what's in their pockets, whether 10 thousand, 20 thousand, if possible more, must move to the hands of the community," he said. He frequently passed these sentences to us and the community.

Semaui Island consists of two sub-districts and 14 villages. This island is located in the western part of Timor Island. Based on its geographical position, the island is bordered by the Savu Sea to the north and west, Pukuafu Strait to the south and Kupang Bay to the east.



Picture 1: Map of Semaui Island

In Semaui, the focus of YAO's work is to encourage and advocate for communities in tourism sector. It was the first time the foundation was engaged in this potential and promising sector. Our working area covered two villages, Bokonusan Village in Semaui District and Uiboa Village in South Semaui District with a focus on forest tourism programs (Uiboa) and marine tourism (Bokonusan).

ON SATURDAY in October 2018 at 11.00, Robert, Pastor David, me and two other colleagues left for Semaui. I was very excited because it was my first time to visit the popularly known mystical island. Before leaving, my mother even warned me,

"Be careful there. Watch your words, keep your attitude. If you want to drink and eat, be careful." To be honest, I didn't really think about my mother's statements at the moment. I never believed in such a thing, but I did feel that our words and acts must always be guarded and cared for, wherever and whenever we are.

The excitement had only lasted for the first three months. After three months, it's not that I was not happy, but things felt normal. Fortunately, after three months, the joy returned because I became closer to the local people, especially with two people who had become friends and parents at *Semau*: Roberth Bao and Jet Lilong. We called them local champions. Both of them were retainers in the Tourism Awareness Group (*Pokdarwis*) we formed. Jet was the Head of the Uinian Bs Tourism Awareness Group in Uiboa Village, while Roberth was assigned as the Destinations Coordinator of the Mutiara Onanbalu Tourism Awareness Group, Bokonusan Village.

Both Roberth and Jet viewed this ecotourism program as a gateway for improving their village, especially in the hamlet they lived in. For Jet, the potential in their territory cannot only be enjoyed by certain individuals such as landlords.

"This has to be managed together, *Kaka* (brother). Because now everyone wants money," he said.

The father of four children also said that the natural beauty and beaches in his village were becoming more well-known to many people inside and outside the island.

"Many rich people have been going back and forth to Bai Min's (landlord's name) house. I have a bad feeling from the start actually. But the people here and I still try to have a positive thought because we are united. We want to develop our village," he added.

Roberth had a similar view to Jet. He argued that empowerment programs for village tourism management were important to increase people's awareness of their land and territory. "When YAO first came, I was optimistic. The program is good, but because this is a new issue for the community, it is difficult to make them aware and participate more," he told me.

Pokdarwis development program was only managed by Roberth Asbanu the field staff and me as the coordinator. However, in its 4th month, Roberth chose to serve as a civil servant which is now known as the State Civil Apparatus (ASN). I had to work alone in the field for several months. After some time, one of the division

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heads in the office also doubled as a coordinator that I could focus more on the field.

However, another challenging came. The coordinator then decided to pursue another passion. I was left alone struggling to run the program. From March 2020 to October 2020 I was back in this role myself. It was a challenge for me, but I had colleagues from other partner institutions who were members of the consortium, such as CIS Timor, Kupang Batanam, IMUT Motorcycle Geng, Tafena Tabua, OCD, Dalen Mesa, Cemara and our umbrella institution- PIKUL association-which was very cooperative.

In Semau, the activities of my YAO colleagues and I did basically disembody into three points including education, ecology, and economics. In the field of education, our activities focused on advocating the community regarding the concept of sustainability in developing villages. Our flagship activity was Environmental Critical Education. In the field of ecology, we carried out environmental conservation efforts as well as a form of advocacy. We identified the forest and the underwater together and came up with a clean village agreement. It's simple indeed, but this movement was the first to be done in both villages. In economic field, we tried to create a market related to the tourism economy. We organized product innovation training and connected with our unit, Alfa Omega Women's Consumer Union.

From the activities we carried out, fifty-eight reports were successfully carried out for approximately two years of work. Countless other activities beyond the official reporting were also implemented, as if one book is not enough to describe everything that happened, felt, and its impact. The short period program resulted in more than fifty-eight written reports. This numerical data is one of the markers of achievement as well as a reminder that much had been done. Everything that has succeeded and still needs to be fought for is recorded in my memory.

I noted that there were at least five important achievement points:

- (1) Establishing the first two *Pokdarwis* on Semau Island so that they had a Village Decree and registered with the Provincial Tourism Office,
- (2) Reaching a village net agreement,
- (3) Collaborating with UNDANA for the development of tourist sites through community service grants,
- (4) Creating a self-sustaining space: the existence of a resident-based homestay in Uiamlasi Hamlet, Uiboa Village and.

- (5) Transferring of knowledge and skills related to 3E (education, ecology and economy).

We don't only talk about stats or accomplishments when we talk about programs. It's more than that; it's about the process. This is a shared learning process, which means that even after the program has ended, the program that has been implemented can be enjoyed by future generations.

If it is said to fail, I don't mind it either. Failure will be a useful evaluation material at a later date although even saying this turns out to be a process.

"SEMAU PEOPLE said that *sonde* program is useful, *Kak* (elder female) Brigit." Over the phone, someone informed me. He then burst out laughing. For a brief period, I was taken aback when I heard that sentence. When he stated those words, I lost track of time. However, I was able to recall exactly what he had said to me.

"Hahahaha, whoever said that, surely he is not a native villager," I answered casually. He insisted to continue with another sentence, but I cut him off with the reasons I made. "I want to go, talk to you later, if you meet Le Ju, you'll just be gossiping," I immediately hung up the phone. Annoyed.

It felt like something was stabbed in the chest. Sweat was unwittingly appearing on the palms of the hands and above the lips. This uncomfortable feeling was not due to a hard, sharp object, but because of something that was not visible. A statement. Someone's words.

I remember the day I arrived on the island that I fell in love with from the first time I saw it, when a wooden boat that took me from Tenau Harbor to Hansisi Harbor had just arrived. In my mind, the smell of heavy, salty sea water lingered.

Now I can't do much, because I'm no longer officially part of the project. I had resigned from the job that connected me to Semaui Island since November 2020.

After ending the program by closing and completing the narrative report, a month later I completed my service there.

No longer joining does not mean that my ties to the island just go away. My heart is sometimes still filled with longing and sadness remembering the island of the Helong people. I often reflect what my coworkers said, which is true. This project was not completely successful. That said, most failed.

Subjective judgments are difficult to avoid. Moreover, this assumption has been strengthened by existing data, assessment results, and statements from

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residents—which I heard from other parties. I did not hide this thought. I also heard the opinions of various colleagues. Their responses were mixed. There are those who said yes, agreed with what I was worried about. Most gave positive and constructive feedback. But, to be honest, to me for the times when we are at a low point, positive words sound less realistic. For me failure is failure. There's no need for the consolation that sometimes just lifts the spirits for a few seconds.

A few days after hearing the news about the unwelcome comments, I thought about reopening the final narrative report that I finished. I remember very well that the report had been completed one week before I officially left my previous institution. One interesting question in the report was something like this, "Tell me about experiences or lessons learned in running the project!" I answered the question in a long answer.

One of my answers was as follows:

"I have experience of doing dynamic activities with two groups of people with different characters; dynamic both from the side that made me smile and sad, made me cry several times even. More than that, even in the closing of the program, we—in the sense of me and the Pokdarwis team—felt like we were betrayed, abandoned by the landlord who had always said YES YES to the location but was actually owned by the state, managed by Pokdarwis.

As it turned out, he preferred millions of red and blue notes (money) over integrated development in his area, which again, if traced back, was still owned by the state, even if it is said to be a joint property. Such situation, the landlord, as always alluded to in the reports, had the highest place in the village. Fortunately, the beach area was not the main focus in Uiboa Village. But still it felt exhilarating to end up like this. Moreover, the development in the coastal area started to trigger other developments in Uiboa Village, specifically in Uiamlasi Hamlet.

Again and again, other successful developments emerged from the self-help development of the community at Uilhaenana Beach, including (1) the construction of a three-series inn, (2) several communities started selling drinks and snacks, (3) the Uiboa Village carried out honey cultivation development, (4) awareness from the community to start preparing better housing for the sake of making tourist cottages in their respective homes."

On my laptop, I stored the statement sentence in a file. After reading it, I immediately closed and turned off the laptop. I smiled a little. It's also funny how I could pour such dramatic words.

Perhaps that's why I was so offended because I heard honest remarks from the residents. Comments that convinced me that all I'd been doing was a waste of time. Failure is the same as failure. However, I do understand that following step after failure is crucial, whether it's to learn from it, get back up, and better, or simply know, forget, and repeat.

I was daydreaming again, especially after hearing the statement on the phone earlier. The story of the landlord finally giving in to circumstances was one of the bitter pills during the project that I had to swallow, without water, without a word! But on the other hand, we also agreed with what we campaigned for in this program: Everyone Wants *Semau*. These three words are a kind of slogan or tagline that we carried in this project. That we—YAO—believed, *Semau* in general and our two assisted villages specifically have great potential that everyone wanted. But to get to the point that everyone wants, *Semau* must also prepare himself. Through YAO's assistance, this is one of the preparation processes. The most important preparation is not only physical but also human resources because the word *Semau* in this tagline also refers to the *Semau* people.

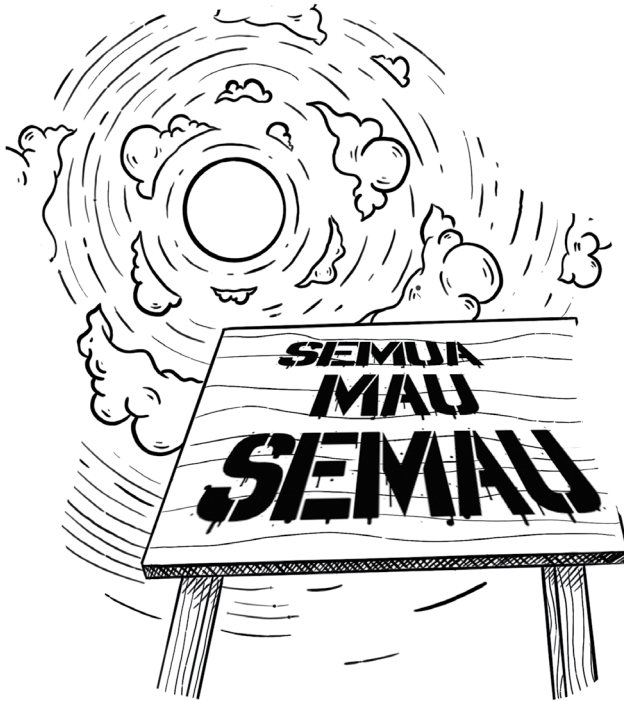


Figure 2 : Billboard (sign) TMSemua Mau SemauTM

Does Everyone Want Semaui?

On the other hand, the slogan of "Everyone Wants Semaui" can also refer to many people who want to save their wealth for self-satisfaction and in the end, the people of Semaui find that their territory is truly valuable with a million potentials. Unfortunately, the people of Semaui may realize it too late. Then they just gave up and said, "We're in NTT so stay calm so that fate is uncertain, but God will help later." Many can end up only deliver trays of drinks to guests, hold brooms in the corner of the hall, or even buy tickets to enter the area where they used to plant, chat, or even just walk as usual. Hopefully it's not too late. Hopefully it's not too late. ***





iMuT Motorcycle Gang and Mama Mince

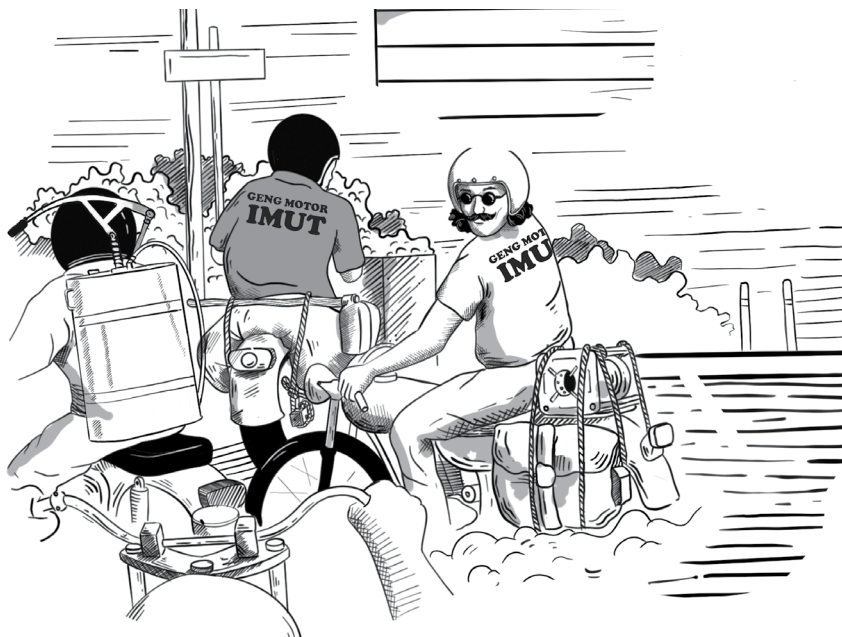
The experience of a program officer in supporting partner institutions in the empowerment and self-reliance program for residents in Semaau.

Author : Semaau Consortium I

A POPULAR and respected “bikers” association existed in Kupang with hundreds of members . A number of mass media reported them. The association’s management have been also interviewed by several media. They are respected not because of awesomeness or reckless actions on the highway but due to their actions and movements in supporting farmers, ranchers, and women in Kupang.

The members of the gang often go on tours by riding along steep roads and rocky terrain. Sometimes their motorbikes are transported by boat across the sea to visit farmers and ranchers. To the residents, the members of the motorcycle gang share their knowledge of raising honey bees. Elsewhere, they help residents make stoves with renewable energy that are friendly, inexpensive and can be installed in their homes. In another area, gang members visit and provide training for women on how to grow crops, especially food crops typical of the Kupang area, which are rich in nutrients, inexpensive and free of chemical toxins.

The name of this association is iMuT Motorcycle gang. The last word is an acronym for the Alliance of People Concerned for Livestock (*Aliansi Masyarakat Peduli Ternak*). I had never heard of them before. I was unaware of their actions and movements. But since I had worked work at PIKUL, I encountered a few of those unique riders. I also read reports about this group’s operations. I used the phone, email, and social media apps to interact with gang members. Because my job at PIKUL was to request updates on their activities, I sometimes thought that my pals from this gang were a little humble to me.



Picture 3: Imut Motorcycle Gang Action

"I feel terrified when you send WA a request for a report." One gang member told me. I responded with a joke or smile.

Actually, it's not only the motorcycle gang members who experienced this. I also received complaints from other PIKUL partners when I asked them to send reports.

MAY 2019. PIKUL Association announced job vacancies for PO positions required for the 6th phase of the Global Environmental Facility-Small Grants Program (GEF-SGP) Indonesia project on Semau Island, East Nusa Tenggara. The announcement was fresh air for job seekers in Kupang City and the surrounding area. A numbers of applicants applied for the position, but only five passed the administrative selection; three men and two women. I was one of them.

In the next stage, the five applicants were asked to engage in discussions to measure knowledge, understanding and ability to argue. The issues raised in the discussion were Labor Day and the nutrient crisis in the soil ecosystem. From the selection stage, three people with the highest scores made it to the interview stage. Each applicant was interviewed in turn by the Executive Director of PIKUL Torry Kuswardono and other managers. The questions focused on a number of

issues including knowledge of teamwork and program management.

Of the three applicants who took part in the interview selection, I passed and was accepted as a PO. I later learned that the staff who were previously in charge of PO filed a resignation because he was accepted as civil servants. He chose to serve as a teacher in an elementary school in Kupang.

In the fourth week of May I started to enter the office, work and become part of the PIKUL team. Historically, since its establishment in 1998, PIKUL has become a non-profit organization that aims to strengthen local capacities and institutions in Eastern Indonesia. As a non-governmental organization, currently PIKUL cooperates and facilitates local leaders, innovators, organizations and communities to create a just and democratic society.

When I started working in a program supported by GEF-SGP Indonesia, I was responsible for getting to know and understand the projects running on Semau Island. I read program documents, assessment reports, landscape assessment results, and partner proposals. I then worked on the archive of learning notes sourced from the partners' monthly and activity reports. It was quite tiring. Sometimes I receive incomplete reports and documents. I also had to adapt quickly.



Picture 4: Routines in the Office; Reading and Checking Documents

iMuT Motorcycle Gang and Mama Mince

On Semau Island, PIKUL was responsible for coordinating a number of partner institutions for programs that support community self-reliance. These partner institutions included iMuT Motorcycle Gang, CIS Timor, Cemara Foundation, Alfa Omega Foundation, Kupang Batanam, Ocean Cozy Destination Beach and Cafe, Dalen Mesa Organic Farmer Community, and Tafena Tabua. Each partner institution had a different field and focus of work.

Motorcycle gang members carried out various activities such as training in organic fertilizer production, honey bee farming, providing animal feed, agro silva pastoral (an agroforestry system that combines forest plants, agriculture and animal husbandry) and innovation of biomass stoves and watering equipment that saves energy and time. These activities were located in the villages of Hansisi, Batuinan, Huilelot, Uitiuh Ana, and Uitiuh Tuan.

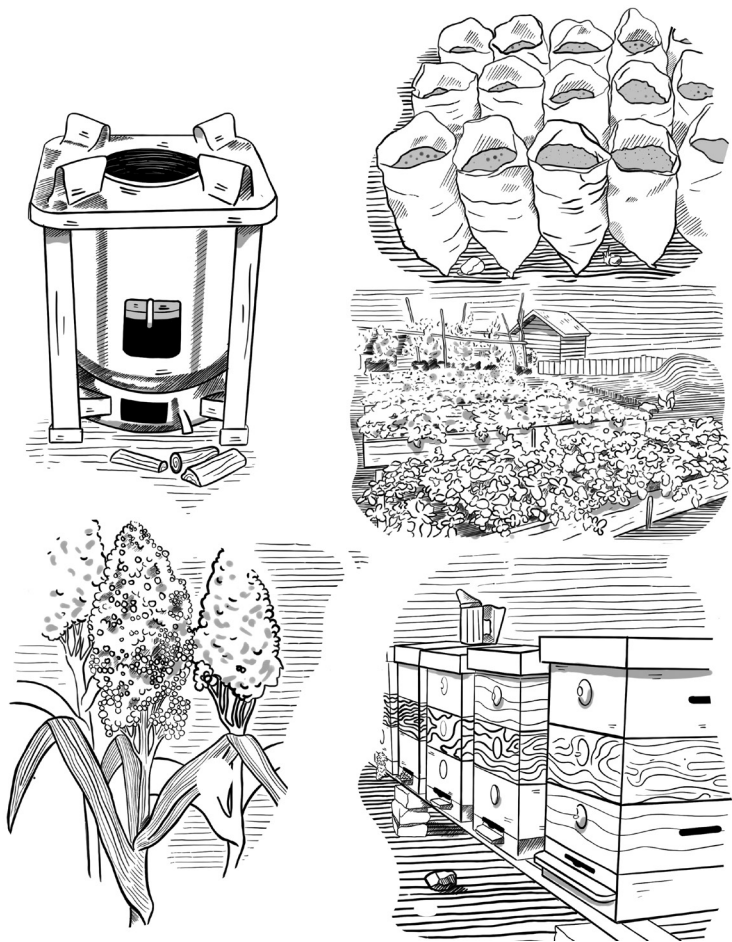


Figure 5: Products from Mentoring Results

CIS Timor shared its knowledge on clean water management for the community in the villages of Hansisi, Uiasa, Huilelot, and Batuinan. Cemara Foundation distributed water using Solar Water Pumping System (SWPS) in Batuinan Village. Water distribution was a means to encourage residents to maintain water catchment areas in order to support the availability of water throughout the year, especially in the dry season. Semau Island often encounters water crisis, especially in dry season.

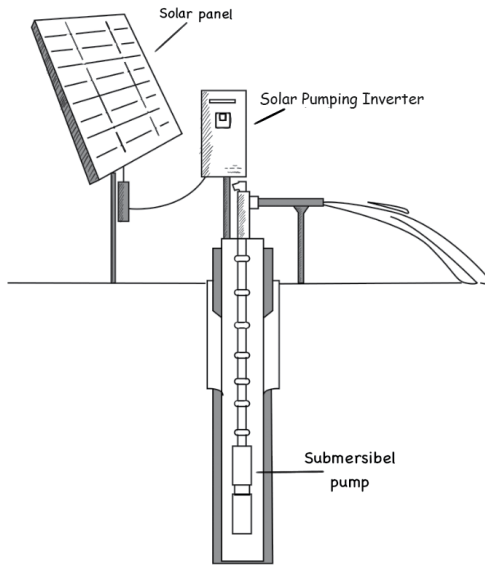


Figure 6. Construction of the SWPS system

Alfa Omega and Ocean Cozy Destination (OCD) Beach and Café Foundation helped residents develop community-based ecotourism in the coastal areas of Bokunusan, Uiboa, and Uiasa. Kupang Batanam supported residents to optimize their yards by holding practices and trainings that encourage residents to meet the needs of horticultural crops through an organic farming system, including re-cultivating local crops of black rice and yellow corn. Women's groups in Uiasa, Letbaun, Uiboa, Onansila, and Uitiuh Tuan villages were involved in this activity.

Dalen Mesa Organic Farmer Community, consisting of farmers living in Uitiuh Ana Village, introduced and encouraged its members to use organic fertilizers in farming. This community also attempted to re-cultivate sorghum, a source of carbohydrates for the people on Semau Island. Meanwhile, Tafena Tabua sought to

form a forum that has a role and is responsible for maintaining and caring for the environment and culture on Semaui Island.

In addition to coordinating with partners on Semaui Island, I also coordinated with four national partners carrying out their activities on this island.

LAWE Indonesia preserved weaving from Semaui Island by involving a group of women in Uiasa. Semaui Muda collaborated with Dalen Mesa community to produce and market sorghum, sorghum flour, and honey. The Center for Energy Studies at Gadjah Mada University strengthened institutional capacity for renewable energy in Onansila, Batuinan, and Uiasa villages. ICCA Indonesia Working Group raised the issue of community-based or local community-based conservation area protection.

PIKUL team also coordinated and communicated with Kaoem Telapak team and Process Institute in conducting monitoring and evaluation on Semaui Island. PO coordinated with partners to prepare the process in the field. Prior to coordinating, I had discussion with PIKUL team. I also carried out monitoring in the field to ensure activities were in accordance with reports submitted by partners, including assisting and providing alternative solutions when the partners faced unexpected obstacles.

The Semaui partners had committed to deliver activity and monthly reports on the 15th of each month, but it was not easy in actuality. This necessitated continuous communication with the partners. I was in charge of collecting activity and monthly reports from partners as a PO. It's no surprise that some of them felt "terrified" at the start of each month, but it was clearly "safe" for partners who were disciplined in providing reports on time.

I SALUTE AND RESPECT the partners and co-facilitators who helped farmers, women, and other communities in the field. Usually, I found intriguing and humorous stories regarding the preparation and implementation of the activities in the reports. The reports were sometimes hurriedly written, and they were frequently completed only before the deadline. It left me perplexed on many occasions. This is how one of the facilitators wrote his report.

"Then the facilitator returned to the house after discussing the plan for the distribution of sapling. On the way, it was raining and the facilitator took shelter in a shop in front of the church and met Mama Mince who was going to shop for cookies. While Mama Mince was shopping for

food to take to Medo, the name of a place outside Batuanan Village where people go to sea, she invited me. But because it's very far and the vehicles that Mama Mince used to get there were not sufficient, so I canceled my intention to follow Mama Mince, plus the weather wasn't good enough."

The report explained that after the facilitator discussed the plan for distributing the saplings, he walked back to the house. On the way, it was raining so the facilitator chose to take shelter in the stall in front of the church. While taking shelter, the facilitator met Mama Mince who wanted to buy a cake. While shopping, Mama Mince asked the facilitator to go with her to a location outside Batuanan Village called Medo,. Due to the remote location and the absence of vehicles and rain, the facilitator decided not to follow Mama Mince.

I learned something useful from these stories. It merely took some time to uncover a common thread and the aim of the facilitator's report.

The report from the Cemara Foundation regarding the distribution of clean water in Batuanan Village was also interesting. In Semaau, it had been women's responsibility to collect water for domestic needs. To get clean water, women had had to walk dozens to tens of kilometers; one to two hours of walk. The water taken had been also limited because the women had limited power to carry large volumes of water. After the installation of the SWPS to distribute water to the settlements was carried out by the Cemara Foundation team, the time to collect water was faster; only about ten to fifteen minutes. These changes were then seen by both men and children. This then changed the habits in the process of taking water.

The facilitator from Cemara Foundation wrote about the joy of the women after getting easy access to water. Here's the story:

"Previously women could only take at most four buckets of water, 2 in the morning, 2 in the afternoon. They were tired too. Sometimes they just took water in the morning or evening. Taking water took more than an hour; an hour and a half to two hours. Now it only took us ten to fifteen minutes. In the past it was only women who took the water, now it is also men and the children. In the past, when taking water, other jobs were left. Now, because they are close, we can do work together." Said a man in Batu inan Village.

The stories told by the biker gang members are also fascinating and relevant. According to the activity report, there were 25 people involved in the activity of making organic fertilizers. Some of the participants then made organic fertilizer by applying the knowledge gained through the training.

Those involved in the production and application of organic fertilizers offered their knowledge. Their remarks were included in the report. One of them is the following testimonial by the head of the Kok Baun Farmer's Group:

"We received an explanation about organic fertilizer from the motorcycle gang. It was explained that ordinary urea fertilizer depletes the soil vitamins. So we want to turn to organic fertilizer. Unfortunately we did not have the materials. No white flowers. Then in rainy season we started planting and the leaves started to grow. Organic fertilizer is useful because it reduces all costs since we can easily get raw materials. If we compare it with urea fertilizer, it is much different because urea fertilizer requires a large budget."

Residents in Semau praised the acts of motorcycle gang members as well as the work of other partners who provided training and support in the manufacture and usage of organic fertilizers. Although the partners were occasionally terrified when I requested monthly and field reports, the testimonies of residents about their work often made me pleased and proud.'"





Working behind the Desk

PIKUL staff assisted partner groups in compiling work reports and had “lost” the best staff.

By: Semau Consortium II

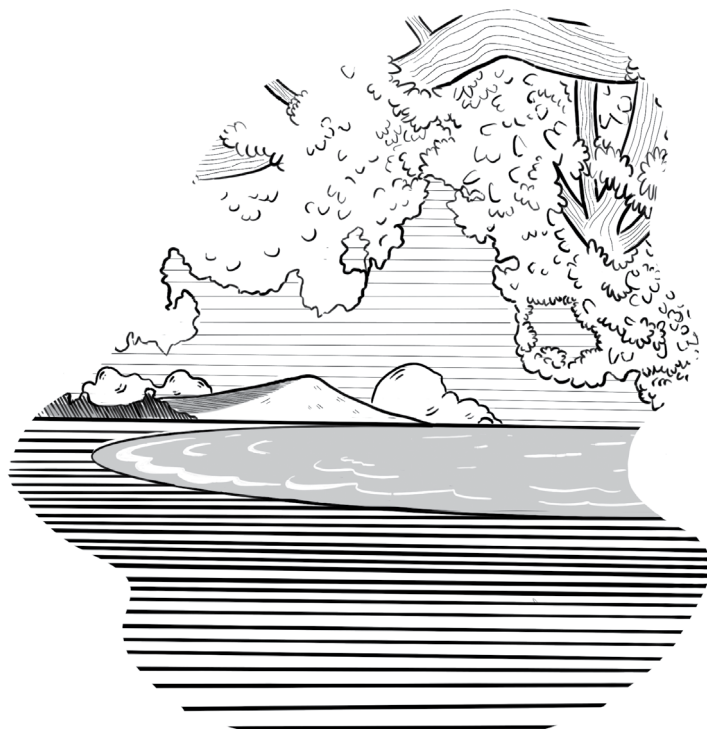
A LARGE passenger ship lined up at the port of Kupang. Passengers with bags, suitcases, and various luggage were waiting to depart. This port serves transportation to several islands around Kupang. That afternoon I brought a backpack containing various field equipment needs. Together with Megawati Liu, my colleague, we headed to Semau Island. The travel from the port of Kupang to the island was about 40 minutes. We rode our motorbikes to this port and it would be on board with us.

The wind was not particularly strong. The waves were calm enough to sail through, but they did periodically disturb the swaying ships. I gazed at Semau Island with its savanna bends while waiting for departure.

Looking at the island, I remembered what my mother had said. When I was a teenager, my mother always forbade me to go to Semau. This island was famous for mystery stories as “suanggi island”.

“It’s an island with black magic,” my mother said once. My heart was so sour.

Growing up, I finally ventured to visit Semau. In my first visit, I visited the beautiful Liman Beach. Brownish white sand lies on the coast. On a clear day, the sea looks blue. For lovers of beach tourism, this is one of the most popular locations. Photographs of travelers with the background of the beach, water foam, and the blue sea are quite a lot circulating on the internet. The image of a suanggi island or an island with black magic as my mother said disappeared.



Picture 7. One of the views of Liman Beach

The announcement from the port officials to prepare to sail to Semau made me rush to the ship. Before leaving, Mega and I had planned to go to several villages on Semau Island.

After 40 minutes of drifting in the sea, we arrived at Semau Island. The ship docked at the port located in Hansisi Village.

I returned to this beautiful island, but this time it's not just a trip to enjoy the beauty of Liman Beach. I came with a more important purpose and took on the task of the organization where I now work, PIKUL association.

THE FIRST week I worked at PIKUL, I attended a meeting with partners working on a program supported by Indonesia's Global Environment Facility-Small Grants Program (GEF-SGP) on Semau Island. These partners consisted of community groups, foundations, institutions or other institutions in Kupang City and Kupang Regency who participate in the selection of program proposals to the GEF-SGP Indonesia secretariat. The PIKUL Association acts as the coordinating agency for each partner organization. Partner institutions that were present at

the time included Kupang Batanam, the iMUT Motorcycle Gang, the Alfa Omega Foundation (YAO) and CIS Timor. The partners' program on Semau Island is ecological resilience while this network of partner organizations is often referred to as the Semau Consortium.

PIKUL is one of the institutions in Kupang City established in 1998. Since its establishment, PIKUL's work focus has been on efforts to strengthen community capacity for social issues related to renewable energy, water, and food topics. In the past, the working area covered the eastern part of Indonesia including the islands of Nusa Tenggara, Sulawesi and Papua. Today, PIKUL's work area is more focused on East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). Currently the position of director is held by Torry Kuswardono and I often call him *Om* (Uncle) Torry.

During the first two weeks of work, *Om* Torry assigned me to help Mega. During that time, I followed Mega to study the documents related to the program. Every day I worked on activity reports and regular monthly reports sent by partners, from September to November 2018. At first this task seemed simple; simply reading; but Mega gave me 52 bundles of activity report documents!



Figure 8. The atmosphere when examining stacked documents

I had to read the reports one by one carefully. Mistakes in filling out reports can have various effects. I also found a number of errors on some of the reports such as typos and misspellings. Incomplete filling and unstandardized reports were given to me by *Om* Torry.

Working behind the Desk

My job of checking reporting for programs with PIKUL partners fell under the Knowledge Management section. Not only checking, I also had to tidy up, summarize lessons learned, and report back to partner institutions.

Within a few weeks the number of partners increased, one of which was the Dalen Mesa farmer group in Uitiuh Ana Village. This farmer organization had no experience in managing activities to reporting. In addition to this farmer group, there were nine villages of partners' work areas on Semaui Island including villages of Uiasa, Hansisi, Letbaun, Uiboa, Bokunusan, Batuinan, Huilelot, Uitiuh Tuan, and Onansila. However, in our planned three-day visit, only two villages we visited.

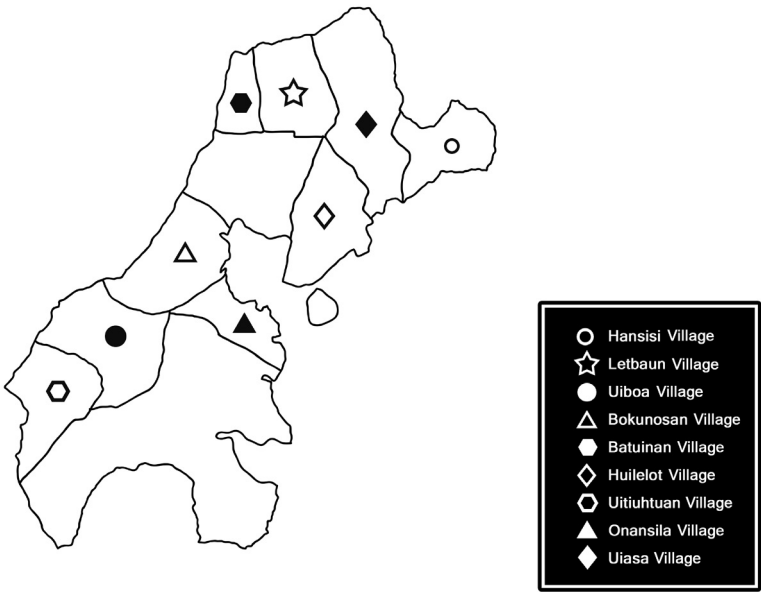


Figure 9. Map of Villages Receiving the Program

WHEN THE ship arrived at the port of Hansisi Village, I remembered the description of this village from one of the reports belonging to a local organization. The Hansisi village is described as a modern type community because it serves as the port of entry for ships arriving from Kupang City. I rode a motorcycle that had been dropped from the boat, and Mega was in the back seat. While passing through Hansisi, we passed the houses of nearby residents. Smooth paved roads. There are numerous stalls along the side of the road; true to the report's contents.

From Hansisi we immediately headed to Uiasa Village and Uitiuh Ana Village. Unlike Hansisi which is fairly dense, this village is deserted. Residents' houses had a large yard. The distance between the houses between residents is far apart and interspersed with gardens and fields.

Mega briefly explained the description of the people and culture in the villages we passed along the way but I couldn't fully remember the explanation. Some of the roads in these villages were rocky and potholed. I focused on controlling the handlebars of the bike to avoid those holes so we wouldn't get accident.

We only stopped briefly at Uiasa Village and then continued our journey to Uitiuh Ana Village. Here we met *Om Wempi* and *Om Asis*. Both were the administrators of the Dalen Mesa group and both were from Helong Tribe, the indigenous tribe and the majority tribe on Semaui Island.

"*Boa Blingin!*" two of them greeted us with the typical Helong greeting. *Boa Blingin* means greetings of peace.

"*Boa Blingin* too!" Mega returned the greeting cheerfully.

Dalen Mesa group, coordinated by *Om Wempi* and *Om Asis*, developed sorghum plants. This type of food plant is often found in the villages of Nusa Tenggara. For some people, this plant is more popularly known as "corn rote" or "high corn". In Flores, as written by Ahmad Arif in the book 'Sorghum, Ancestral Seeds for the Future (2020)', the origin of the seeds of the sorghum plant has been known for a long time by the public through the story of a figure named Tonu Wujo.

It is said that in a family with six boys and one girl, it was difficult to get seeds to plant in the fields during the rainy season. Tonu Wujo was the daughter of seven siblings who was finally willing to sacrifice herself to be slaughtered so that every part of her body becomes a seed. "I am a seed," she said. Then, the parts of his body were then planted in a number of corners of the field. A few days later, the body parts grew into various plant seeds. Some turned into corn, pumpkins and a variety of tubers. Another seed was sorghum.

Sorghum crop submerged in the New Order era. That time, food politics focused on efforts to develop rice farming. Through this policy, the government encouraged the opening of new rice fields outside Java. The large-scale project was carried out to islands that have different weather and low rainfall, including Nusa Tenggara. Various local foods no longer received the attention of local governments.

In the long term, this policy of uniformity in people's food had an impact on dependence on rice. Rice is the main food requirement. People in Nusa Tenggara, especially young people, no longer consumed and recognized sorghum.

In 2006, as reported by the news site tempointeraktif.com (now tempo.co), a food crisis occurred in NTT. The news was entitled "Nine Districts in NTT Serious Food Crisis". The most severe crisis threats were reported in three districts. A total of 5,563 families in Belu Regency, 6,680 families in Sikka Regency and 5,752 families in Lembata Regency had the potential to experience food insecurity.

Meanwhile, 6,847 households spread over five other districts of South Central Timor, North Central Timor, Ende, Ngada, Manggarai, and West Manggarai also experienced the same problem.

The prospect of a food crisis, according to Petrus Langoday, then-Head of the NTT Community Guidance and Food Security Agency, was triggered by the decrease of rice and corn supplies. People had depended on these two food-stuffs. The government assumed that other foodstuffs other than the two were not sources of proper and nutritious food. To overcome the food crisis, the local government needed more than 12,000 tons of rice for eight months of supply.

According to media reports, the food crisis in NTT resurfaced during the era of Joko Widodo presidency. Kompas.com online media, in January 2015 reported "Hundreds of Residents Eat Livestock Food". As reported, hundreds of residents in Kualin Subdistrict and South Amanuban Subdistrict, South Central Timor Regency, were forced to consume *putak*, the middle part of the *gewang* tree trunk. *Putak*, as this media wrote, is generally used by residents for animal feed. Hundreds of residents who eat this putak were scattered in seven villages.

This is different from a study published by PIKUL Association in 2013. Yurgen Nubatonis, one of the PIKUL research teams, stated that *gewang* tree trunk is part of the local community's food. In the research of the PIKUL team, apart from stems of *gewang*, there were five types of cereals, 11 types of tubers, 12 types of nuts and 7 types of stems/flowers/fruits belong to local foods in NTT include. This local food diversity has the potential as a source of food security in NTT.

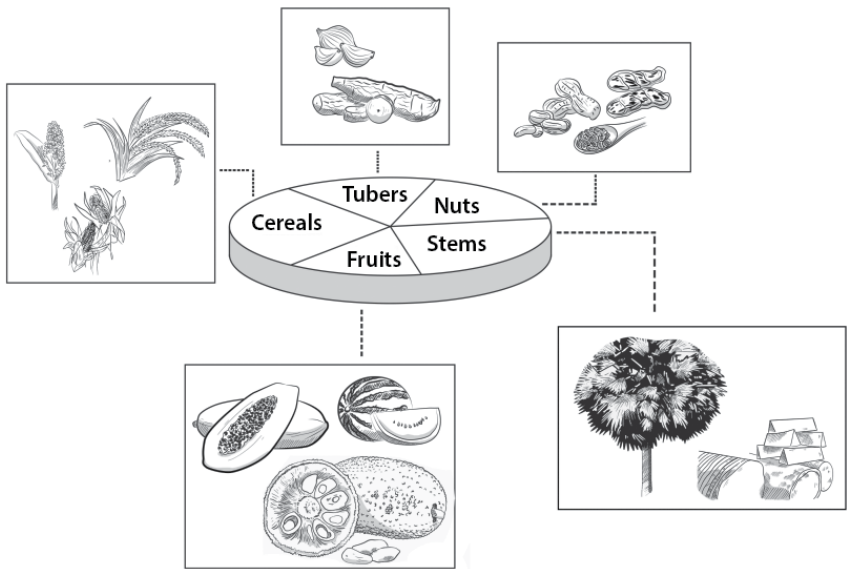


Figure 10. Diagram of Semaun local food based on PIKUL's research data

Instead of promoting food politics that strengthens local food sources, the central government in Jakarta promoted rice as the main food for the people to eastern Indonesia, also instant noodles which have become a new source of dependence.

Responding to the food crisis that occurred in NTT in January, according to *kompas.com*'s report, President Joko Widodo sent the Minister of Social Affairs, which was then held by Khofifah Indar Parawansa. Representing the government in Jakarta, she also brought 24 tons of rice, 800 boxes of instant noodles and other food aid packages.

While the central government's policy for a food focuses on rice crops, a number of initiatives were taken by NTT residents to reduce dependence on these foodstuffs. On the island of Flores, as written by Ahmad Arif in his book, Maria Loretha and Jeremias D. Letor people began to grow sorghum plants. Both of them were involved in activities that encourage residents to return to planting sorghum by conducting campaigns to accompanying farmers in a number of villages in Flores to cultivate various local sorghum seeds.

In contrast to rice which requires land with a stable water supply, sorghum can survive in soil that tends to be dry. This plant is able to adapt to the weather and a long dry season like in Nusa Tenggara. In several studies, sorghum seeds are recognized to have nutritional, fat, and carbohydrate content to good energy content. Due to the richness of these nutrients, sorghum is able to prevent cases of malnutrition that often occur in toddlers and children in parts of NTT.

The community also develops sorghum as a raw material for various snacks and drinks. Sorghum is now increasingly popular. Residents' lands for planting sorghum are increasing. Seeing the potential of sorghum, the local government has begun to look at this plant as a superior food in recent years. Not only as a local food ingredient, sorghum production has also begun to be traded outside the province

THE DEVELOPMENT of Sorghum Farming carried out by Dalen Mesa group in Uitiuh Ana Village has just begun. PIKUL Association assisted farmers so that the program could run as expected. Farmer group activities were monitored and reported to GEF-SGP Indonesia. Mega and I were in charge of helping to collect information and data about sorghum farming.

Working behind the Desk

Dalen Mesa is a farmer group that has been working together with the PIKUL Association since 2014. During the implementation of the 6th phase of the GEF-SGP Indonesia program, Dalen Mesa, which used to work together as a partner group in the community, is now a partner group that will facilitate five farmer groups, others in their village for organic farming and sorghum cultivation. The organic farming and sorghum crop development program has been ongoing since 2018. *Om Asis* was assigned to be the group leader whose job is to report the activities carried out by Dalen Mesa.

Unfortunately the telecommunications infrastructure in Uitiuh Ana Village is limited. Phone and internet access was very difficult to access. As a solution, PIKUL team helped enter the report data. As PIKUL program officer, Mega transferred the report written by *Om Asis* into the reporting system of GEF-SGP Indonesia secretariat.

That night we stayed at Uitiuh Ana Village. After having dinner with the family of *Om Wempi* and *Om Asis*, we continued to work. Mega, who had experience in assisting farmer groups and communities, explained the contents of the cooperation agreement between the PIKUL Foundation and Dalen Mesa group.

Mega also explained about the administration for reporting. They were not used to complex record keeping and administration. However, reporting is an important measuring tool and document in today's agricultural governance. I observed Mega's way of explaining a number of points that the farmers had to be patient with. She provided examples and descriptions that can help farmers understand how to fill out reports. They were good in the fields and in the garden, yet making report with tables, numbers, indices which is a skill that was not easy to master quickly. I noticed that Mega was suitable to be a teacher. Her ability to teach people how to fill in complex tables was very helpful.

In addition to the report, farmers were required to think about the sustainability of farmer organizations, build cooperation with community institutions and government agencies, and think about the benefits of developing sorghum farming on the ecosystem around the land. They also had to think about the sustainability of the production system, people's livelihoods, the development and use of energy-efficient and environmentally friendly technologies.

As an organization that oversees community groups and institutions carrying out activities in Semau, PIKUL has a reporting system. The report was filled out by the partners at the end of each activity in Semau. All reports were filled out using

the online Google Form application. Since the internet connection in Uitiuh Ana Village was very limited, Dalen Mesa group relied on the host's assistance to fill out reports.

"Mega, explain to me what to include in the report, okay? I don't really understand," said *Om Asis*.

However, it wasn't just the Dalen Mesa team that needed assistance with reporting. During the reporting period, other partners also required enough help. Partner facilitators completed reports that had previously been compiled offline in word processing software on their laptops at the beginning of the month. Before uploading to the system, the team leaders double-checked each report's content. There were numerous errors discovered. There were also excessively long narrations and misunderstandings about outcomes and indicators, in addition to typing problems.

For example, socialization activities in the topic of governance structure and network results were incorporated into the theme of landscape ecosystem services because they believed it aligned with their program's core theme of home gardens. Meanwhile, the outcomes of landscape ecosystem services should be included in training activities or other conservation practice activities.

Mega played an important responsibility. She made sure all partners filled out activity and monthly reports. I learned from her from downloading, observing report data, classifying data, coding data groups, to checking descriptions for summary of activity results. Activity and monthly reports were downloaded from online application and then accessed via the numerical processing software, Excel. After it was checked and corrected, the report was returned to partner institutions.

As a new staff member of the field monitoring team, I learned important lessons from Mega that night, particularly how to communicate with farmers with limited background knowledge and experience regarding reporting and administration activities.

Reporting system that utilizes computer technology, internet, word processing applications, numbers and so on is an important knowledge for some people. This system facilitates and speeds up communication and coordination, especially in an era where the internet and computers have become technologies that dominate activities in offices and community organizations. However, low digital literacy skill and information technology limitation in a number of areas, such as in Semau made the process of activities ran slowly.

A MESSAGE came to my device one morning in early February 2019. It was a message from *Kak* (elder females) Lenny, the coordinator of Kupang Batanam: "Hello, how to read and check all of these tables?"

Kupang Batanam is an organization based in Kupang. This institution focuses on supporting organic farming practices in people's yards. This is one of Semau Consortium.

I immediately replied to the message; explaining how to use Excel via WhatsApp, which in my opinion, would be confusing.

"I'll explain it by phone, okay? It's a bit difficult to explain it through typed messages."

Lenny agreed. She then immediately contacted me back via phone.

"Hello. Look at the cell at the top of the file window that is already open. Click and then block the entire first row, then select the filter icon in the upper corner of the processor. There's a down arrow in every cell, right?"

Through telephone communication, I tried to give an explanation about the preparation of tables in the Excel software on laptop to Lenny.

"Click there. Then choose the points you want to read according to your needs, *Kak*. The page next to the file has an index section, right? The page has a pivot, it can be seen the number of activities, the number of participants, the number of activity categories and others as well as the number of seeds, trees, or hectares of activity achievements according to the outcomes and indicators. How's it going, sis?" I try to help. But this is not easy. I can't directly observe the process that *Kak* Lenny is doing.

"Oh, I see. I'll study it again later. If I have time I'll go to the office, so you can explain to me again," she said on the other side of the phone.

Whether she understood or not, I just prayed that the explanation over the phone did not add to her confusion. I remember how Mega guided and assisted the management of partner organizations in compiling and making reports presented in tabular form, with columns and rows to fill in. Not only by telephone, I had seen Mega received the same questions again and again when the management of the partner institutions came to the PIKUL office.

MEGA ARRIVED at work as usual one beautiful morning in the middle of the year. Outside, the wind blew gently, but inside, every office space's fan was turned on. Mega informed us of the situation the next morning.

"I was accepted as a candidate for ASN (State Civil Apparatus) in Kupang Regency," she told us. For me and a number of colleagues in the office at that time, this was a shocking news, as well as encouraging one. She had more important tasks.

"As an elementary school teacher," she continued.

Mega had a bachelor's educational background in Teacher Education and Educational Sciences. After a year joining the 6th phase of the GEF-SGP Indonesia team on Semaui Island, Mega's parents suggested her to take the test as an ASN. This is a common practice for parents, including my parents who live in the city of Kupang with the majority of ASN working in state-owned institutions or government institutions.

We were happy for Mega's achievements, but we also had to prepare for the interview process and the selection of a new project officer to replace him.

At the office, we held a farewell for Mega. However, many PIKUL partners in the field did not know about this. Some still remembered Mega. She was so imprinted in the memories of the partners' representatives and most of the villagers in Semaui. She was lively, happy to help and was smooth in speech. It was easy for the village women to fall in love with her. They even wanted to adopt her as a child.

About a month after the farewell, I took over Mega's job to remind partners to submit monthly report. Once I received a WhatsApp message from one of the partners.

"Mega, I need the link for the activity and monthly reports. The link was accidentally deleted from my smartphone," the message written..

The message was from *Om Asis*, the administrator of Dalen Mesa on Semaui Island, which Mega and I once visited. I immediately replied the message.

"Om Asis, I'm Ani, not Mega. Here is the link, okay," I wrote briefly.

It was not easy to replace Mega. But the wheels of organization had to keep turning. *Om Torry* immediately decided to appoint someone to carry out Mega's responsibilities

Working behind the Desk

and functions as a project officer. After going through a selection process and interviews with other managers at PIKUL, Adriana was selected. I call her *Kak Ad*. She is an alumnus of a postgraduate program from an institute in Bogor, West Java.

Kak Ad had previously joined PIKUL as a volunteer in the land food team activities when Mega was a project officer. Since then, all of the activity documentation and administrative files that Mega had collected during her work was handed over to *Kak Ad* as the new project officer for this small island team. PIKUL's work to complete the program supported by GEF-SGP Indonesia yet to be completed.***





Bagai in Mantigola Village

Bajo fishermen in the floating village of Mantigola are often ostracized. They find it difficult to accept the presence of outsiders.

Author: Edi Harto, FORKANI

LA MAKIKI, that's how he was familiarly addressed by the residents. He was a fisherman living in a Bajo tribal village in Mantigola Village, Kaledupa District. The sea is the source of life for him and the Bajo people in this village. The marine wealth in the Wakatobi island group, short for Wangiwangi Island, Kaledupa Island, Tomia Island, and Binongko Island has supported Bajo people from generation to generation, including La Makiki and his family.

Mantigola village where La Maliki and his family lived is right above a seagrass meadow on the west side of Kaledupa Island. This village is under the administration of Kaledupa District, Wakatobi Regency. Inhabited by more than 400 families, all of the residents are Bajo Tribe and fishermen. Some people know them more as Bajau, while mainlanders in Kaledupa call them Wadu. This village is separated from the mainland of Mantigola Village and from a distance looks like a floating village.

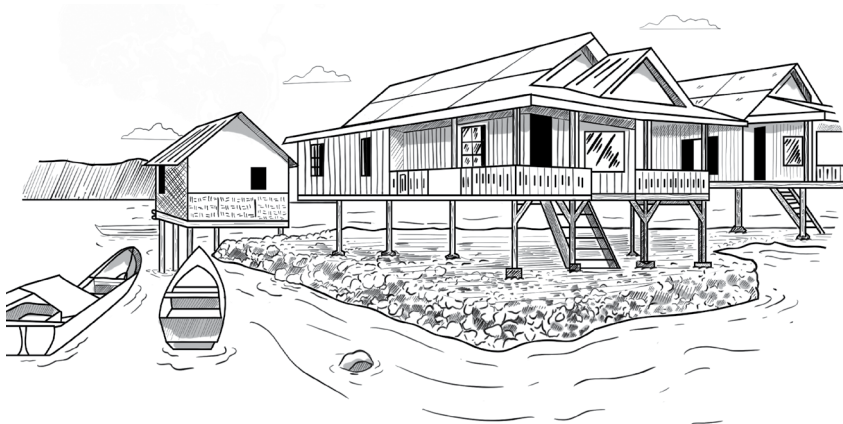


Figure 11. Bajo Tribe House

Bagai in Mantigola Village

Some people's houses were built on piles of rocks taken by the Bajo Tribe at low tide or *meti*. These rocks are then piled up as a foundation with a height of between two and four meters from the seabed. The height of the foundation, which is similar to a stone wall, is designed to exceed the highest tide limit for sea water. This is to prevent tidal puddles from entering the house.

Coral has recently been used by the Bajo community as a foundation. Previously, several other residents' houses were built using piles of mangrove wood. Mangrove wood is resistant to salty seawater when plunged into the seabed. This house on stilts with sticks is the initial model of the Bajo tribal house after settlement. In the past, Bajo people lived in *soppe* or *bangka*, the term for a large boat. Historically, Bajo people have been known as "boat people" and were used to living a nomadic life. The concept of houses and settlements has just recently been introduced to them.

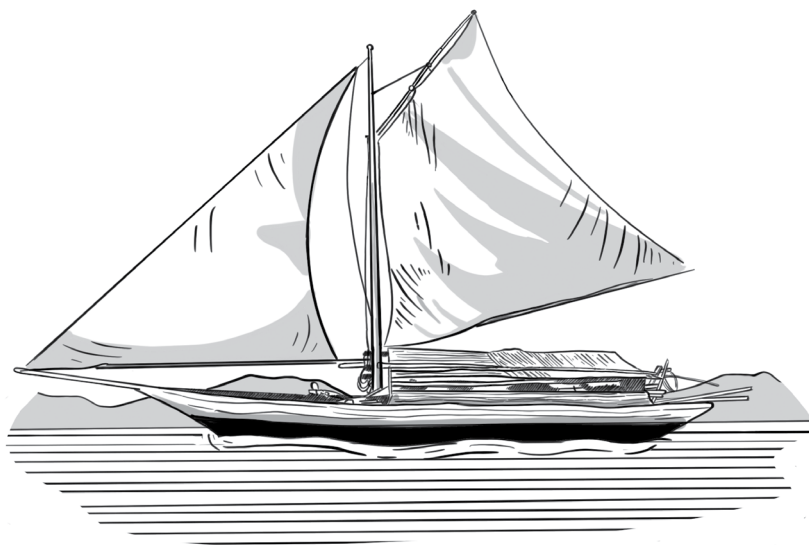


Figure 12. The big boat of the Bajo suku tribe house

Bajo traditions and culture ran through La Makiki's family. He was one of the Bajo residents with a broad vision of education. He attended college yet he did not complete it. He aspired that Bajo people can be more advanced because many mainland residents on Kaledupa Island despised them in Mantigola. The mainlanders even mocked them with the expression of *wadu ma'madahani*, which means "the know-it-all Bajo".

According to Tasrifin Tahara, an academic at Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Bajo people are also often labeled as "pirates". In his text entitled "The Awakening of the Identity of Bajo People in the Wakatobi Islands" published in the Indonesian Anthropology journal, University of Indonesia, 2013, this stereotype had a negative impact on the Bajo community, including those who lived in Mantigola. Even though they are popularly known as the mighty in the sea, Bajo people often felt inferior when interacting with the mainlanders. According to Tasrifin, Bajo people were also often neglected in development processes.

According to La Makiki, Bajo community frequently received different treatment from the village government on the mainland. He and a number of Bajo residents in Mantigola, in the 2000s, were key figures in the division of the region so that Mantigola became an independent village area. His efforts and ideas to form Mantigola Village separate from Horuo Village received threats from figures on the mainland of the island.

This did not dampen La Makiki's intentions. He and a number of Bajo figures in Mantigola continued to fight for Mantigola to be truly independent, organizing themselves in one village for their community. He believed that mainlanders will never succeed in building a Bajo tribal community because of the stereotype that Bajo people do not have the ability to organize and manage villages. On the other hand, Bajo people think that mainland people do not understand the culture and customs of the Bajo community.

In addition to fighting for village expansion, La Makiki was involved in education in Mantigola. He encouraged younger generation to carry out spiritual development and to initiate a place for Koranic education at the mosque in the floating village.

The formation of Mantigola Village was finally granted. But that was just the beginning of the struggle. Governance, structure formation, preparation of village administration, financial management, and village development planning are uneasy long-term tasks

I GREETED La Makiki as *Pak* (Mr/elder male) Bahrin. He was a friend to exchange ideas and a source of knowledge for me to explore and understand the culture to the problems experienced by the Bajo community in Mantigola. Representing *Forum Kahedupa Taudani (Forkani)*, an organization in Kaledupa, Dita and I, my colleague, were assigned to assist the Bajo community in Mantigola.

Bagai in Mantigola Village

From *Pak Bahrin*, Dita and I understood that changing the lives of the Bajo people was not easy. Changing the culture and habits of nomadic life as "boat people" into fishermen who settle and inhabit only one place is a process that requires time, communication, support, and the involvement of many parties. The construction of access roads for education, health and fish trade services is important.

The first important infrastructure development was the bridge. This connects Mantigola Village with sub-district towns on the mainland. The construction of the bridge was funded by the local government.

Once in a bad season and high tide, the bridge was broken by the waves. To reach the mainland, the residents were accustomed to using boats or wooden canoes with engines "attached" to the tail. Not only parents, children in this village were adept at driving boats with outboard engines when they go looking for fish, octopus, crabs, sea shells or crabs in the mangrove area on the coast of the island.

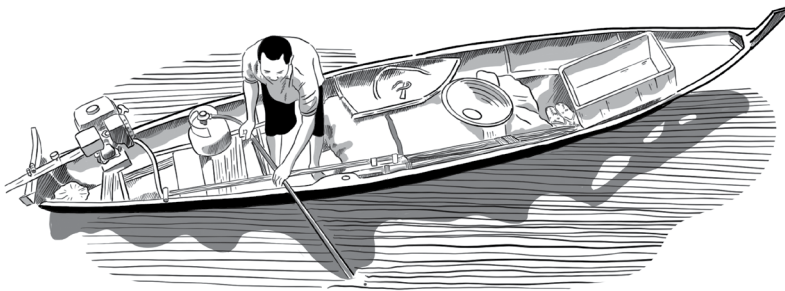


Figure 13. Wooden Canoe with outboard engine

Bajo Mantigola community is a tough fishermen and sailors. As fishermen, they understand the technique of finding fish, octopus, and other marine products very well. However, their knowledge about the use of natural resources on land is very limited. Bajo people in Mantigola who can access resources on land are usually only people who have emotional or kinship relations with mainland people, residents of Kaledupa Island.

The formation of the village government structure is followed by structuring and establishing policies that regulate citizens. Bajo fishing community must also follow the rules for managing marine resources and coastal areas. Regulations on fishing and the use of coral reefs for the construction of houses and mangroves for

household energy needs have been enacted. This could even trigger tension and opposition from Bajo residents.

One of the tensions occurred after the marine area in Wakatobi was declared a National Park. The policy to protect biodiversity has an impact on the Bajo people who usually uses marine resources. Through this stipulation, the community is prohibited from cutting down mangrove trees even for their fuel. Fishing methods that damage ecosystems and are harmful to coral reefs and fishermen are also prohibited and some types of fish are not allowed to be caught. As fishermen who depend on the sea, these policies make it difficult for the people of Bajo.

Dita and I conveyed information from *Pak* Bahrun regarding the challenges and difficulties of Bajo people to Forkani. The secretariat of the institution is located on the mainland, in the middle of the city of Kaledupa District. Dita and I used to go back and forth to Mantigola, crossing the water in a canoe with an outboard engine, gathering information and people's aspiration. It turned out that this process was also not easy. Bajo people in Mantigola have a different language from those on the mainland. My arrival and Dita as outsiders, outside Bajo community, was not easily accepted by the people in Mantigola.

IN 2018, Forkani organization was appointed as one of the local partners who received support from the Global Environment Facility-Small Grants Program (GEF-SGP) Indonesia to run programs related to nature and environmental conservation efforts based on local wisdom in the community. Previously, Forkani had run programs with similar themes through collaboration and support from a number of national and international institutions, including the World Wild Fund (WWF). The latest program was located in Mantigola Village. The program was carried out for about two years, until 2020.

Before the mentoring program for Bajo community in Mantigola Village was approved by GEF-SGP Indonesia, GEF-SGP Indonesia strategy and steering team came to directly monitor Mantigola. The agency team asked Forkani to develop a proposal for a more complete mentoring program and more specific targets.

La Beloro, the head of Forkani immediately assigned Dita and I to the core team in assisting Bajo community. That time Dita had just graduated from a university in Kendari, Southeast Sulawesi. Previously, she was involved as a member who helped Forkani activities.

Bagai in Mantigola Village

Dita was enthusiastic about her new assignment even though she did not fully understand the terrain and character of the community that Forkani would be accompanying this time. In college, Dita read some books about community organizing and being involved in student organizations and activities. She admitted that the opportunity to learn with the community was the only reason she wanted to go directly to the community. Unfortunately she did not master the Bajo language.

The issue of protecting marine and coastal resources was the focus of our activities in Mantigola village. The target at the end of the program was a policy initiated and agreed upon by the community regarding joint marine protected areas for the community.

In Mantigola, Forkani worked closely with Mantigola figures, one of whom is La Tao. He was a teacher at a private *madrassa* (Islamic school) in Mantigola Village. He also served as the Chairman of the Mantigola Fisherman Business Cooperative (KUN). There were no sophisticated electronic devices either in schools or cooperatives office. La Tao had no computer skills. This is a small obstacle that sometimes made the process of preparing proposals and activity reports difficult.

Dita and I greeted him as *Pak* La Tao. We involved him in the preparation of program proposals to be sent to GEF-SGP Indonesia. We asked a lot of questions and had discussion. The process of preparing the proposal is based on information and problems extraction in Mantigola. The process to fix up the proposal and sending it back to GEF-SGP Indonesia secretariat was quite long, even we had to edit it three times.

The proposal returned by the Secretariat of GEF-SGP Indonesia became the joint task of Dita, *Pak* La Tao, and me to fix. After receiving the revised proposal, the mentoring program for the Bajo community began to run.

THE MARINE fish crisis began to haunt fishermen in Wakatobi in 2010. The number of fish caught by fishermen in these island and Kaledupa Island decreased. The crisis of fish caught by fishermen continued until 2015. A field research conducted by Forkani team found that fishing methods using traditional tools were considered to threaten the availability and population of fish. Some fishermen used a fishing gear called *sero*, which was also used by some Bajo fishermen. If the practice was overused, the fish crisis will continue to repeat itself.



Figure 14. Sero / Bala (Traditional Fishing Equipment for Bajo Residents)

The use of *sero* by fishermen was carried out in bottom waters. *Sero* is a circular net with a large diameter with a size of about ten meters. This tool is installed at a depth of four meters and supported by wooden poles between 6 to 7 meters long. The installation is usually done in the area of crossing the movement or migration of fish. The skilled Bajo fishermen have the knowledge in determining the location for the installation of this fishing gear.

However, the use of *sero* was not the main cause of fish scarcity. It was one way for fishermen to survive and get fish in the midst of competition with large fishing vessels. Large-scale fishing carried out by large vessels from outside the

Bagai in Mantigola Village

catchment area in Wakatobi was also the sources of the problem. Some of these large ships came from outside the area equipped with sophisticated fishing gear.

The arrival of the ships was part of the chain of consumption of fish and marine products. The demand for fish and marine products in national and international trade has been increasing. The consumption of processed foods sourced from the sea in a number of Asian countries is also increasing. From hotels, restaurants to households, seafood menus are increasingly popular. This has an impact on fishermen. At sea, competition in fishing between outside fishermen with large boats and local fishermen is inevitable.

The fish crisis was also triggered by other factors that also occurred in a number of regions in Indonesia. In its 2013 report, the organization of Greenpeace International revealed that climate change had an impact on marine ecosystems in Indonesia. Mining activities to sedimentation change reefs and contributed to the destruction of coral reefs where fish breed. Recently, the conversion of mangrove areas into tourist attractions, resort buildings, and hotels has also threatened marine ecosystems in Indonesia, including in the waters of the Wakatobi archipelago.

BAGAI IS a term for people outside Bajo Tribe community on Kaledupa Island. The term "*Si Bagai*" or "*Bagai Darat*" is addressed to everyone who comes to the Bajo community. The arrival of me and Dita to Mantigola earned us this nickname. Bajo people is not open to residents from outside the village. In the process of implementing the mentoring program, community closure can have bad consequences. The time set to reach the target at least will be delayed.

From the results of discussions with several figures, we got an idea about the closedness of these residents. Some residents were traumatized by a dark history that occurred more than 70 years ago. Shortly after Indonesia's independence was declared in Jakarta, in the 1950s, a number of upheavals and conflicts occurred in a number of areas. That time, mainlanders accused the Bajo Tribe community of being involved and supporting a rebel gang affiliated with *Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia* (DI/TII) based in South Sulawesi. Bajo community in Mantigola was then ostracized. The experience of conflict with the mainlanders left a lasting impression. Bajo Mantigola people then closed themselves from Kaledupa mainlanders.

When Dita and I visited floating houses owned by residents in Mantigola, we felt this closedness. People mostly avoided us. They were also reluctant to provide information and tend to be wary of outsiders. Moreover, Dita and I were from the mainland of Kaledupa Island.

During the first three months we mingled with the community, Dita and I went back and forth to Mantigola, crossing in a canoe with an outboard engine. We strived to build public trust in Mantigola. We talked to teenagers and children but this was also not easy. We did not speak Bajo language. On the other hand, not many Bajo residents understood the language used by mainland islanders.

We chose to use Indonesian. Unfortunately, many children in Mantigola were not fluent in Indonesian. Some of them did understand Indonesian but lack confidence in speaking. We also needed time to learn Bajo.

Whenever coming Mantigola, Dita's appearance often attracted people's attention. She usually wore a shirt. Sometimes to protect her eyes she wore sunglasses. The backpack was sticky on her back. She also brought a camera to take pictures of the daily life of the fishermen and Bajo residents. Dita looked more like a tourist rather than a community facilitator. This appearance, she realized later, had distanced herself from the fishermen in Mantigola, more so from the women in the village.

Instead, I tried to blend in with a simple and unobtrusive appearance. I played with the children and talked to the youth. This was also an approach to their parents.

Dita, who began to realize the problem with her approach, slowly changed it. From previously not used to sitting hanging out with mothers now she learned the patience to hear complaints, stories, and gossip from women, she no longer wore a shirt, except in meetings held at the village office.

Some residents began to accept our presence so that we began to be allowed to stay overnight. In a week, two to three days we followed all the daily activities carried out by fishermen to women in Mantigola. From there, we explained the purpose of our visit and the program plan to strengthen fishermen's cooperatives in Mantigola.

PAK BAHRUN helped us with our work. That was after we failed in choosing a person who could be trusted and worked as a facilitator in Mantigola Village. The facilitator from the village we appointed later turned out not to be doing the job well. This made Dita depressed considering the limited time for implementing the program. In a number of meetings and discussions, the facilitator often asked about attendance fees or money to buy cigarettes. This was followed by other residents who were invited to attend the meeting.

Bagai in Mantigola Village

As local facilitator, *Pak* Bahrun was a refreshing change of pace for us. The meetings with fishermen to discuss cooperative institutions and fishing methods to the creation and agreement of fishing areas started to take place. We started to share our duties in carrying out activities in Mantigola.

Dita focused on the administration when the proposal was finished, but she continued to plan activities for the mothers and children organization. Fisherman households in Mantigola generally used firewood to meet their needs in the kitchen. In addition, the nutritional needs of the family are generally low in vegetables. This was part of Dita's job.

Pak Bahrun and *Pak* La Tao worked in organizing activities involving male fishermen. When preparations for the next day's activities were not complete, I often spent the night in Mantigola, exchanging thoughts and experiences with *Pak* Bahrun at his house until late at night. While enjoying bitter black coffee and a gust of wind that carries the smell of sea salt, we also discussed plans to promote village fishermen.

The process of gathering knowledge in Mantigola did not always run smoothly. The difficulties we experienced were mainly in identifying the catches of octopus and sea cucumbers. Accessing catch data from collectors was very difficult, while they never counted or recorded their catch. They usually sold their catch of octopus and sea cucumbers to collectors who Bajo residents called "coordinators". When we tried to ask the "coordinator" for information about the number of sales of octopus and sea cucumber catches, he refused to provide the record. The reason was that his notebook contained more of a record of purchases and debts of fishermen.

In Mantigola, many fishermen still practiced debt. Although sometimes it helped them in getting money quickly, this economic system often suffocated them. Here, a coordinator acted as a creditor.

Coordinators are generally fishermen who have big capital and has 10 to 30 more members. Assisted by his members, the coordinator usually gave loans to fishermen during bad seasons. In the fishing cycle, the fishing season does not last all year round. During the season of strong winds and high waves, fishermen does not go down to the sea. In this season, the coordinator made loans to fishermen. However, the coordinator would ask for guarantees from fishermen. During the fishing season, fishermen who are in debt are required to sell all their catch to the coordinator. Debt offers usually target young fishermen and new heads of families who are still dependent in managing finances.

This debt chain is still ongoing today. Furthermore, this pattern of relationship is used by the coordinator to influence fishermen in political processes and decisions. In political season, the coordinator is also often a successful team. The fishermen who are in debt, in a number of political celebrations are mobilized by the coordinator to choose one of the competing candidates.

PAK BAHRUN'S house became our place to stay. I talked with Pak Bahrún late into the night, accompanied by bitter black coffee, about the challenges of the fishermen in the floating village of Mantigola, as I had done on prior occasions. I discovered about the biased news about my close friendship with Dita among the major themes of discourse regarding the problems and difficulties of fisherman.

Through *Pak* Bahrún's story, there were residents who thought that we were a couple who had a love affair. This rumor grew among several Mantigola Village locals who knew Dita and I frequently stayed at Pak Bahrún's house, a Koran instructor who was trusted by the residents as a marriage administrator. We were rumored to be an elopement couple. *Pak* Bahrún conveyed this gossip to us. The coffee I was drinking became even more bitter.

Dita and I ignored the gossip about our whereabouts and our arrival in Mantigola. We were merely involved in organizing the fishermen, men and women.

Day after day, we were busy documenting the knowledge of the fishing community of Bajo Mantigola and recording the fishing gear commonly used by fishermen. We also took pictures of various reef fish, octopuses, and sea cucumbers.

We observed how Bajo fishermen taught their children to look for materials and made fishing gear to look for various fish in the sea, not in special classrooms. They often took their children with them to sea.

The process of assisting fishermen in Mantigola was not easy. In between activities with parents or in my spare time, I swam in the sea several times with Bajo children of elementary school age. They learned breathing techniques in the water while playing in the sea. On average they were able to dive for a dozen seconds. The ability to dive in the deep sea is very important for these prospective fishermen. ***



From Saritani to the South Tamaila

Farmers in two Boalemo villages were struggling to increase their harvests amid the pandemic.

Author: Bambang Mamangkay, Natural Resources Advocacy Network/JAPESDA

THAT AFTERNOON, April 17, 2020, the Natural Resources Advocacy Network (JAPESDA) held an online meeting with several institutions in Gorontalo. JAPESDA is the organizer of meetings between institutions that are partners in the 6th phase of the Global Environment facility-Small Grants Program (GEF-SGP) Indonesia program. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Agrarian Institute, Woman Institute for Research and Empowerment of Gorontalo (Wire-G), and Center for Coastal Ecology Studies Based on Local Wisdom (PKEPKL). Representatives from North Tamaila Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes). Marsudi Lestantun were unable to attend due to internet network problems.

The monthly meeting of SGP Indonesia partners had been held since January to discuss the development of each institution's program. Most of the meeting participants revealed that program activities had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 outbreak, especially ones inviting and gathering residents.

After the meeting, Ahmad Bahsoan, whom I called *Pak Mat*, JAPESDA Program Manager called me. Before *Pak Mat*, the position of program manager at JAPESDA was held by Sugeng Sutrisno. By telephone, *Pak Mat* ordered me to make an application for field trip funds to the financial department of the institution. We would go to several villages to meet community members assisted by JAPESDA.

"*Inshaallah* we will leave in the morning from the B. J. Habibie roundabout," he added via telephone.

I did as he requested.

From Saritani to the South Tamaila

JAPESDA WAS ESTABLISHED on June 5, 2001 in Gorontalo. The founders of this non-profit organization were activists who cared about environmental governance and community welfare. The establishment was inseparable from the political changes after the 1998 Reformation. A year after the fall of President Soeharto, the government issued the Regional Autonomy Law No. 22/1999. This law provided greater authority to local governments in managing their territories. This authority was included in the management of natural resource wealth. A year later, in early December 2000, the Gorontalo Province was formed, overseeing five regencies and one city. This new province is a division of North Sulawesi Province.

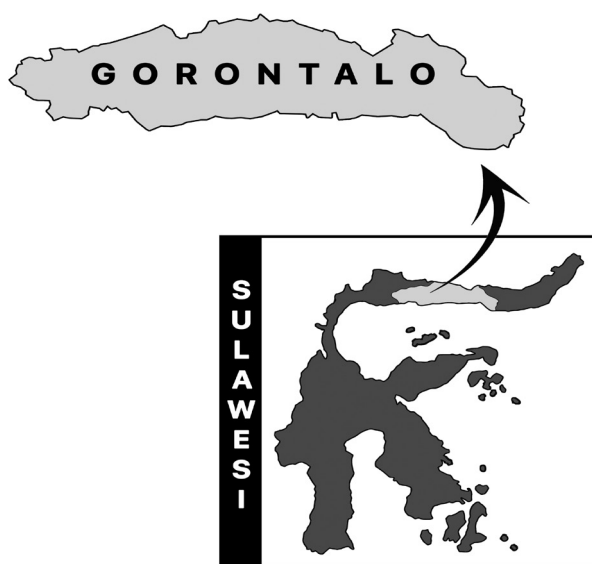


Figure 15. Map of Provincial Expansion

The politics of decentralization can harm the community if local governance is not supervised. Bad practices of natural resource management that occurred during Suharto's reign can be repeated in the regions. Therefore, the founders of JAPESDA agreed to encourage good natural resource management in the Gorontalo area. Good natural management and involving residents will encourage community welfare.

Since its establishment, this organization has tried to get the community involved in natural resource management. Gorontalo is one of the areas with great natural wealth, especially agricultural and plantation products. JAPESDA develops a data and information center on natural resource management to provide assistance and training to improve community welfare.

From Saritani to the South Tamaila

In 2018, JAPESDA received support from GEF-SGP, an international institution that provides funding to encourage community-initiated sustainable and environmentally friendly development in a number of countries, including Indonesia.

The community assisted by JAPESDA is in North Tamaila Village with partners from North Tamaila Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes), and Transmigration Settlement Unit - Settlement Unit 3 UPT-SP3/Saritani Village with partner Marsudi Lestantun and his group members.

MONDAY, April 20, 2020. I rode a motorbike to the B.J. Habibie Roundabout. That morning *Pak Mat* and I agreed to meet on one side of the roundabout that leads to Gorontalo's Jalaluddin Airport. This was the starting point of our planned field trip to visit JAPESDA partners by motorbike.

"We should go to the farthest village first," I suggested to *Pak Mat* before leaving. The skinny, dark-skinned man agreed.

The farthest assisted village was Transmigration Settlement Unit - Settlement Unit 3 (UPT SP3)/Saritani Village. This village is located in Wonosari District, Boalemo Regency. From B.J. Habibie roundabout, it is 150 kilometers in distance by passing the paved road. Entering the village of Saritani the road began to break down, rocky and uphill. We also had to cross some broken bridges to cross the river.

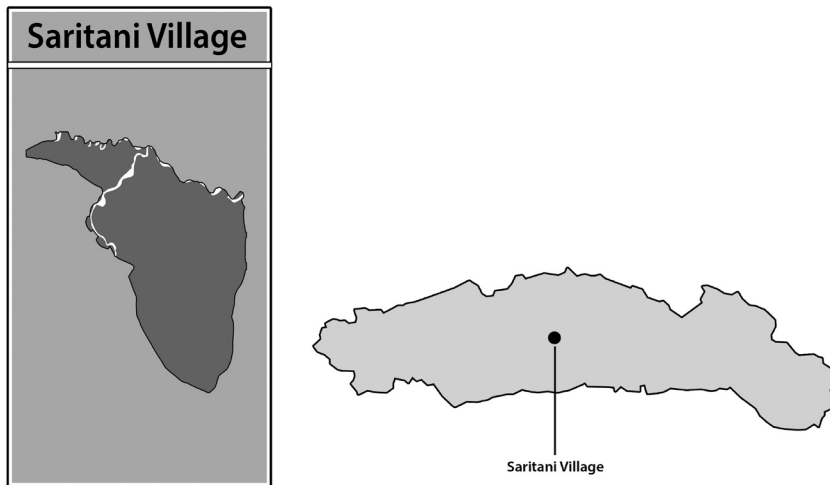


Figure 16. Saritani Village Map

From Saritani to the South Tamaila

Several police officers guarded the border between districts and villages during our journey. The surveillance was conducted after the Covid-19 outbreak infected some Gorontalo inhabitants. The traffic of residents to and from the village is not as free as it was before the epidemic. In addition to campaigning and encouraging new healthy habits such as washing hands, wearing masks, and maintaining social distance, local governments make policies that reduce the flow of citizens' mobility. In Saritani Village, I saw large gallons of water for washing hands in front of residents' houses.

UPT-SP3/Saritani Village was inhabited by about 425 people. This area is surrounded by forest. To the north it is bordered by the Nantu River Protection Forest, to the south by the Limited Production Forest, UPT Pangea and the SP1 Tamilo area. The land area of this village is approximately 673 hectares. Of that area, agricultural land is about 231.25 hectares. The forest area around this area supports the availability of water, air humidity, and soil fertility needed for community farming.

Most of the inhabitants of this area are transmigrants who come from outside the island of Sulawesi. Historically, the policy of population relocation has been carried out since the Old Order era and continued by the New Order government until now. In Gorontalo, the transmigration program has been initiated since the 1950s through a government agency, the Transmigration Bureau. That time, residents who participated in the transmigration program came from Central Java, East Java, and West Java. Some names of the places inhabited by transmigrants were taken from the places of origin of the transmigrants. The general objective of this policy is to promote prosperity and economic equality due to the population explosion, especially in Java and Bali. However, in practice it shows a link with the efforts of the central government in overcoming political conflicts in the regions.

At UPT-SP3/Village Saritani, we met several transmigrant farmers who were also JAPESDA partners. *Pak* Mat and I met Vial Gruvi Bulyanto. He was 29 years old and came from Yogyakarta. Together with Marsudi Lestantun, Vial and the transmigrant farmers here were our institutional partners. According to Vial, the COVID-19 outbreak had an impact on the activities of farmers. Several plans and agendas for farmers' meetings had to be postponed and some were even forced to be cancelled.

We assisted farmers to encourage economic development programs through marketing of agricultural products. In addition to growing various food crops,

they also grew coconut, coffee, cocoa, cloves, cashews, vegetables, and chilies. But farmers often faced problems from marketing to sales. Prices of agricultural products also often changed. Sometimes prices were high but then dropped when the supply in the market was abundant. As a result, farmers often lost money.

The long-running pandemic was even more detrimental to farmers. The problem was more complex due to the central government's economic recovery policies that often changed and did not answer the problems faced by farmers in the regions.

We immediately held a meeting at Vial's house by inviting several residents. *Pak Mat* encouraged farmers to continue to carry out economic development activities without gathering residents.

"If it's possible, do the door-to-door or individual meeting at home way," *Pak Mat* said.

During the brief meeting, we also formulated a plan to purchase tools to assist the development of processed agricultural products. Important meeting notes were listed on the board. This included a plan to purchase an oven, a large skillet, double-sided stove, an oil filter, a large skillet, a cheese grater, a flour mill and a jar. Women were important actors in this plan.

"Actually this is what we expected," said Vial, relieved.

"There is a solution for program disruption," he added.

It was raining heavily when we were about to leave Vial's house, but *Pak Mat* and I were not done with our mission yet. We headed to North Tamaila village.

DAY CHANGED to twilight. All the way to North Tamaila Village, it rained. The road was slick and muddy. We drove past a road that was being repaired and over a newly built bridge.

The rain had rendered the bridge's pavement slick. *Pak Mat*'s motorcycle's back wheel suddenly slid. He and his motorcycle both ended up in the river. I immediately sought assistance in lifting his motorcycle, which had been stuck in the mud. *Pak Mat*'s motorcycle was successfully lifted out of the river with the assistance of locals. We were resolved to continue our quest despite the fact that it was a bit perilous.

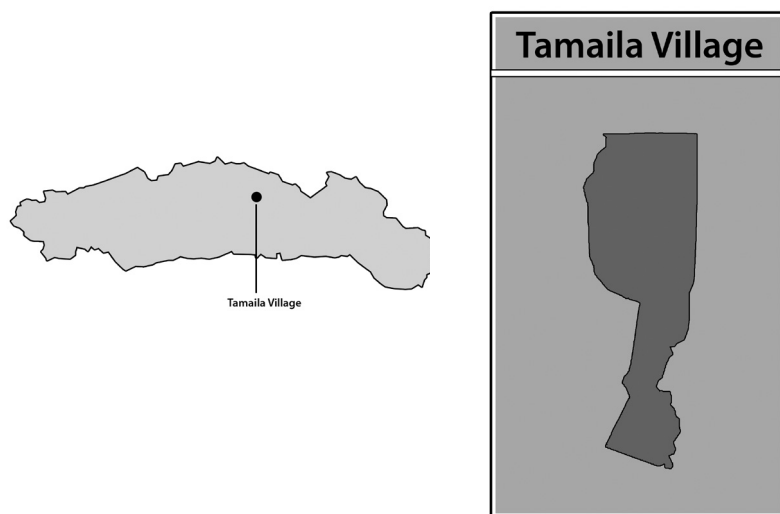


Figure 17. Map of Tamaila Village

In North Tamaila Village, we visited the house of the Head of North Tamaila Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes), Bukhari Boroma. He is a village head and is usually called *Ayah* Boroma. The nickname "*Ayah*" (father) is usually given to a village head in Gorontalo. Boroma's father is a scholar in Islamic education. We got there at almost 8 pm.

Ayah Boroma was forced to postpone a number of planned activities in the village due to the ongoing epidemic.

"Maybe in fasting month I can hold some activities again," he responded *Pak* Mat's question about the planned training activities for business groups in the village. "But I have look at the conditions because we still adhere to health protocols. The number of participants, social distancing and masks usage will be imposed following health protocol," he continued.

The economic institution led by *Ayah* Boroma encouraged production and marketing for agricultural enterprises. At the end of 2020, North Tamaila BUMDes began producing virgin coconut oil or popularly called virgin coconut oil. Machines owned by this institution began to process coconut meat to extract its pure oil. A number of studies say this oil contains a variety of health benefits, including boosting the immune system to avoid diseases from bacteria, fungi and viruses. However, coconut farmers who try to produce virgin coconut oil are often constrained by the absence of processing tools and machines. oil.

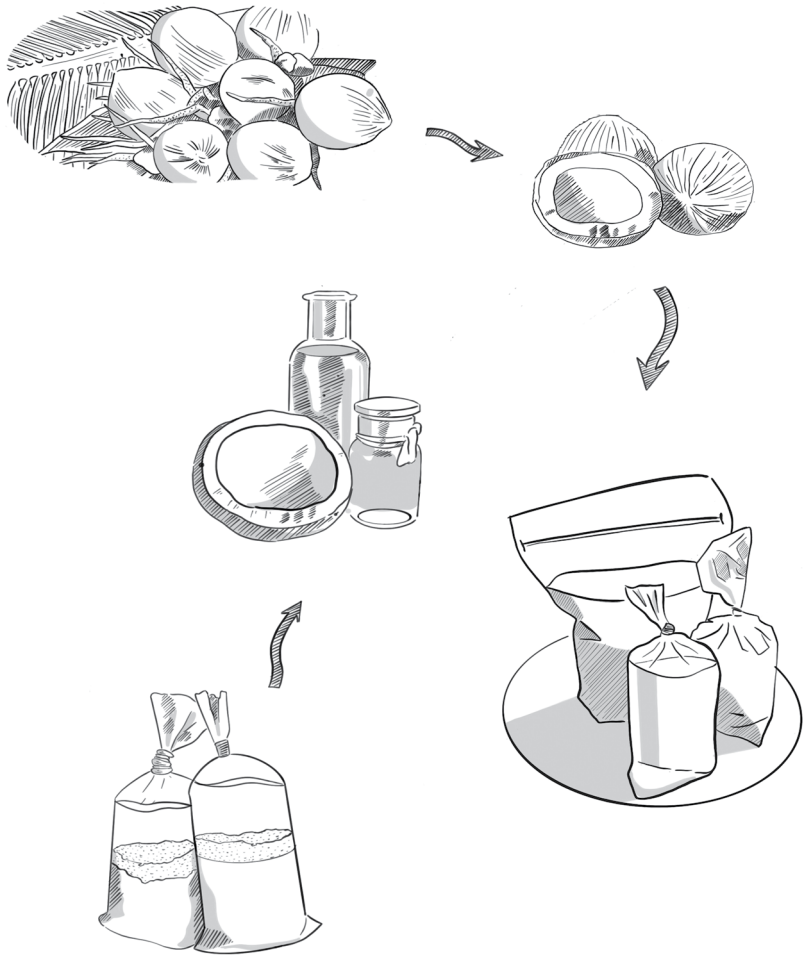


Figure 18. The process of making Virgin Coconut Oil (VCO) in a simple way

Coconut is a tropical plant that grows well in Gorontalo. More than 71 thousand hectares of coconut plantations were covered by about 4.7 million trees. Unfortunately, the product's processing was uniform. People usually grind coconut into copra or dried coconut and then extract the oil, which is less expensive than pure coconut oil.

With the potential of coconut and the wealth of other agricultural products in its territory, the provincial government issued a supportive economic policy. Coconut plantations scattered in this area were generally owned by the community. The BUMDes of North Tamaila, led by *Ayah* Boroma, participated in carrying out government policies. This institution sought to develop the business of the

From Saritani to the South Tamaila

residents who are generally farmers. Due to the outbreak, the plans that had been drawn up with the BUMDes team had to be rearranged.

"I hope it can be held on the fifth day of fasting month. But I will inform *Pak Mat* if it is possible," said *Ayah* Boroma's.

In the middle of the conversation, *Ayah* Baroma's wife offered us a meal. We were happy to welcome the hospitality of the family.

The sun set. After eating dinner, we said goodbye. The local government imposed a curfew since the pandemic. We didn't want our trip to be hampered due to inspections in every guard post.***





Disaster and Hope in Juriya Village

After a long period of absence in preventing floods and landslides, women's voices began to be heard in Juriya.

Author: Fatra Hala, WIRE-G

AT THE END of October 2016, the rain pured down heavily in a number of areas in Gorontalo from noon to night. Paguyaman, Boyonga, Marisa, Meloopu, and Bulota rivers were unable to hold the spilled water from the sky. The current and overflow of water immediately turned into a disaster in a number of settlements. Buildings and rice fields in a number of sub-districts, such as Bilato, Bolihyuto, Limboto, West Limboto, Pulubala, and Tolonguhula were damaged by the water.

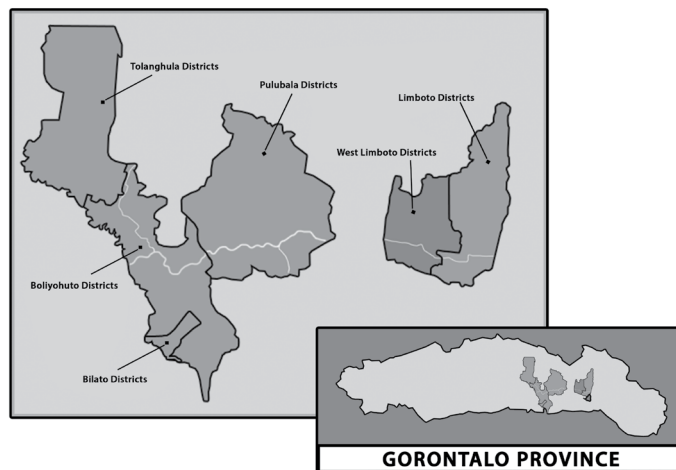


Figure 19. Map of the Districts of Bilato, Bolihyuto, Limboto, West Limboto, Pulubala, Tolonguhula

Disaster and Hope in Juriya Village

The water height level in several villages in the sub-district was even higher than one meter. A number of houses in Juriya Village, Bilato District - including the house of 63 years old Grandma Tulo- were also flooded. The swift current of water entered the house. The rushing water carried with it mud and dragged mountain rocks the size of an adult's fist into the kitchen. The elderly woman who worked as a farm laborer was shocked to find her kitchen collapse under the current of water and mountain rocks. One of the pillars of the kitchen was broken. Some of the bamboo supporting the house that collapsed was carried away by the current. The kitchen walls made of pitate or woven bamboo were broken.

Based on data of the Gorontalo Regency Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), nearly 1,500 houses were flooded with a height of between 50 and 100 centimeters. Hundreds of residents fled to a number of government buildings that were not flooded near the Regent's Office.



Figure 20. Flood

The flood lasted for several days while landslides also hit several places. As a result, a number of public service offices were paralyzed. Public facilities and infrastructure, such as regional public hospitals, health centers, offices and others, were also flooded. Roads and bridges were damaged. Regarding the disaster, the report from the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) stated that areas in Sulawesi are generally prone to flash floods due to topographic conditions in the form of hills and mountains with short plains. Morphological conditions or the shape of the earth's surface in the area make it easy for flash floods and landslides to occur when it rains. This condition is exacerbated by the lack of water catchment areas, changes in land use from forests to agriculture and settlements. Changes and changes to land and environmental functions also make rivers shallow and narrow, making them more vulnerable to flooding.

JURIYA VILLAGE in Bilato District is located downstream of the Paguyaman River. This is a large river that empties into the Gulf of Tomini. It is about 136.25 kilometers with its upstream in the Dapi Mountains, Pohuwato Regency, Gorontalo Province. The upstream area is a plateau with steep contours. The middle part is lowland/alluvial and undulating hills. The downstream part, including the Juriya Village area, is lowland with an elevation of less than 1 meter above sea level.

During the last few years, especially during the rainy season, Paguyam River often overflows. In addition to heavy rainfall, the overflow of water that causes floods and landslides is exacerbated by the activities of clearing new lands and illegal logging in forest areas upstream of the river. The upstream area of the Paguyaman River is an integral part of the ecosystem of the Nantu Wildlife Sanctuary. This protected forest area has recently been increasingly threatened due to illegal logging and gold mining. Damage upstream has a negative impact on areas downstream. This makes villages in Bilato sub-district, including Juriya, vulnerable to flooding and landslides.



Figure 21. Land Contour in Juriya Village

Disaster and Hope in Juriya Village

From Gorontalo City, Juriya Village is taken about two hours using a four-wheeled vehicle. If you drive by motorbike, it takes about one and a half hours. This village is next door to Totopo Village in the north. To the south of this village is bordered by the village of Bilato. These villages are also frequently hit by floods.

There are three hamlets in Juriya village including North Juria, South Juria, and Karya Tani. The hamlets of North and South Juria were previously part of Totopo Village. It is said that this village is called *Juriya* because there was once a large durian tree that lived for decades. In Gorontalo language, durian is "*duria*" which has the same sound as "*juria*" and "*juriya*". But that's just a myth because there is not a single durian tree in this village. Trees with large diameters are also difficult to find. The new trees planted by residents and nature lovers after the 2016 flood only grew around riverbanks.

Most of the residents of Juriya Village are corn farmers. Only part of the land area is planted with coconut trees. The residents' agricultural land is on a sloping land. However, the soil on this sloping land is very susceptible to erosion. When heavy rains flush the land, several houses located in lower areas are frequently hit by landslides.

FREQUENT FLOOD strikes causes a lot of losses for many residents. They have to build and repair damaged buildings over and over again. Again and again the residents also have to rebuild rice fields.

Not only men were burdened. Disasters make women suffered too. However, the society still undermined the role of women. Women's voices and involvement were often taken for granted in policy making, including post-disaster policies and environmental conservation. Meanwhile, from a total of about 709 residents in Juriya Village, 344 were women.

The division of labor in which men work outside the home and women take care of the household has triggered the low participation of village women. This has happened and has been entrenched for a long time. Furthermore, this affects the reluctance of mothers and women to take initiatives to formulate policies in the village.

"*Nanti kalo modapa undangan mopigi, masa olo dia tidak undang mopigi eey,*" Salmah told me. This middle-aged woman is usually called Ma Salu. The meaning of the sentence was that he would only attend the meeting if there was an invitation.

In fact, participation in formulating village policies is the right of both women and men and is protected by the state, it is written and confirmed in the Village Law Number 6/2014.

This is similar to the story of Ma Salu, a woman from Karya Tani Hamlet, Juriya Village. As a housewives, they were involved in cultivating land yet they could not become members of farmer groups.

"Saya olo ibu ada ba tani, cuma tantu kiapa tidak motamaso di kolompo. Macam kalo torang ibu-ibu susa modapa bantuan bibit," Riana said to me. Even though she was involved in farming activities- said the woman who was familiarly called Ta Nano- for some reason women could not become members of farmer groups. Women, she continued, found it difficult to get seed assistance.

I talked and heard about her experiences on the terrace of his house. She told me that her husband was a construction worker while farming was her responsibility. However, she often had difficulty getting assistance related to agriculture because she was a woman.

In 2018 Juriya village became one of the program targets supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the Small Grants Program (SGP). Several local agencies including the agency I work for, Wire-G, implemented it. Wire-G stands for Woman Institute for Research and Empowerment of Gorontalo. In carrying out this program, the team consisted of four people and is assisted by six volunteers.

The program run by the Wire-G institution in this village focuses on strengthening village institutions to encourage policies that are friendly and supportive of women. In addition, this program supported sustainable natural resource management and environmental sustainability.

Wire-G is a non-profit organization established in 2006 and was initiated by three women who were previously members of the field of women's empowerment in a youth organization. This institution has a vision of "smart women of advanced nations". Its mission is to empower and strengthen women to create prosperous society. In addition, it seeks to promote gender responsive policies at the community level. The activities carried out include educating and encouraging women to be involved at every stage of development in the village. Another activity is bridging women's groups with government agencies, such as the Women's Empowerment Office, both at the district and provincial levels.

Disaster and Hope in Juriya Village

CORN FARM was the main farming commodity of many families in Juriya Village. When the corn harvest arrives women are involved in harvesting corn fruits. The village become more crowded and open-air vehicles came in and out of the village. These cars carried sacks of corn back and forth to the corn harvesting warehouse.

Some farmers saved some of their corn harvest for daily consumption. Corn consumed is local corn for *mootame* or ward off reason. Because the harvest time is faster than hybrid corn seeds, local corn is also denser. The selling price is Rp.1,000 higher than the market price of hybrid corn. If the price of hybrid corn is Rp. 2,700, the local corn price is Rp. 3,700. However, the availability of local corn seeds is limited.

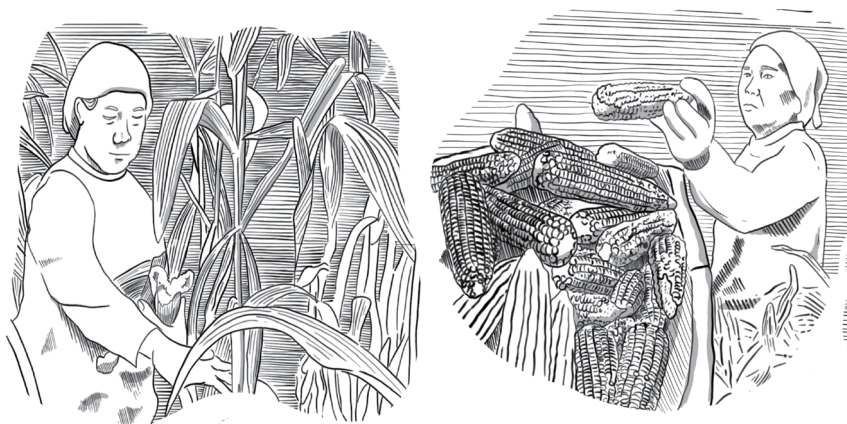


Figure 22. Women's Activities and Agricultural Products

Ma To'u was one of the female farmers in this village who was often sought after by people in the local corn seed business. She focused on local corn farming. She started inviting other female farmers in Juriya to plant local seeds. She also gave free local seeds to other farmers.

"In order to get more," she answered when I asked why the seeds weren't for sale.

Wire-G also facilitates women in Juriya Village to develop the potential of local processed food, especially in the Karya Tani Women's Group. The group started to produce traditional cakes made from local ingredients, including corn, which were sold to stalls. This entrepreneurial activity is encouraged to make women more empowered.

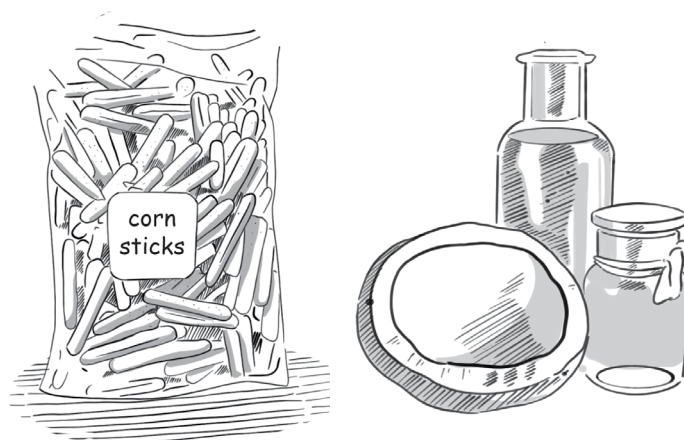


Figure 23. Corn sticks and Coconut Oil

It's not easy to start a business from the ground up. Through the internet and social media, we assist and provide product marketing training. We also put this product in a number of provincial and district government shows to raise awareness of it.

The household businesses we assist did not only produce snacks such as corn sticks, but also processed coconut oil. Coconut is also a commodity in this village. While waiting for the corn harvest time to arrive, female farmers processed coconuts to make copra. Many residents of North Juriya and South Juriya hamlets processed coconut into copra.

However, the presence of middlemen has been a scourge for farmers here since a long time ago. They used to go to the homes of farmers who own coconut plantations, and bid for copra. To make copra weighing 30 kilograms, farmers need about 100 coconuts. Middlemen often bid to the lowest price, only Rp. 5,000! The reason is, apart from quality, the copra is directly picked up at the farmers' homes. The fluctuating price of copra is sometimes not sufficient to cover daily needs.

Another coconut product is coconut oil. However, there are still few people who process coconut oil until now. The reason is that manual processing takes a long time. There are only two known processing techniques, *wali-walngo* and *tulu-tulu*. *Wali-walngo* is a direct processing technique. After the coconut is squeezed, the coconut milk is immediately cooked. In the practice of the *tulu-tulu* technique, coconut milk is left on for one night and only cooked the next day.

Disaster and Hope in Juriya Village

To develop the business, we also collaborated with UPT Job Training Center (BLK). Trained by certified trainers, during this training the farmers practice coconut oil processing. From the practice that was carried out for five days, farmers obtained clearer processed coconut oil.

In Gorontalo, village coconut oil or commonly known as *yinulo bongo* is not only used for frying foodstuffs. Typical foods such as *ilabulo*, a snack made from processed sago, banana heart, and chicken liver, are commonly steamed using coconut oil. Another typical snack, *ilepa'o*, which is made from Nike fish and sago also uses native coconut oil in the mixture. In addition, the local spicy chili sauce known as dabu-dabu also uses village oil. Coconut oil is a very important requirement in the kitchens of women in the village.

OUTSIDE THE HOME, women in Juriya Village slowly began to be involved in important meetings discussing efforts to develop the village, including preventing future disasters.

This made me and my colleagues at Wire-G proud. Our efforts to invite and facilitate women in training activities and formulating village policies were fruitful.

Village women now start to speak. Practical and strategic needs must be fought for. No shame, no hesitation. One of the people involved in our activities named Ellen expressed her anxiety in front of the forum which was attended by the Head of the Bilato Sub-district and his staff; shortly after the aspiration session opened.

"Farmers who own land and will open agricultural land on a slope to pay attention to the impact," she said in front of the sub-district head.

"We are the victims. Please respond to this," she added. Ellen's statement was immediately supported by a number of other women who were in present. They did not want to continue to suffer losses. ***





Reviving Panggoba

Some of the successful farmers in Gorontalo cultivate crops with ancestral knowledge which is considered contrary to modern agriculture and state policy.

Author: Sugeng Sutrisno, JAPESDA

THE JOURNEY from Limboto, the capital of Gorontalo Regency to Saritani Village in Wonosari District, Boalemo Regency took about four hours. That afternoon, I rode my motorbike passing winding roads, settlements, and fields. I was about to meet the Marsudi Lestantun Farmers Group. The members of this group are generally transmigrant farmers from Java who are struggling to increase the yields of their fields and gardens.

In 2018, the group received financial support from the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Program (GEF-SGP) Indonesia phase 6 for a sustainable sloping land agriculture program. In Gorontalo, apart from this farmer group, there are several other organizations that have the support of GEF-SGP Indonesia. These include Agrarian Institute, Woman Institute for Research and Empowerment of Gorontalo (Wire-G), Center for Coastal Ecology Studies Based on Local Wisdom (PKEPKL), and Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) of North Tamaila. These institutions are under the coordination of the Gorontalo Natural Resources Advocacy Network (JAPESDA).

I work at JAPESDA. In between the routine meetings in the office that coordinates partner institutions, I also made a field visit to meet farmer groups, hear their stories and experiences.

In Saritani Village, the farmers, generally transmigrants from Java, work together on each member's land by building a terrace every Sunday. They grow various types of annual plants on sloping land. Each member of this farmer group also develops a goat farming business. Manure is used as fertilizer for crops, including seasonal crops such as corn. They plant corn following the local people.

Corn is chosen because this is a type of commodity that has been grown from generation to generation by Gorontalo farmers. In addition, corn is relatively easy and more quickly sold compared to other crops. Buyers can directly come and take the corn harvest at the location of the farmers. However, there are differences in local people's corn plants and that grown by transmigrants.

"Local corn plants always grow well and are almost undisturbed, either by pests or by wild animals such as rats, monkeys, or wild boars even though the corn is planted near or directly adjacent to the forest area," said Vial Gruvi Bulyanto, 32 years old. He comes from Yogyakarta and owns a corn field in Saritani Village. From Vial's experience, the growth of corn is often disturbed when it enters the age of 20 days making leaves yellowish white in color.

This condition happened to Margiyanto's corn stalks. The 37-year-old farmer was forced to dismantle his 15-day-old corn garden. From his experience, if the corn is affected by disease, it is difficult to expect good growth. Alternatively, pesticides was used, but the chances of corn to return to normal growth was relatively small. The only solution to reduce maintenance costs is to replace it. This method makes expenses and farmers' losses can be reduced. After the corn affected by pests is cleared away, new seeds are planted.

Margiyanto's bad experience was also experienced by a number of other transmigrant farmers in the Gorontalo area. Many farmers complained of rat pests that are difficult to control. Several measures to control rats were not quite successful. Exterminate using poison did not reduce the rat population.

According to farmers, the use of poison has actually made the area of corn plants attacked by rats wider. Some farmers decided to harvest corn early. This has an impact on the low quality of corn. The weight of the corn was lighter that the selling price was lower.

Initially, the farmers suspected that this problem was related to certain types of seeds being planted. However, this assumption was wrong after seeing the conditions of corn from the same type of seed planted by local farmers which grows relatively well, even close to perfect until the corn is ready to harvest.

I took a note of the experiences and disappointments of transmigrant farmers. On the other hand, I was increasingly curious about the success of local farmers who have better corn yields.

FROM SARITANI village, I headed to Tumba Hamlet in North Tamaila Villages 25 kilometers to the east. There I met Ka Risi, a 56 years old local farmer who succeeded in planting and harvesting corn.

That night six other local farmers in this hamlet accompanied him. We had a discussion in the living room, above the house on stilts lit by solar lights. Coffee of their harvest and the cold weather of Dusun Tumba also accompanied us.

Our conversation revolved around the knowledge of Gorontalo farmers in farming, including their efforts to overcome pests and diseases in corn plants which is called *tabongo* in Gorontalo. It attacks corn since the plants are young. Before the corn produces flowers, *tabongo* can be recognized.

This pest is localistic and does not attack all corn crops. On certain lands it will only be found in a few trees. However, in other places this pest attack can even reach 60 percent of the plants. *Tabongo* disease is not contagious or affects other corn crops. It is even possible that A's corn plants may be attacked by *tabongo*, while B's corn fields are free even though the corn plants are directly adjacent to or in one stretch.

The emergence of these pests generally starts from farmers' mistakes in cultivating the soil and determining the planting time. This mistake allows corn plants to be vulnerable to pest attacks. Not only *tabongo*, other types of pests that often attack corn plants will also follow.

In the tradition of local farmers, the business of growing corn or any type of plant has rules and provisions.



Figure 24. Corn plants affected by tabongo disease

"It's better to learn and follow the old way of farming. Because if the crop fails, we ourselves accept the consequences," said Ka Risi.

In the past, Gorontalo farming community knew *Panggoba*. To the date, the name is still known by some people, especially those who live in rural areas and carry out agricultural activities.

I once read a book written by Amirudin Y. Dako entitled *Local Wisdom of the Gorontalo Community*. He describes *panggoba* or the person entrusted with the task of taking care of the agricultural sector. *Panggoba* in Gorontalo language means a person who masters astrology and is able to read natural signs. Because of his superiority in the field of astronomy, this person is given the trust to organize and be a place to ask questions about farming, especially those related to determining the planting period and how to protect plants from pests and diseases.

In accordance with his capacity in carrying out his duties, *Panggoba* always uses *poliyama wopata* (four stars) as a guide for starting farming activities. The four names of the stars are *Totokiya*, *Tadata*, *Otoluwa*, and *Malu'o* and their appearance can be seen at 06.00 and 18.00 local time. These stars sight allows farmers to start farming, which begins with land preparation and sowing seeds for seasonal and annual crops.

Totokiya star, also known as the king's star, appears in three appearances. The rising position of this star can be seen at 16.00 on July 16, while the 450 position is visible on July 23. The position just above the head or position 900 seen on October 16 while position 1350 seen on October 23.

The positions other stars are seen in the morning at 06.00 on January 16, position 450 on January 23, position 900 on April 16, and position 1350 on April 23. The sightings of the four stars are based on circulation and viewpoints carried out at different time.

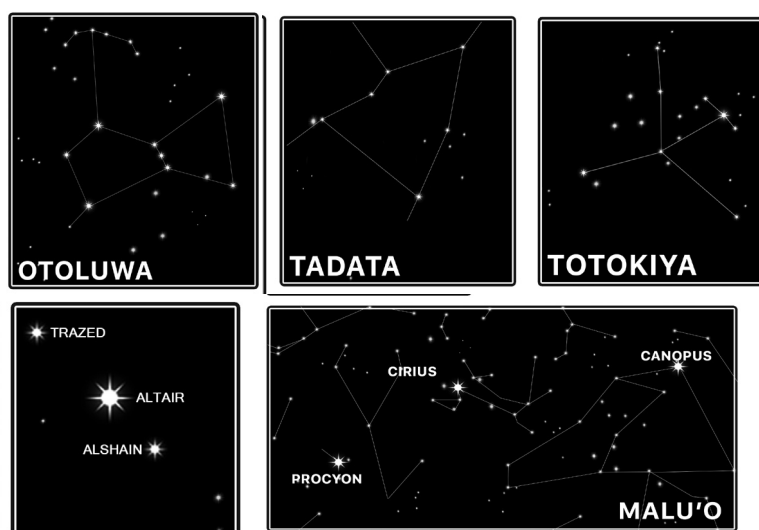


Figure 25. Four Agricultural Constellations (Otoluwa, Tadata, Totokiya, Maluo)

The appearance of the *Totokiya* star is based on the division of the season appears at the beginning and end of the dry season, rainy season and transition. Related to the time of planting, in dry season planting can be done from July 1 to July 6, and from July 23 to July 30, while in the rainy and transitional seasons planting activities are carried out from January 21 to January 31, and from April 21 to April 30.

That night I listened to stories and knowledge about *panggoba* from Ka Risi. This farmer also shared knowledge about soil science inherited from old people in Gorontalo.

In farming, local farmers in Gorontalo are not only friendly to nature when releasing seeds but also preparing the land to be planted.

Land is considered as generally animate creatures, even as a source or origin of life itself, so farmers also give time to land not to be planted or known as "soil fasting". This is done after harvesting the crop.

"Soil fasting" provides an opportunity for the soil to return to its natural state. During that time, activities related to the land were stopped, but the planting of long-lived plants or perennials was still allowed. For seasonal crops, especially short-lived crops, it is advisable to wait when the soil is ready to be cultivated.

Ka Risi was a local farmer who still practiced land fasting in farming. According to his experience, soil fasting is considered complete and the soil is ready to be processed when the remaining stems are in the same level as the soil surface. Under these conditions, bacteria, viruses, and soil fungi have completed their work to break down plant organic matter.

From the point of view of soil biology, said Ka Risi, the microbes that cause pests no longer appear or live permanently on the land. The microbes have broken down organic matter into nutrients needed by plants. This pattern of tillage makes the plants no longer get disturbed by pests from the soil. The soil becomes fertile and makes plant growth not require the addition of other fertilizers in large quantities.

From cost perspective, this practice keeps expenses lower. Farmers no longer need buy fertilizers or pesticides and yields are relatively stable. For the same type of crop, the yield is similar to that of previous growing season. The main key in farming lies in the knowledge of cultivating the soil. Land cannot be forced to be planted immediately after the harvest is complete.

"If we do it, we have 'apostatized' to the wisdom values of land fasting. In one year, ideally, corn for example, can only be planted twice. If we insist to three times of planting, it is not a problem and will still give results. It's just that a lot of costs are incurred, and the yield decreases every harvest," Ka Risi explained.

DIFFERENT TIME, different policy. Historically, the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides was one of the policies popularized during the Suharto era. Under the jargon of the "Green Revolution" farmers were forced to expand their paddy

fields and increase the amount of rice harvested in order to achieve self-sufficiency in meeting food needs or self-sufficiency in food.

However, the policy became a means of uniforming food for the population in Indonesia. Through this policy and self-sufficiency target, the traditions and wisdom of the community in plant resilience and breeding were removed. The legacy of knowledge from ancestors started to be erased and not much is known by young people, including in Gorontalo.

Currently, not all farmers in Gorontalo use *Panggoba* as a knowledge base in farming. Those who carry out practices- from tillage to harvesting- are farmers who are over the age of 40.

The results of the Agrarian Institute study in 2019 conducted by Terri Repi, Lecturer at the University of Muhammadiyah Gorontalo (UMGo) in Saritani Village and North Tamaila Village concluded that farmers aged over 47 years knew and carried out environmentally friendly farming practices. They still used the knowledge and local wisdom of *panggoba*.

Senior farmers maintained direct consultations with *panggoba* in determining when to release plant seeds on the land, as well as in prevention of plant pests. They still used the service of the *panggobato* handle and deal with pest disturbances directly in the fields. The method used is to dispel and expel by using easily available materials, in addition to prayers or incantations.

Meanwhile, farmers in the young age category or under the age of 40 years are more pragmatic in terms of farming. These young farmers choose certain types of plants that are more market-oriented. Every year types of plants are developed on the same land. They tend to plant corn as a single crop which is also the government's main commodity.

Their farming behavior is heavily influenced by information obtained from agricultural extension workers that ignored soil fasting. The trees from the corn crop are immediately pruned by machine. Weeds in the form of grass are sprayed using herbicides. The type of seed planted is no longer a typical local plant. They prefer hybrid corn seeds, even though they are obtained by borrowing as capital in the form of money or materials from middlemen.

This modern agricultural production business model makes the costs incurred higher. Moreover, if the synthetic chemicals needed are obtained by borrowing from middlemen. As a consequence, farmers as land owners and tending plants

do not have full rights to the crops. They do not get profit in harvest time (BEP), even leaving the burden of debt. All the crops are taken by middlemen at low prices to cover the farmers' loans.

Rosyid Azhar, one of the researchers from the Agrarian Institute, suspected that the process of destroying local wisdom and knowledge of farmers in Gorontalo who have *panggoba* is going systematically. These processes are deliberately carried out because the practice of farming science *panggoba* indirectly hinders the marketing of agricultural materials produced by the company.

"If the concept of agriculture with *panggoba* is still running, at least the use of local seeds is difficult to replace with genetically modified types of seeds," said Rosyid.

He further explained, by venerating and utilizing local seeds, farmers can at least repeat planting without having to buy seeds.

"Similarly, if farmers still persist in practicing land management using the concept of land fasting. Farmers do not need synthetic chemicals such as inorganic fertilizers and herbicides. Then, farmers take care of the plants until they are ready to harvest without using insecticides and pesticides," he said.

IN PANGEA Hamlet, Saritani Village, local farmers ask an old man of 67 years old named Saha Saili become a *panggoba*. The people often greet him as Opa Mani. From his experience and knowledge of astrology, *Opa* (Grandpa) Mani said that the seeding and planting developed was not only based on the date count, but also had to consider the time in this case the clock.

Opa Mani's expertise in astronomy was very beneficial for local people in farming. Some transmigrant farmers began to learn and practice the cropping patterns and procedures suggested by *Opa* Mani.

Siswanto, 32, was one of the transmigrant farmers in Saritani Village who consulted with *Opa* Mani. *Opa* Mani suggested him releasing the seeds on January 21 after 10:00. In January, the local climate in Gorontalo is in the low season with relatively stable rainfall. After following *Opa* Mani's advice, the corn growth in Siswanto's land was relatively good compared to those of other residents' planted at the same time. Another farmer's corn plants were attacked by *tabongo* disease because the corn seeds were planted before 10:00.



Figure 26. Panggoba Deliberation with the Community

Long before meeting and consulting with *Opa Mani*, Siswanto often paid attention to the corn fields belonging to his neighbours, local farmers. The fields owned by local residents are only planted with corn every year, almost never changing or being replaced with other types of crops. But compared to his corn field, the neighbor's garden corn grew and produced a better harvest. Half of his corn trees are often disturbed. This situation forced him to do treatment by spraying pest poison.

In the following days, he began to pay attention to the planting procedures and patterns practiced by local farmers. For example, when the sun was at a position

Reviving Panggoba

of about 400, the farmer began to punch holes in the soil with a stick for seeds, followed by other farmers inserting the seeds into the holes.

Since then, Siswanto's corn crop has been different from the previous season. This time the growth was quite good and relatively the same as the corn in the neighbor's garden, although at that time the planting was not completed in one day and had to be continued the next day with the help of workers.

When Siswanto met *Opa Mani*, the *panggoba* called the technique *payango*. This is a form of human endeavor when they want to do business in living life. If what is done is in accordance with the wishes and expectations, it means that he has the blessing of the giver of life.

Farmers continue the practice of wisdom and knowledge from their ancestors which are understood to be friendly to the environment by providing opportunities for other creatures to live in harmony with the people living life in nature. Through *Payango*, farmers try to avoid the possibility of plant growth at a certain age so as not to be attacked by pests. This farming behavior has at least helped save the lives of other creatures.

According to *Opa Mani*, the current condition is different from the period before the government regulated the community and farmers. In the past, *panggoba* had the task of determining planting times, conveying information openly to the community, and assisting and giving advice to farmers in caring for plants from planting to harvesting.

"The role of the *panggoba* has now been taken over by the agency that is responsible for and takes care of agriculture and food crops. Agricultural extension workers are those who have better knowledge because they come from various university graduates," said *Opa Mani* when I spoke with him. He was very humble.

Therefore, currently *Panggoba* prefers to remain silent because they have never received formal education at college.

TRAVEL AND meeting with a number of farmers and old people in the villages gave me important knowledge. Local wisdom and knowledge in plant breeding is still relevant today. On the other hand, not all modern, engineered products in agriculture can have a good impact.

Panggoba, a traditional figure in agriculture, can have a good impact on farmers. However, in my opinion, two things are needed to ensure that *panggoba* is guaranteed a sense of security and confidence in carrying out farming practices.

First, the government should provide space by facilitating *panggoba* to consolidate and have a dialogue to determine the timing of the planting season which is used by the government as the basis for making agricultural policies.

Second, the government must protect *Panggoba* from discriminatory treatment by certain religious groups who claim and accuse *panggoba* of committing shirk and polytheism. This protection will encourage *panggoba* to actively participate in supporting the agricultural production business of rural communities. Services to farmers, especially the certainty of information when planting certain types of plants are no longer closed.

Opa Mani had an unpleasant experience that made him chose to be passive and silent.

"*Panggoba* is also afraid of being blamed if the planting time information conveyed to farmers leads to crop failure," he said.

This feeling of fear affected people who still had and kept knowledge of astrology. They even refused to be called *panggoba*.***



Unforgettable Experience in Nusa Penida

*The challenge is to introduce and invite people to
practice sustainable ecotourism,
from overcoming language barriers to
patriarchal domination.*

Author: Fransiska Natalia, JED Program Coordinator

NUSA PENIDA is an island located in the southeast of the island of Bali. *Nusa* means island, thus, many people call it "Nusa Penida" without starting with the name island. Since 2015, Nusa Penida has slowly become one of the new destinations for tourists visiting Bali. Nusa Penida is increasingly visited by travelers since several destinations on the island became known to the public through social media. Prior to the pandemic, the number of tourists vacationing to the island increased sharply; approaching 3,000 per day from the port of Sanur.

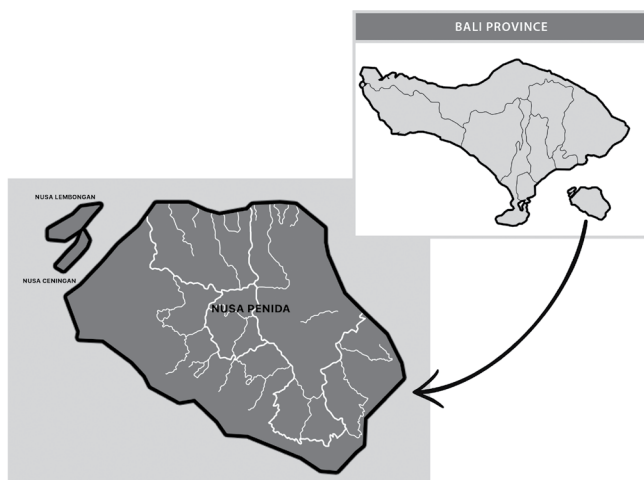


Figure 27. Map of Bali and Nusa Penida

Unforgettable Experience in Nusa Penida

In terms of numbers, this is one of the prides of Klungkung Regency. Unfortunately, this is a mass tourism which only focuses on the quantity of tourists without considering the spatial and social capacity of the community. This type of tourism tends to be short-lived and has adverse social and environmental impacts in the future.

In Village Ecotourism Network (JED) we have been developing ecotourism since 2002. Our association was initiated by four communities from four villages and assisted by the Wisnu Foundation. Ecotourism is a concept of sustainable tourism development that aims to support environmental conservation efforts (nature and culture) and increase community participation in conservative management so as to provide economic benefits to local communities (Directorate General of Tourism, 1995).

For 18 years, JED has developed ecotourism in six villages whose entire activities are managed by community groups under the term Community-Based Tourism. In 2019, we got to know Indonesia's Global Environmental Facility-Small Grants Program (GEF-SGP), which then gave us the opportunity to introduce alternative tourism in Nusa Penida.

For JED, collaborating with GEF SGP Indonesia and Wisnu Foundation in Nusa Penida is an excellent opportunity to introduce sustainable tourism models for the local people of Nusa Penida. We started this program in October 2019. The initial plan was to integrate partner programs that have previously worked in each village so that it is hoped that a five-village ecotourism model can be formed which becomes a single unit in Nusa Penida ecotourism, but also has charm and uniqueness.

Five villages with five partner institutions were selected, they were Suana village in Banjar Semaya with its seaweed product assisted by Kalimajari Foundation; Tanglad village with its natural dyed *cepuk* cloth initiated by Alam Mesari Group; Ped village with Learning House developed by Taksu Tridatu Foundation; Batukandik village with dry land agriculture previously assisted by the Idep Selaras Alam Foundation and finally Batumadeg village with its agroforestry program assisted by the Wisanggenig1 Community.

Why is this integration process important? First, because ecotourism development program can provide a space for expression for the assisted communities especially the beneficiaries. Their potential can be introduced to the public through sustainable tourism activities. Second, the development of Nusa

Penida ecotourism indirectly builds long-term relationship connections between beneficiaries and partner institutions and host institutions even though the partner institutions' programs have been completed.

Nusa Penida ecotourism development program consists of three main parts. The first part is the process of socializing or introducing the concept of ecotourism to the community in Nusa Penida. This consists of outreach at the sub-district level, village level and multi-stakeholder meetings with the government and Nusa Penida tourism practitioners. The second part is a training series that will equip our partners in the village with the necessary skills. This series of training includes training in making village stories (storyline), training for tour guides, culinary training, sanitation and hygiene, and management training. The third part is the marketing preparation process which includes the creation of the Nusa Penida webpage, brochures, books, promotional videos, and trip trials.

Cross Organizational Cooperation: Mapping Potential Conflicts and Interests

JED communicated intensely with its five partner institutions to inform, discuss and request input from each partner regarding the process of transitioning their program to the Nusa Penida ecotourism development program. In general, JED received a positive response from the partner institutions, there were even partner institutions who introduced us directly to the assisted communities so that the transition process ran smoothly.

Unfortunately, several obstacles needed to be encountered, such as (1) lack of coordination between several partner agencies and JED. This may be because people from these partner institutions were busy with ongoing programs in their respective villages, and/or because the partner agency's programs had been completed; (2) potential conflicts between groups and between individuals in a group who are beneficiaries of partner institutions who previously worked in each village.

These potential conflicts affected the program implementation. Local communities, both from group members and from community leaders, were less likely to participate in ecotourism development programs. While some people supported Nusa Penida's ecotourism development program, not all of them attended the meeting because they felt uncomfortable to meet members of other groups or community groups.

Unforgettable Experience in Nusa Penida

Once, a young participant from Banjar Semaya was unable to participate in the next training activity because his family had a conflict with his uncle who happened to also participate in the Nusa Penida ecotourism development program with JED. In another village, the group members we targeted (ie groups that had already benefited from the previous program) were not invited by the village head to attend our training classes when the training was held at the village office.

In addition, territorial conflicts between traditional villages and official villages, between traditional villages and other traditional villages also caused polemic in this ecotourism development program because the destinations set in the village are not clear in terms of their territorial status. Another obstacle emerged because the location that has been determined has changed the function and status of the land, such as the Saab Temple in Batumadeg Village which was previously accompanied by the Wisanggeni Community.

Organization and Public View of Bali Tourism

In addition to approaching beneficiaries who were connected with previous partner institutions, JED also approached community leaders through formal channels. We carried out socialization at the sub-district level and at the village level to get support and to see the potential of community members who are interested in this program, especially young people.

Community interest is very important in the ecotourism development program, because this program is not a one-time program or a program of merely providing facilities/knowledge/assistance/facilities. We will leave the village and Nusa Penida ecotourism program will continue, with us assisting the promotion process and marketing process to ecotourism tourists. Our responsibilities and those of the communities involved do not end once the trainings are completed, but continue until one of the parties terminates the relationship.

Sparkling public interest is a challenging "tasks". After several months of running, it turned out that the low community participation was also caused by the public's view of Bali tourism in general. Bali tourism applies the concept of mass tourism with the number of visits is the main indicator of success. This is evidenced by the continued increase in the number of tourist visits to the island of the gods that was launched by the Bali government. People's views then tend to underestimate sustainable tourism (ecotourism) because it does not provide large and short benefits..

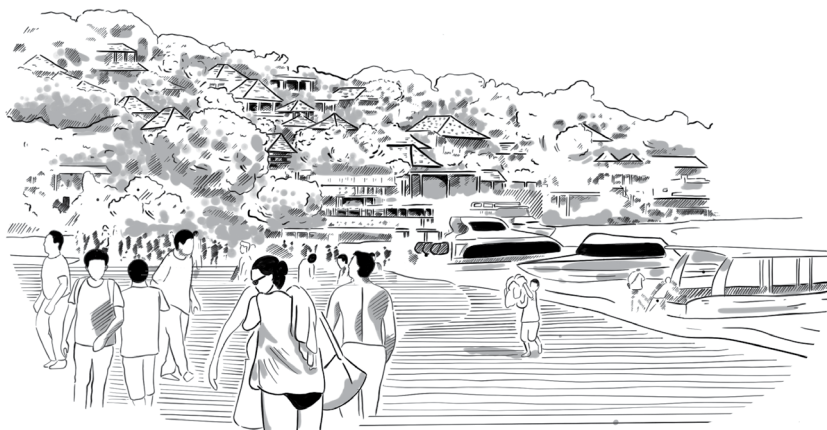


Figure 28. Crowd of Tourists Heading to Nusa Penida Island

Finding potential beneficiaries who are interested and understand our ecotourism concept, or what we will hereafter call "partners in every village" was not easy. This is like looking for a needle in a haystack because we were not like other partners who come with goods or money. The formal approach did not produce significant results. Socialization was seen as "an important event to attend". We then took an informal approach, such as contacting community leaders personally to meet and convey the objectives of this program, some of them supported and disseminated information to the public and young people. However, some just said "yes" without concrete actions.

Because of time issue, we remained optimistic, realistic and ran the program as best we could. We held several trainings by continuing to use two types of approaches; formal by sending training invitation letters to community leaders (such as village heads and customary village heads) and informal approaches (directly contacting both village heads, traditional village heads and potential participants we have contacts with).

Community Participation During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic had quite a variety of impacts on Nusa Penida. Economically, the impact hit especially those who work full-time in the tourism sector. Many then returned to agricultural and livestock sectors because they were more productive than tourism sector.

Unforgettable Experience in Nusa Penida

Our program was affected by COVID-19. Since starting activities in Nusa Penida in July 2020, we found several young people who were interested in participating in training and ecotourism development programs. Some of them used to work in the tourism sector as drivers or guides and were forced to return to the village and live in the village due to the pandemic. In addition to the increasing number of young participants, most of them also agreed that this pandemic was a very good example to show that tourism is a very vulnerable sector. Relying on this sector's main income is not wise. They were then become more receptive to the concept of ecotourism and actively participate in developing this concept in their respective villages.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 pandemic did not automatically change the thoughts and views of all elements of society regarding mass tourism and sustainable tourism. There were a lot of people who were optimistic that pandemic condition would soon be over, so instead of slowing or stopping the pace of development they speeded up the process of building villas, restaurants and other tourism supporting facilities.

One concrete example from our experience was when we met a participant who looked excited at the beginning because he happened to be being laid off from the mass tourism sector, but when he found out that this ecotourism activity did not bring many guests and was really only considered a bonus in Tenganan Peglingsingan Village (from comparative study activities), he immediately disappeared and could not be contacted again. Even when we visited her home, she just said "yes" and never came back. This proves that the concept of ecotourism takes time to be understood by the community until they are willing to implement this sustainable concept.

Women: Appreciation, Space for Expression and Passion for Learning

The most impressive part of running the program in Nusa Penida was the position of women and their interest in this program. They actively participated in making presentations, asking questions and seeking information in several trainings such as story writing training. This training was dominated by young women in several villages. Other training such as culinary training was also dominated by women. Some mothers even recorded the chef (cook trainer) from the beginning of the session to the end when he gave cooking tips and how to present the food

to make it more interesting to eat.

The desire to learn and increase self-skills was also seen after the training. Two mothers, *Mek* (Mrs) Juana from Ped village and *Mek* Kadek Setiawati from Batumadeg village, for example, were always eager to ask questions about what needs to be improved in their cooking, and waited for the next training.

The involvement of young women was also seen in Suana Village and Batukandik Village. Even though they were shy, they were interested in learning. Diah and Arik were two examples of young people in Banjar Semaya that impressed me. Diah was more shy but actively absorbed the knowledge given, while Arik was more active and expressive with a high spirit of asking questions. Both had something in common; willingness to learn. Unfortunately learning opportunities were limited by circumstances and family responses. For people in Banjar Semaya, boys have access to higher education, while girls do not. Girls are also asked to work tying seaweed, while boys don't have to. Their participation in this ecotourism development program certainly colored and opened their eyes to how the Banjar Semaya economy continued to run because of the presence of these women who help their parents tie seaweed every day. I really appreciate their participation in the challenges they face, both at the family and community level.

I also faced challenges as a woman personally while running the program in Nusa Penida. For initial information, my work experience had more "dealing" with customers/clients, and even if I worked in the community, the communication flow was clear with mutual need. I had never worked at the grassroots level which is initiating a program and organizing the community.

As a 29-year-old woman with mediocre Balinese language skills and limited community organizing knowledge and only armed with organizational and community skills that I learned independently outside of work, I ventured to take on the role of coordinator of the ecotourism development program in Nusa Penida.

Challenging and complex is a suitable phrase to describe what I experienced. The ecotourism development program required intense communication with many stakeholders. In a day I contacted 10 to 30 people for different purposes, from informing activities, asking for input from community leaders, requesting the presence of participants, providing additional information about what ecotourism is, coordinating with partners/ resources/ trainers/ service providers, coordinating with other partners and host institutions, to other needs.

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Not all communication with the people of Nusa Penida ran smoothly. The patriarchal system that exists in Bali had a big influence in addition to my age and Balinese language skills. Many did not take my statement seriously or I was only looked down upon by community leaders. When I opened the training and events, many did not listen, or even did not attend, even though I had contacted them many times.

Communication was also another issue. The training activities were dominated by young people who did not really like formal and boring training. Often the trainers made jokes to make the training atmosphere lively and attracted participants' interest, but then there were those who were rude or a little harassing.

The position of female participants in general was also not better in Nusa Penida. Although I repeatedly asked women to participate by making direct approaches to mothers and young people I knew, they did not attend the training or meeting because they did not receive an invitation from community leaders. Sometimes they did attend if I was present because usually the participants were dominated by men. There was a feeling of shyness and perhaps embarrassment. This is understandable because they felt their place was at home and they followed the direction of male leaders. During our program, I never met the village head or the women's traditional village head. Learning opportunities were given more often to men, who, according to me, had lower desire to learn compared to women.

This program has taught me a lot of valuable lessons, both ones I learned personally and as an organization. What I regret the most was that women today were still undermined as capable of making changes in society. Their scope of movement was limited in the domestic sphere. This was one of the "homework" that would take a long time to complete.

Nusa Penida Ecotourism Trip Trial and Potential for Collaboration

In personal opinion, I felt that the highlight of the ecotourism development in Nusa Penida was the trial tour we held at the end of September 2020. This trial was a test for our partners in each village and also for us. From this pilot we could see what had been achieved over the past year and what needed to be improved in the future together with partners in each village.

We tried this trip for 2 days and 1 night. This summarized all the potentials of the five villages of Nusa Penida ecotourism model. On the first day, the guests visited three villages. The activities were art activities and learning about sustainable development models at the Learning House, learning about the Guyangan spring in Batukandik Village, and learning about seaweed cultivation and the importance of seaweed during the pandemic in Suana Village.

On the second day, the guests visited two villages. The activities were village tour and learning traditional *cepuk* and *rangrang* weaving in Tanglad Village and continued by visiting and learning about *Tembeling* spring and its forest located in Batumadeg Village. At least about 100 partners were involved in it.

Overall, the trial went smoothly with plenty of surprises at every turn. All of our trial guests such as travel agent partners, travel bloggers, digital agencies, and the media gave a positive response and liked ecotourism trips in Nusa Penida. The thing that surprised them was because they never imagined that Nusa Penida had so much potential for culture, nature and interesting stories. All of the invited guests joined this trip because they were "curious" with what activities to do. Some of them even offered JED to hold a follow-up meeting to discuss prospects for further collaboration.

Even though the trip went smoothly, there were still many aspects needed to be improved, such as the provision of supporting facilities for health protocols at each location/destination (such as a place to wash hands) and deepening of tour guide materials.

After the trip, we carried out evaluation with partners in each village. Most of them showed enthusiasm to continue this ecotourism program, even asked us to come back to discuss further about what they could improve based on feedback from test guests and subsequent collaboration processes, such as exploring other potentials, forming groups and determining the right price.

Conclusion and Expectation

Nearly a year of implementing program activities in Nusa Penida, I personally felt that the challenges we faced were intense and varied from issues of communication and coordination between us and our previous partners, between us and the host institution, and between us and community leaders. In addition, the issue of potential conflicts in each village discovered in the middle of the

Unforgettable Experience in Nusa Penida

program, gender equality (patriarchy), and public perception of a better and more profitable mass tourism also became challenges. All of these challenges become very valuable lessons for me personally and for organizations, with the hope (through this paper) they can be lessons for anyone who will develop programs with the same model.

My team and I at JED saw that one year was not enough to work in five villages because of the variety of social issues we faced. For example, our resource in one of the founding villages and members of JED, the traditional village of Tenganan Peglingsingan, revealed that while this village had been practicing ecotourism for more than 18 years and group members understood the concept of an Ecological tourism village, some components of the community complained the profit of this type of tourism as lower than that of mass tourism.

The concept of ecotourism we offered was the practice of tourism that does not only emphasize economic but also environmental and social aspects. The general public perception of mass tourism and sustainable tourism cannot be changed in weeks, months or even years. Because our concept is sustainability, we hope that as long as it is accepted in the community, this perception can slowly change over time and our collaboration with partners in each village will continue.

In the future, we hope that the enthusiasm of the partners in Nusa Penida will not fade even though the program supported by GEF-SGP Indonesia ended in October 2020. We from JED will continue to support them to complete their Nusa Penida ecotourism trip, by helping develop tours in several villages that have expressed direct interest in this activity ***





Ecology Learning House

A community in Nusa Penida attempted to encourage residents to keep the natural environment and cultural heritage in a simple and natural way.

Author: I Wayan Karta, Taksu Tridatu Foundation

THE SUN began to set. Its golden yellow light shone on Nusa Penida, an island in the province of Bali. That afternoon I was invited to walk down the path to a place belonged to I Made Arnawa whom I called *Bli* (Bro/uncle) Made. This place was in Banjar Nyuh, Ped Village and called Bukit Keker Learning House.

When we arrived, I saw a number of children and teenagers learning to dance seriously. Their eyes widely opened. The hands were opposite each other, swinging to the rhythm. Their faces were flushed and their fingers were outstretched. The legs crossed and the stomping shook the floor of the stage.

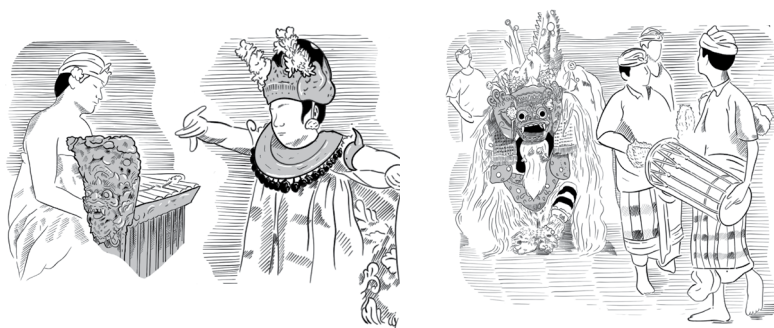


Figure 29. Dance Practice

"Keep going, Gus. Continue *malpal*!" said one young man to another youth. *Malpal* is one of the walking movements in dancing. They were learning Barong and Rangda dances. This dance is quite scary and is very famous in Bali. The dancer wears a costume and mask of a creature figure with large eyes, long flowing hair, large canine teeth, and a long protruding tongue. It is often performed

in traditional ceremonies as a symbol of worship. Barong and Rangda dances have also become an attraction for tourists visiting Bali.

The young man who taught the children and teenagers to dance was Komang Suryawan. "*Bli Komang*" was his nickname. He was born in Banjar Nyuh, Nusa Penida and is now 29 years old. The man with shoulder-length hair was a graduate of the Indonesian Arts Institute (ISI), Denpasar. The art of *kerawitan* was one of the arts that studies the science of playing gamelan and arranging traditional Balinese music. *Bli Komang* studied on a scholarship from the government which motivated him to graduate on time.

After graduating from college in 2012, *Bli Komang* was not interested in living in Denpasar city. Instead, he returned to Nusa Penida and hoped to work as an artist. The challenge was tough. Living in a village and facing the economic conditions of a poor family, *Bli Komang* was unable to be creative and found it difficult to find suitable jobs. For two years he had been unemployed. Occasionally he helped train residents to play the gamelan.

With his bachelor's degree in arts, *Bli Komang* was finally accepted as an honorary teacher at SMK Negeri 1 Nusa Penida. This is the only vocational school in Nusa Penida. In addition to teaching, he also fostered Pijer Muntig children's community. Since 2013, he has invited children to participate in environmental care activities. Every week they picked up trash in the port area. This activity was finally supported by the community by providing cleaning facilities and equipment. Unfortunately, their activities had not been able to inspire the community to dispose of waste in its place. Even so, the community he coordinated continued to carry out a number of activities to clean the village.

In 2018, Denik Puriati from Wisnu Foundation visited Nusa Penida. she held a meeting with a number of cultural activists and indigenous communities who were active in environmental and cultural preservation. *Bli Komang* was also present. This meeting became the forerunner of the establishment of the Taksu Tridatu Foundation.

Bli Komang was then recruited to become a field worker for the Wisnu Foundation. This opportunity opened his horizons. He participated in various community empowerment activities held by the foundation and thought that in Nusa Penida there should be a local institution that could carry out mutual responsibility. Finally he and his two brothers agreed to establish Taksu Tridatu Foundation. This foundation establishes and manages the Bukit Keke Learning House. Until late at night, *Bli Komang* was still talking to me.

BUKIT KEKER Learning House is not only an art space for children and young people. This place also provides ecological and cultural model laboratory. Nearby we can see an organic plantation. Corn, kale, mustard greens, and other vegetables grew there. Nusa mango, passion fruit, silica, srikaya, sweet tamarind, papaya, guava and dragon fruit as well as medicinal plants such as turmeric, red ginger, red lemongrass, kaffir lime, belimbing wuluh, vile shard, moringa, betel nut, and herbs also grew well.

In front of Taksu Tridatu Foundation office, I could see various plants grown using a permaculture system and a water-saving cropping pattern. Permaculture is the use of land that synergizes nature, humans and the environment as a single and sustainable unit. Environmental designer David Holmren and researcher Bill Mollison, both from Australia, pioneered permaculture in the 1970s by re-practicing what human ancestors did thousands of years ago.

An elderly man, I Wayan Belun, took care of this garden. Since childhood he was familiar with agriculture. However, the "explosion" of tourists to Bali, including Nusa Penida has made some farmers left their gardens and fields.



Figure 30. The Learning House

"Because of the advancement of tourism, I applied to be a porter on one of the speed boats," he said.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic hit Indonesia, Bali was one of the destinations for domestic and foreign tourists. However, the number of tourists fell in 2020. According to data from the Bali Central Statistics Agency, the number of tourist visits to Bali fell almost 100 percent compared to 2019. A number of businesses collapsed. This also had an impact on the tourism support service sector, including ship and speed boat transportation that connects the islands of Bali.

As passengers and tourists dropped during the pandemic, Wayan returned to farming, managing an organic garden at the Bukit Keker Learning House. In addition, by pursuing agriculture he could meet the family's vegetable needs and even shared with his neighbors.

He regularly checked the plants in the garden and cleared the weeds. These plants were often in danger of being eaten by pigs, cows, and other pets of his neighbors. Sometimes the animals ravaged the garden at night while he was asleep. He was annoyed, but did not give up. Due to his tenacity, he could still harvest his crops even in the dry season.

"I keep doing farming and will not abandon it because from farming we understand nature, which is all-giving. Farming gives us peace," he told me.

Organic fertilizers were used in the garden. *Pak* Wayan routinely transported cow dung and some crushed organic waste to be mixed with soil as raw material for fertilizer to be included in permaculture plots. In addition to cow dung, the source of fertilizer also came from Nyuh Kedas Integrated Waste Disposal Site (TPST) next to the Learning House.

THE EPICENTER is the right phrase to describe the position of the Bukit Keker Learning House. The art and ecological knowledge he practiced then spread to a number of places. I Wayan Belun's organic fertilizer made me curious and wanted to learn. Not far from the Learning House we could find Nyuh Kedas TPST (garbage disposal). On the left and right of the road leading to it, the scenery was green. As I got closer, I didn't smell the rotten garbage. The trash can was also neatly arranged. Plastic bottles were stacked and arranged neatly. Organic fertilizer in the form of compost was well packaged. All around it chilies, limes, kaffir limes, cucumbers, and even sorghum grew.

I Nyoman Moda planted and took care of the small garden. He was 48 years old and the officer who managed the Nyuh Kedas TPST. Prior to his current job, he was a porter on a fast boat just like I Wayan Belun. When tourism was good, long before the pandemic hit, I Nyoman Moda did not want to work in waste management. His income as a porter was higher than that of he got from taking care of smelly garbage.

He did not only manage waste in this TSPT but also did administrative works.

"I previously felt uncomfortable working with garbage," he said.

He was embarrassed because he imagined people's opinion who might underestimate his work. The stench of garbage that stung his nose made him even more uncomfortable. But he had no choice as tourism business did not improve. It took almost a month for him to adjust to his new job. He began to enjoy the environment and his work. He arranged the garbage disposal to make it neat and prevent bad smell.

The job of managing waste is actually equally important as the other jobs. A clean and comfortable environment through good waste management can maintain the health of residents from various diseases to support tourism. Scattered garbage and a pungent smell will never bring tourists to come. I Nyoman Moda began to understand his important role in society.

However, he was humble, "At least I participate in maintaining the cleanliness of the environment, there is something I can dedicate to my traditional village even though not many people know what I do."

Every morning he picked up trash from house to house. After nearly four hours of walking, he took the garbage to a temporary landfill to be sorted. After sorting, the garbage was put in sacks. The next task was to collect data. He recorded each waste taken, from the amount to the type such as organic waste, valuable inorganic waste, and residue. The waste was then weighed. He recorded all of this in the garbage registration document book. He then took the residual waste to the Biaung Final Disposal Site (TPA).

He did not carry out this task alone. The biggest problem was not in the technique of collecting or sorting waste. Based on his experience, the community had bad habits in waste management at home. I Nyoman Moda often found it difficult to encourage and tell the residents to be more concerned and disciplined in sorting

household waste. There were still many residents who litter. When disposed of regularly and sorted, the garbage will not cause bad smells, caterpillars or disease bacteria.

"I'm mostly annoyed because some residents don't sort the waste out, I reminded them many times but they keep doing it," he said. Even so, he remained optimistic that one day the behavior and attitudes of residents towards waste will change for the better.

WASTE is the enemy of tourism. Scattered or piles of garbage created an unsightly view. Photos of trash – dominated by plastic waste– scattered on Bali's beaches circulated on social media and mass media. Dirty beaches, eventually, can be a bad image of the tourism sector.

According to Bali Partnership research in 2019, the volume of waste in Bali in a day reached almost 4,300 tons! Within a year, the volume of waste in the province, which is a global tourist destination reached 1.5 million tons.

The study revealed that 60 % of the waste in Bali was organic waste, others are plastic waste (20%), paper (11%), iron (2%), glass (2%), and others (5%).

The research team also found that waste in Bali was not managed properly. Every day 2,220 tons of waste was not handled properly. A total of 944 tons (22%) are wasted into the surrounding environment, 824 tons (19%) are still being burned and 452 tons (11%) were wasted into waterways, then flew into the sea and polluted it.

In waste management, the availability of landfills is an important. Availability is important in households, places of worship, public places to final disposal sites, which collect all waste in an area.

In Nusa Penida there was only one final disposal site, TPA Biaung managed by the local government of Klungkung Regency. When I visited there, I saw various types of garbage piled up and unseparated. The site gathered the waste from all villages in Nusa Penida.

Many villages did not have a waste sorting program so all waste was carried directly to Biaung TPA. If it continues, mountains of garbage will be formed. In this landfill, I saw scavengers looking for trash that could still be sold. Farm animals were also allowed to forage here.

There was a strong smell of garbage when I entered the Biaung TPA area. I Nyoman Moda disposed the residual waste he brought with him in the westernmost part of the TPA. He regretted that there was a lot of unsorted waste in this TPA.

"Waste sorting needs to be done in villages so that the waste here is organized. At least a little bit of waste goes to the TPA," he said.

He took the initiative to teach waste management to the people around him, including his children. I Ketut Mardiana, his son, often invites him to participate in sorting the waste by putting bottles in sacks, packing fertilizers, and taking notes.

I Ketut Mardiana was 15 years old sitting as a 3rd grader of junior high school. He was happy to accompany his father to Nyuh Kedas TPST. He also learned to make organic fertilizer, then stacked it neatly. He arranged the plastic bottle sack. The plastic bottle waste and organic fertilizer were then sold. From selling garbage and fertilizer, he earned extra pocket money and can pay for his schooling.

In the afternoon he usually helps water the plants in the TPST. Vegetables and fruit plants in that place began to be picked.

"At least by joining my father I know the importance of managing household waste," the young boy told me.

He was also a student at Bukit Keker Learning House and dreamed of becoming a teacher.

FROM BUKIT Keker Learning House, I was taken by *Bli Made* to ride a motorbike to Banjar Pulagan and Banjar Jurangaya, Kutampi village. This was a pilot forest management combining forest resources and livestock called *silva pastura*. However, the distance was quite far; about 25 kilometers from the study house.

Our motorbike was sometimes was ridden fast and sometimes slow because of extreme road. The winding road and sharp incline was along the journey. Sometimes we had to pull the motorbike aside if we pass a car because the road is not wide enough.

On the left and right side of the road I saw green hills. I saw cassava, bean, and sorghum trees and shrubs. Bunut trees (similar to banyan trees), teak, coconut, intaran or neem, gamal, acacia, and pule also grow here. The leaves that fall from the trees are useful for fodder in the dry season.

We walked along the potholes. This indicated that we entered the countryside. The limestone soils on the road appeared to be more dominant. After about 45 minutes of travel, we arrived at Banjar Pulagan. Here I was invited by *Bli Made* to meet Kadek Suandra, one of the partners in *silva pastoral* activities and cattle breeding.

Kadek Suandra owned about five hectares of land. He planted corn and secondary crops on the barren field.. In addition, he also had five bulls and five female cows.

He told us that farmers often experienced a shortage of animal feed during the dry season. The animals were at risk of being unproductive, and even getting disease.

Taksu Tridatu Foundation then held a training program and practice of making dry and wet animal feed using fermentation techniques. This program provides a glimmer of hope for the availability and security of livestock food in the dry season.

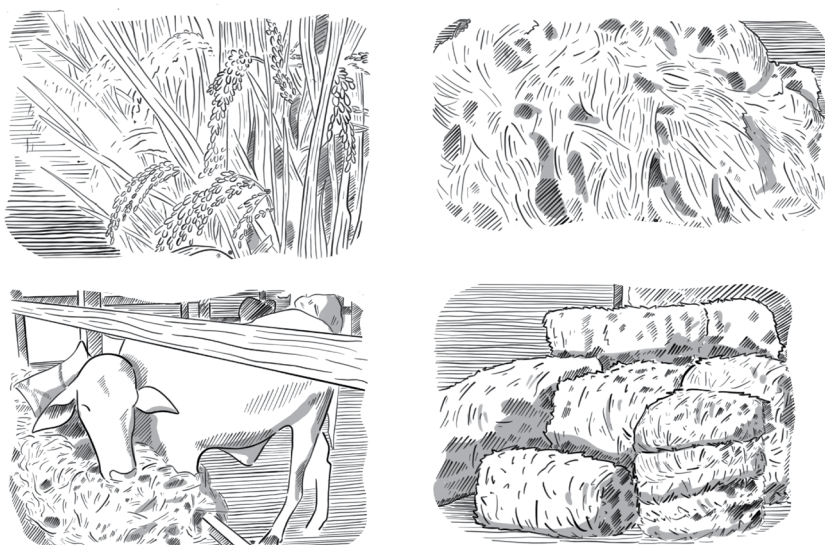


Figure 31. Production of Dried Animal Feed for Cattle

He and his friends collected grass and dry leaves for dry animal feed. This technology can reduce the purchase of feed which reduces costs by up to 60 percent of buying animal feed. In addition to dry animal feed, silva pasura program helps provide animal feed with better nutrition.

The problem of animal feed can still be solved, but there is another problem that has not been solved: water. Even though *cubang* was made on agricultural lands, this could not meet the need for water.

Cubang is the name for a water storage building in Nusa Penida. *Cubing* is in the form of a light bulb below the ground and a cube above the ground. Cubang stores rainwater during the rainy season

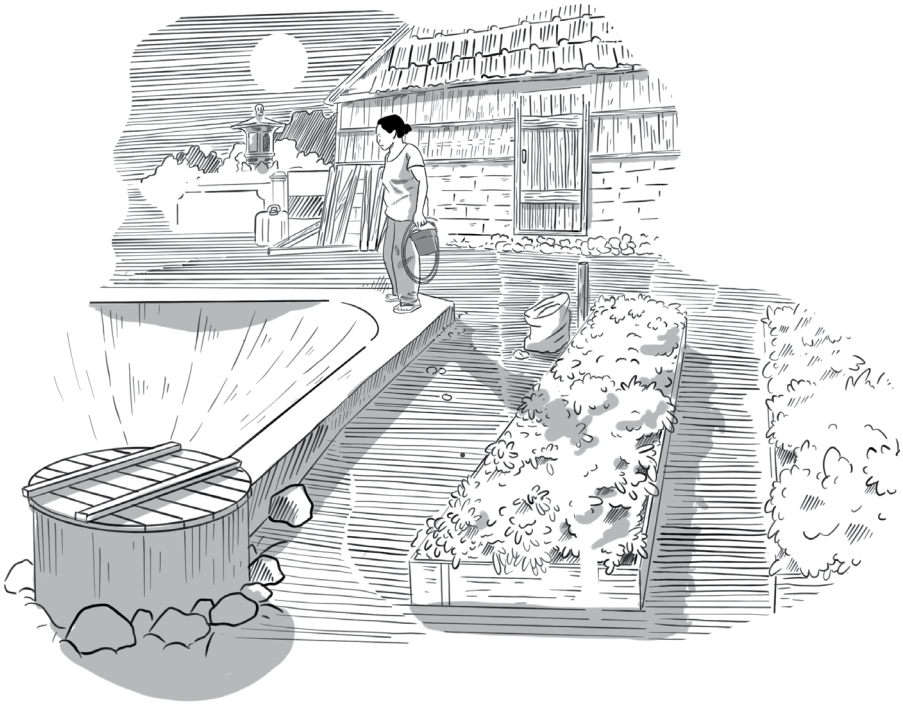


Figure 32. Cubang for Water Reservoir

Every house has *cubang*, some even deliberately make it on agricultural land. The water reservoir in the agricultural land is made tilted rectangle and is known as a *telabah*.

Kadek Suandra had three *cubang*. He hoped that in the future there would be assistance for the provision of gutters in gardens closest to farms or technology for capturing dew water. This can at least guarantee the water needs of residents' homes.

Until the afternoon, *Bli Made* and I talked with *Pak Kadek*. The sun almost set when we said our goodbye. In the middle of the road on a motorbike, *Bli Made* and I were still discussing to find a solution to price stability for Nusa Penida cattle and water supply. It's a long way to go. ***



Small Footprints in Nusa Penida

*Challenges in building the independence of
Nusa Penida people to manage the environment and
improve welfare.*

Author: Ni Made Denik Puriati, Wisnu Foundation

Prolog

Sometimes people asked me why I choose the kind of job related to community service. The choice did not come in sudden. Travel and life experiences have brought me here. Let's have a flashback.

I come from a small village where most of the inhabitants were farmers and manual laborers. I was born into a family of small farmers and construction workers. Economic limitations became our family's daily life. White rice was a food we rarely consumed, instead we had mixed rice more often; little white rice mixed with cassava, corn, jackfruit, bananas, tubers and sometimes sago. We felt happy to eat pure white rice just once.

My parents were only able to send my two older sisters to elementary school. In our extended family, only two older cousins managed to finish high school. As the youngest child, I was a bit luckier compared to them.

When I was studying in elementary school, I was often bullied and belittled by my classmates. In order to avoid this situation, I moved schools several times. However, none of the schools were safe for me. If there was a commotion in class, I was often made a scapegoat. Silence was the only thing I did. This experience lasted until I was about to enter high school. Defending yourself feels impossible. Injustice was daily life of village people who were economically powerless.

Small Footprints in Nusa Penida

Bitter experiences in the past made me determined to work with the village community, especially for indigenous people. I hope to assist them in overcoming inequality by fighting the lack of courage: afraid to express opinions, afraid to be different from others, afraid to change, afraid to start something, and worse, afraid to learn from mistakes and failures.

Making small footprints; that's how I call people who work like me. Small footprints in large quantities can cover the surface of this earth, that's what I believe.

The days went by. I did not feel I was with the residents long enough to experience ups and downs with them. One day I was asked to take on a new assignment.

On January 22, 2017 I was appointed as Director of the Wisnu Foundation. Being a director was an administrative position. It's was a big challenge.

Previously, Wisnu Foundation ran a waste management program prior to finally empowering the community. The change in direction of this institution began in 1999 after the reformation when freedom of expression had more space. That time, decentralization in the government system began to be implemented through regional autonomy. Political reforms also influenced Wisnu Foundation, which preferred to work on "safe and secure" issues and did not want to conflict with government policies during the New Order era. As a leader I had a responsibility to keep the organization running and make sure that the programs were implemented. Without funds, progress could not be achieved and designs of activities would not become a reality.

Amid my concerns about funding and the sustainability of the foundation's programs, an old friend, Ery Damayanti, contacted me in mid-2017. She said that another friend of ours, Chatarina Dwihastarini wanted to meet to discuss a collaboration. Ten years ago I met Dwi in Tenganan Pegringsingan Village, Bali when we were working together on a micro-hydro development project. The project was initially promising, but did not go according to plan due to natural, technical and human factors. Something that is intended for good often encounters obstacles. Dwi is now the national coordinator of the Global Environment Facility-Small Grants Program (GEF-SGP) Indonesia.

Dwi called me and told me that GEF-SGP Indonesia would implement a program in Bali, specifically in Nusa Penida for small island and climate change issues. She invited me to work together for this program. I also learned that Ery

was also involved in helping GEF-SGP to develop a baseline and strategic plan for the program.

Almost half a year since the conversation, on January 9 2018 I met friends from GEF-SGP Indonesia in Jakarta for further talks. They wanted to work with experienced institutions. However, other challenges come from internal side.

It was not easy to convince my colleagues at Wisnu Foundation to take this opportunity. They were still traumatized by our failure in Nusa Ceningan. There, we ran a program to restore sovereignty and spatial management rights to small island communities by building and developing cooperatives. The mentoring for more than three years succeeded in making the assisted groups independent, but then suddenly everything fell apart due to weak monitoring. What had been built seems to be lost, without a trace.

After going through a series of discussions and considerations, we agreed to work in Nusa Penida where the construction of tourist facilities is getting out of control. Nature and the environment are also threatened.

Another challenge was our limited knowledge of the conditions and character of the local community.

Would the proposed program be accepted and in line with village and community programs? The answer required a survey.

First Trip to Nusa Penida

Prior to starting the trip, our team looked at the landscape of the villages in Nusa Penida from Google maps to find several villages on the coast and in the hills that were quite close together. This is in accordance with Nyegara Gunung concept that the relationship between seascapes and mountainous or hilly landscapes has a bond with each other, thus the management must be an integral and inseparable part. We also related it to the development of rural areas in the Village Law, thus choosing villages that were quite close in terms of distance, which could benefit each other. Finally five villages were targeted for the initial survey, they were:

- Suana village, a coastal area located in Banjar Semaya. That time this village was the only area that had seaweed farming.
- Sekartaji village which is facing the open sea has coral hills overgrown with grasslands known as Teletabis hills, I did not know where the name came from.

Small Footprints in Nusa Penida

- Batukandik village which is also facing the sea. This is a village that has a fresh water source and has been managed by the Regional Drinking Water Company (PDAM) to support tourism development.
- Tanglad village, a mountain village famous as a weaving village.
- Batumadeg Village, a plain village that has a forest with a typical plant habitat of rudraksa. Rudraksa seeds or also called genitri are useful for relaxation, blood circulation, treating epilepsy, asthma and arthritis, in addition to being one of the ingredients in *upakara* (offerings).

On January 22, 2018 at 14.00 we took a fast boat from Sanur Beach Harbor to Nusa Penida. There were 10 people who left including me, my friend Atiek, the GEF-SGP survey team (Ery, Mas Cadra, Bang Zein, Mas Tirta, Edot, Yoyon, Aik) and Dwi from the GEF-SGP secretariat.

Returning to Nusa Penida unlocked old memories of mine

The last time I visited Nusa Penida was in 2012. That time Wisnu Foundation and *penglingsir pinandita* (people who have gone through the process of self-purification ceremonies as servants of the people in carrying out ceremonies) in Nusa Lembongan and Nusa Ceningan started *nangiang Sang Hyang Grodog*; an offering as a form of gratitude of abundance and perfection. For 11 days the village people meditated together to refine the soul. After 29 years of neglect, *Sang Hyang Grodog* was revived. That time we were assisting refugees to develop dry land agriculture and helped revive this almost lost cultural rite.

Of the five villages we surveyed, Sekartaji and Batukandik were the two that impressed me the most personally.

Our first destination was Batukandik village to meet the *perbekel* (village head). The village office was beige in color with sturdy pillars and the building looks brand new. A dark-skinned and well-built man was rushing to greet us warmly. His white teeth visible as he spoke. It was Wayan Katon, the only village head who answered our phone right away that we decided Batukandik as our first destination to visit.

When our group entered Sekartaji Village, it was already late in the afternoon. The coral hills was in sight along the way. Black clouds drifted by and the sky was a little dark. It was rainy season. Not many people were in sight. When I approached the village office, I only saw a few residents.

During our conversation, Sekartaji Village Secretary said, "Soon I also leave the village, I want to transmigrate." His statement raised our concern. He said that

most villagers chose to migrate in the hope of improving their standard of living. In the village only parents and children from elementary to junior high school were left. Those aged 17 to 50 years had left the village, and even left the island of Bali.

Accompanied by two village staffs, we enjoyed sights of the south sea coast. They talked about the land belonging to the traditional village which had been sold to investors and housing or tourist facilities to be built on it. The land was sold because the village had difficulty paying taxes. They also heard about Teletabis hill that would suffer the same fate because it was considered useless for the village. When I arrived at the edge of the southern sea, I felt a very strong wind. It is inconceivable that there were desperate people who wanted to build buildings near the high seas.

Second Trip to Nusa Penida

Middle-aged women to grandmothers were seen sitting in *rompok* or small beach huts that day. They were tying the seaweed with raffia rope while taking shelter. They were about to plant the seaweed again. Shirtless men sat relaxed under the tamarind tree that grew on the beach. On the tarpaulin, the seaweed was dried. The strong aroma wafted along the road. Banjar Semaya in Suana Village is the only banjar that is still actively developing seaweed.

The view of this village reminded me of Nusa Ceningan in the 2000s. In each family's house, a *cubang* or rainwater reservoir was shaped like a jug was is filled to the brim.



Figure 33. Seaweed Cultivation and Activities of Seaweed Farmers

Small Footprints in Nusa Penida

My arrival and my friends to Nusa Penida at the end of April 2018 was our second survey trip to visit four villages from the five villages that had been previously surveyed. We also conveyed the results of the initial survey to the village leaders and the plan for the continuation of the survey that had been carried out, as well as asking for permission to implement the survey results that had been formulated in the work program with the village government.

Nusa Penida was getting busier with the arrival of domestic and foreign tourists. Speed boats with four to five engines with a power of 250 PK (paard kracht) had been operating since 2015 making the waves of tourists even bigger. The journey that used to take 1.5 hours from Sanur Harbor now only takes 30 minutes. Speed boats were always ready to take passengers every hour.

Data collection conducted by Abdul Fikri Angga Rekso, a student studying at Bonn University, Germany, shows that at least 3,000 tourists come to Nusa Penida during the high season. However, our field observations yield higher figures. Of the 27 speed boats in Sanur, at least 5,000 to 8,000 tourists were transported to Nusa Penida. The impact is big. Many gardens in the sub-district of this archipelago have been converted into inns for tourists. New buildings for tourist facilities continue to stand. The need for clean water is increasing. Where do they get their water from? Relying on PDAM channels that come from Guyangan springs in Batukandik Village (212 liters/second discharge) and Penida (185 liters/second discharge) is not enough. During peak hours, the PDAM's water supply is completely shut off.

In contrast to the hustle and bustle of tourism activities on the coast of Nusa Penida, villages in the hilly areas still relied on rainfed gardens and livestock.

In Banjar Tanglad, Tanglad Village, we met a group of women who weaved a typical Nusa Penida cloth with a *cepuk* and *rangrang* motif. They did not use threads dyed with natural ingredients but synthetic one. One of the weavers expressed her desire to learn making dyes from natural ingredients.

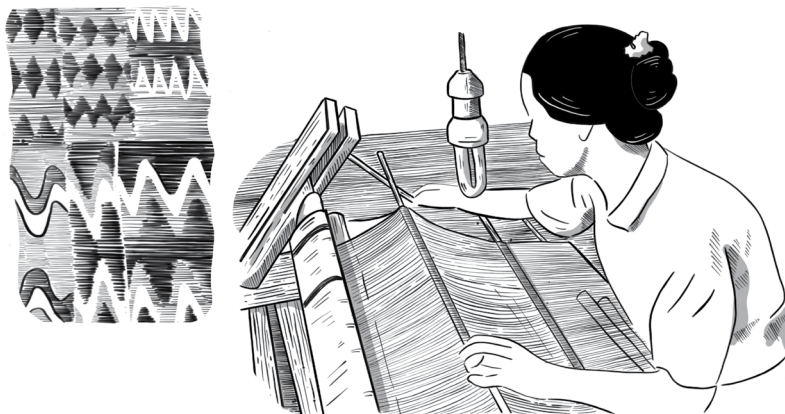


Figure 34. Cepuk and Rangrang Fabric Weaving Process

From Tanglad we went to Batumadeg Village. Mangku Made Rata who came from Banjar Mawan accompanied us. He had long hair and wore a hat. The banjar was inhabited by 17 heads of families, most of whom were women in groups because many men worked outside the village as construction and tourism workers. Sekartaji Village Secretary's statement was also evident here.

Mangku took us to his *bale banjar*. The building was roofed with asbestos, supported by thin wooden poles that had blackened with joints, rectangular pedestals made of rock. There were two large cots covered with bamboo slats. The two cots facing each other had turned gray. The ceiling of the building was ornate with carvings. There was also a sacred place in the shape of a rock, a pile of rocks neatly arranged without any cement or other adhesives. This natural material distinguished Banjar Mawan from other banjars with modern architecture.

The Banjar was apparently about to be renovated. Meetings had been held for the plan. Mangku as *kelian* (leader/chairman) of the *adat* in the and the village development chief (head of affairs) were powerless to face decisions from the majority of votes. "I tried to keep the banjar shape like this, but most of the people wanted to be replaced, so I lost my vote," he said. His tone was sad.

Four Villages for Ecological Practice

Four villages were selected in the first stage of ecological practice implementation in Nusa Penida.

In Banjar Mawan and Batukandik most of the people were farmers and ranchers. Given the absence of tourism destinations in these two locations, this is a good opportunity to develop eco-friendly agricultural models.

We started to involve Bali Environmental Education Center (PPLH), a foundation engaged in education and the environment, to carry out participatory mapping activities in the four areas we had defined. PPLH handles issues of environment-based education and waste management.

We also organized various partners. The Foundation develops seaweed seeds such as alparesi and red saccule in Nusa Lembongan. Idep Selaras Alam Foundation develops household gardens and planting medicinal plants. Alam Mesari Weaving Group in Tanglad Village was accompanied by Djamur Community (Timbool). The seaweed group in Banjar Semaya was accompanied by Kalimajari

Small Footprints in Nusa Penida

Foundation for the development of seaweed and seaweed derivative products.

The approach in the field was entirely within the authority of the partners who knew how to communicate with the community.

Program Monitoring

Three months after the program was running, I carried out monitoring in the field. The first monitoring took place in January 2019. From this monitoring, I learned about the various obstacles faced by partners. Communication that did not go smoothly with various parties in the village caused misunderstandings. The lack of good socialization of programs related to village politics, such as between traditional villages and official villages, between village governments and the government above them, and between implementing partners also encountered.

In the same month a monthly coordination meeting was held involving all implementing partners in Nusa Penida to find out the overall development of the program from all partners. Not only coordination meetings, the monitoring schedule had been set to once a month for partners. We also socialized this program at the sub-district level for smooth work and the realization of the expected results.

A year later, new villages emerged to be involved in this ecological program as a result of our search for new partners. They are Banjar Nyuh Kuku in Ped Village, Banjar Pulagan, Banjar Jurangaya, Banjar Ponjok and Banjar Jurangpait in Kutampi Village, Banjar Anyar in Sakti Village, Saab Temple in Mujaning Tembeling traditional village located in Batumadeg, Suana Village and Puncak Mundi Temple in Klumpu Village.

New Partners

One day I witnessed elementary school age children picking up trash on the beach of this island. They were accompanied by a young man wearing a hat. Maybe some people underestimated what they did, but they kept moving. That young man was Komang Suryawan who would later accompany me when I had to go to the field. He was active in Taksu Tridatu Foundation.

His body was a little thin with the average height of an Indonesian. His skin was clean and his eyes shone with enthusiasm. He worked as a contract teacher at the

Nusa Penida State Vocational High School 1 and taught art.

Komang was willing to be involved in the ecological program of Wisnu Foundation in Nusa Penida as a field staff. His main tasks were to assist the communication and coordination of all partners and partner institutions network of GEF-SGP Indonesia. He also coordinated and communicated the developments related to the programs carried out by each partner institution to the coordinator and program team at the Wisnu Foundation. The reports become our monitoring tool.

The history of the Taksu Tridatu Foundation is quite interesting. This institution was established in 2018 and has a notary deed in 2019. It was formed by a group of youth who have concern for culture, economy, social and environment in Ped Village. They were worried about developments in their area.

"We are also facing problems with waste, land sales and land conversion which are becoming more and more common," said Wayan Karta, chairman of the Taksu Tridatu Foundation. He hoped that the name Taksu Tridatu will become the three supernatural powers that come to save Nusa from the brink of destruction.

Since this organization had just been formed, Wisnu Foundation provided intensive assistance. Those who were expert in their fields were asked to carry out activities related to training centers, animal feed and livestock (silvopastoral). "Working in Nusa Penida should not be done half-heartedly and must be with sincerity and honesty," said Made Suyasa as the program implementer of the Taksu Tridatu Foundation. He has worked in Nusa Penida since 1984 and understands the character of the local community.

For the Balinese, *pura* (temple) is not only a place of worship but also has its own forest and land. Wisanggeni Foundation assisted planting at Pusering Saab Temple located in the traditional village of Mujaning Tembeling, Batumadeg Village and Puncak Mundi Temple, Klumpu Village.

Pura Saab had 11 hectares of forest land and *pelaba* (land) which had great potential to be developed in order to meet the needs of temple ceremony materials and temple *pengempon* (members). Vegetables and flowers were planted with designs following natural patterns in front of the temple. Puncak Mundi Temple had 5 hectares of forest land.

Planting at the peak of the dry season in September 2019 was carried out using dripping system method.

Small Footprints in Nusa Penida

"We invite farmers to collect used bottles to hang on each plant," said Muhamad Ramadhan from Wisanggeni. "During the dry season, plants receive a supply of water and liquid fertilizer that helps them survive," he continued.

What Wisanggeni's friends had implemented paid off in the next three months. Community groups harvested vegetables and flowers planted in the temple grounds.

Not only sharing knowledge on how to grow crops in the dry season, this program fostered brotherhood across religions and ethnic groups.

"We are actually ashamed of our Muslim brothers who were willing to help and teach our people. They even slept for days (*mekemit*) at the temple, even though we invited them to stay at home," said Ketut Sutama as a temple attendant.

Around 20,000 plants in the form of seeds were distributed to the assisted villages in an effort to establish food security and fulfill the need for rituals. Last year's long drought caused some of these plants to be planted during the rainy season in January 2020. There tends to be less rain in the eastern part of Nusa Penida than in the western part.

Ecological work in Nusa Penida is manifested in organic farming practices that are adaptive to the local climate. Planting the needs for agricultural and livestock materials, making dry feed for community cattle, and restoring ecological practices that were previously practiced by the community begin to be forgotten by the next generation.

In addition to the Taksu Tridatu Foundation and Wisanggeni Community, there were four new partners of Wisnu Foundation joining the project including Pijer Muntig Group – Nyuh Kuku and I Ni Timpal Kopi for clean renewable energy practices, Village Ecotourism Network that compiles all partner programs into ecological tourism destinations in Nusa Penida and Youth Workshop to embrace young people in Nusa Penida.

Wisnu Foundation as an Umbrella Institution

Not only responsible to the funder, Wisnu Foundation also bears important responsibility to the community as the beneficiary. The partnership program with GEF-SGP Indonesia was the first experience for Wisnu Foundation as an umbrella institution for partners and also my first experience in leading it.

Ensuring that the programs carried out by partners in the target locations, not cause conflicts or misunderstandings with the beneficiary communities or between partner institutions were also challenges.

Each organization has a different culture and work style. This is that diversity has the potential to cause conflict if not managed properly. However, differences of opinion can be resolved through good communication. Understanding will be born not only through work programs but also from getting to know each other personally from the people in these various institutions.

Despite continuous communication and coordination, problems could not be avoided even if they were sometimes trivial. The problems could get bigger if the proposed solution was not perfect and ended up disappointing. But on the other hand it trained patience, strengthens mentality, and becomes a valuable experience.

Pelaba of Pura Pusering Saab and Tembeling Forest

"We have been trying to get support from the government for a long time to be able to help preserve and save the temple, which is partly forested, until finally the Wisnu Foundation came," said Ketut Sutama, chairman of Pusering Saab Temple.

However, Mr. Sutama was worried, "There are several opinions circulating among the temple owners, that it is better to rent or lease the Pura Pusering Saab so that they can increase the temple cash to maintain the temple. If this happens, of course the existence of the temple as a forest will change."

Government regulation No. P.83/MENLHK/SEKJEN/KUM.1/10/2016 concerning social forestry explains that customary forest is included in it, as one of the efforts to strengthen the land of the Pusering Saab temple. However, reality is not as smooth as expectation.

The COVID-19 pandemic hampered us from traveling for coordination. Instead, we did our coordination via WhatsApp and telephone conversations from April to June 2020 with the beneficiary parties.

In July 2020, Nusa Penida was re-opened without having to attach the results of the Rapid test. After four months, this was the first time for us to have the opportunity to meet face-to-face with various parties and discuss the plan to propose the Pusering Saab temple as a customary forest.

Small Footprints in Nusa Penida

Accompanied by Komang, I met I Made Mustika, the village head of Batumadeg who had been supporting all of our programs. He suggested that I speak to the traditional village chief of Mujaning Tembeling in which Pusering Saab Temple is located.

"Actually, besides Pusering Saab Temple forest, there is forest called Tembeling here with a spring in it, but it's a state forest. We have tried to ask the Regent to be able to manage water sources for us to distribute to residents, especially residents who have not received water from PDAM. Now we have lifted and distributed the water, but it has not reached the residents' houses," he said.

He then talked about the policies of the central government, ministries, and districts which often differed and fluctuated. The Birth of Village Law No. 6 of 2014 with all its derivative regulations also creates estrangements between traditional villages and official villages. Traditional villages felt that they were regulated by the official village because the government budget for the traditional village went through the official village account and the customary village was obliged to report it to the service village. Regional Regulation of the Province of Bali concerning Traditional Villages no. 4 of 2019, which regulates the authority of traditional villages, was also seen by I Made Mustika as contributing to exacerbate the problem between traditional villages and official villages, especially in Batumadeg Village. "The issuance of this Local Regulation on Traditional Villages makes traditional villages feel that they no longer need the role of the official village," he said.

Under the hot sun, Komang and I rode on a motorbike to meet the village chief of Mujaning Tembeling, I Made Wistawan. The distance to the traditional village bale of Mujaning Tembeling was about 30 minutes. The village was still quite green even though it entered the dry season. Gamal flowers add color along the way.

There were several *pelinggih* or places where the gods and goddesses reside in the bale of this village. I saw a middle-aged man wearing a headdress or *udeng* batik as a head covering sitting waiting. Through his profile picture on WhatsApp, I estimated that he was around 50 years old. It turned out that he is still very young by his traditional position.

I Made Wistawan was in his 30s. His clothes were neat and his demeanor was calm. He turned out to be the youngest *bendesa* in Nusa Penida. Still sitting cross-legged and upright, he listened to our explanation about the importance

of mapping the area for the village, the importance of the *Pelaba Pura* being requested as a customary forest, and the pros and cons for the pengempon community and the village.

I was amazed to hear the answer.

"Although I have to bring *prajuru* together to discuss these goals, I personally believe that they will accept this proposal for cooperation. Because Lord Vishnu is actually present in our midst," he said. *Prajuru* is traditional village administrator.

He added, "Securing territory, map the potential we have have been haunted me, but they have never been sparked. It turns out that only from intentions and thoughts, that energy comes. For us, this is an opportunity for us to start organizing *palemahan* (areas/living spaces), then *pawongan* (humans) and *parhyangan* (sacred places)."

He then began to express his anxiety. Fresh water sprung in the Tembeling forest have become a tourist spot even though they were located in customary territory. Hyang Pancuhan Temple was also in the forest. The people of the traditional villages of Batumadeg, Banjar Salak, Banjar Macang and Mujaning Tembeling who were the temple owners should be able to take advantage of it. However, he thought the forest belonged to the state. People tend to take care of it, not manage it.

Ten days after our meeting, I Made Wistawan reported that the village officers agreed to cooperate in the process of mapping the customary village area and the process of applying for customary forest for Pura Saab and Tembeling forest.

On Sunday, August 9, 2020, a meeting to socialize Perda No. 4 of 2019 concerning Traditional Villages was held. Those who attended as resource persons were Sarikan Agung/Secretary General of the Bali Province Traditional Village Council, I Ketut Sumarta, and Director of the Customary Territory Registration Agency/BRWA, Kasmita Widodo. The moderator was I Made Suarnatha, the head of the Wisnu Foundation Trustees. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the South Bali Forest Management Unit-Bali Provincial Forestry Service.

All representatives from traditional villages were present, as were village government officials. Attended by about 50 people, the meeting went smoothly.

The community finally understood that Tembeling forest was not a state forest after hearing an explanation from the representative of the Bali Forestry Service.

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I Wayan Suardana. This means that Tembeling forest, guarded and cared for and considered a state forest was actually a forest area without a master or without a clear status.

"What is the status of the Tembeling forest if we ask it to be a customary forest? In whose name will the forest be, so that in the future there will be no misunderstanding?" said the head of the Hyang Pancuhan Temple, I Putu Anik. He has served as the village chief of Batumadeg and currently serves as the Village Representative Body in the official village of Batumadeg.

"So far what we know is that the forest is a state forest. When mapping the official village by the district government with the map that was brought by the district team, the forest was not included as part of the Batumadeg village area," said I Made Mustika, the village head of Batumadeg village.

Their questions hinted at something not simple. Will this be a fire in the husk?

"Now you know that Tembeling forest is not a state forest. That means that the status will later become the rights of the traditional village that occupies Tembeling forest. But the management can be done jointly by the four communities as the organizers that have been running so far," said Kasmita Widodo.

Ketut Sumarta added, "Wisnu Foundation and BRWA can later become partners in ensuring and digitally registering traditional village areas in Bali."

"After it is designated as customary forest by the Ministry of Forestry and the Environment, the community holding the decree will be able to submit proposals for activities that can be facilitated by the government in the context of preserving and managing customary forests for welfare as well as the sustainability of the forest and its surroundings," said Wayan Suardana.

When the status of the forest had been answered and the next step was ready to be taken, another problem emerged. Made Wistawan, the traditional village head of Mujaning Tembeling, began to receive questions from Batumadeg traditional village apparatus. What is the purpose and objective of the Mujaning Tembeling traditional village to map the Tembeling forest area? Does Mujaning Tembeling traditional village want to own Tembeling forest? On what basis does the Mujaning Tembeling traditional village claim the territory of the Mujaning Tembeling traditional village?

Made Wistawan explained that the mapping was not to own the forest, but to determine the boundaries of the area. However, the explanation was not accepted

by the Batumadeg people. He reported this problem to me over the phone.

For a moment I thought back to the experience of 20 years when working in Nusa Ceningan, in Lembongan Village. My friend Atiek and I were tried in a village officer meeting because of mapping in Nusa Ceningan; they suspected us. Mapping does not only resolve conflict but also instead has the potential to cause conflict. Some people even take advantage of the obscurity by allowing conflict to persist.

Leaving for Nusa Penida: The Beginning of the Conflict

While collecting documents and the results of the existing mapping, I got ready to go to Nusa Penida. Two days later I got there. Accompanied by Komang, we went back by motorbike to the traditional village hall of Muaning Tembeling.

Made Wistawan, accompanied by village officers looked at the map we brought.

"As far as I remember, there were no protests or signs of disapproval from the community during the point-taking process in the field. For the boundary with Batumadeg Village, we refer to the boundary map that has been made by the Wisnu Foundation according to the advice of the Mawan Banjar community. We were also accompanied by Komang when he took part in mapping the Mawan Banjar," said I Putu Widian, one of the mapping team and also Chairperson II of the Pengempon Pura Hyang Pancuhan.

There was no other choice. Clarification and verification to Batumadeg and counterpart villages had be carried out immediately. Deftly, Made Wistawan took the Balinese calendar he always carried with him to see auspicious days and adjusted it to the ceremonial agenda in the village. Finally, 8 September 2020 was decided to be the meeting date.

A sense of misgiving crept in. My cell phone rang at the accommodation that night. With a trembling voice, Made Mustika, the head of Batumadeg Village, said, "Maam, I apologize in advance for disturbing you. For tomorrow's event at Muaning Tembeling, can it be cancelled? I am afraid that there will be turmoil and clashes in society. It looks like I won't be attending the meeting tomorrow."

He explained that the situation was out of control. He asked me to come to his office first to explain to the villagers. The traditional village chief and officers from

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Batumadeg had written a rejection letter to the results of the mapping carried out by the Mujaning Tembeling traditional village.

I Made Granyam Santika, the village chief of Batumadeg also stated that he would not be attending the meeting. I was reminded of another story about I Granyam. This name was closely related to the legend of the Munjaning Tembeling traditional village. In the legend, I Granyam was a native of Nusa who didn't like immigrants like I Gede Maos. He tried to defeat I Gede Maos by complaining about his supernatural powers. Long story short, I Granyam finally lost.

Way out

When I was at the Batumadeg Village office, residents demonstrated in front of the office and on the streets. After talking without success with the adat village officials, I left the office and took the car to go to the Mujaning Tembeling traditional village. A number of friends and Dwi from GEF-SGP Indonesia were waiting in the car. They greeted me with a smile, which was a little reassuring. They knew that the problem was getting serious. The tears were about to fall, but I held it in as hard as I could.



Figure 35. Meeting for Formulation of Traditional Village Boundaries

Tense faces greeted us at the village bale. Pecalang were seen guarding along the path to the village bale, some of the village officers were smiling. I could barely hold back my tears. At the same time our group entered the bale, two youths in traditional clothes came and gave us a letter. It turned out that they were envoys from the traditional village of Batumadeg. The letter contained a rejection of this meeting.

Made Wistawan as the traditional village chief of Mujaning Tembeling finally spoke up. He apologized to us for the inconvenience caused. However, this was not his fault.

In his remarks, the head of the Klungkung Regency Madya Council, I Made Tirta, expressed his appreciation for the initiatives taken by the Mujaning Tembeling traditional village and the Wisnu Foundation to ensure the boundaries of the traditional village territory. However, the issuance of the Customary Village Regulation did not necessarily solve various problems. "The examples are real, they are before our eyes now. The question of the boundaries of traditional villages has often brought tension between traditional villages. Apart from the rejection letter given by the Batumadeg traditional village, they did not understand the contents of the invitation letter. The title of the invitation is clarification and verification. The villages present now, don't be like this. It doesn't solve the problem," he said.

The delegates from traditional villages and traditional banjars who were present at this meeting stated that they did not object to the boundaries of the areas that had been written and described, but asked that the names at the coordinate points should be replaced with names according to the Land and Building Tax Returns.

Even though the decision was taken by majority vote, Made Wistawan still wanted to restore relations with the traditional village of Batumadeg. He sent a letter of request for mediation to the District Alit Council. The letter was answered. Alit Assembly invited the two villages to attend a meeting on September 23, 2020 at wantilan Pura Ped, Ped Village. Wishnu Foundation was also invited to witness this process. I was present that time. However, the meeting did not result in an agreement. The delegates from the traditional village of Batumadeg insisted on assuming that the traditional village wanted to own the Tembeling forest and the Hyang Pancuhan Temple.

In the end, both parties agreed with the results of the deliberations and considerations of the Alit Council. The details of the agreement are as follow:

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The way out has been found. Was the problem over?

Months, even years changed. I Made Granyam Santika, the traditional village chief of Batumadeg, never signed the agreement. There were many reasons. As a result, to the date, the map of Mujaning Tembeling traditional village area has not been able to be signed by the Regent of Klungkung as one of the requirements for the application of customary forest. The process for submitting the customary forest of Pura Pusering Saab has been also hampered. However, the status of Pusering Saab Temple as a conservation area that has been managed by *pemempon* from generation to generation is traditionally preserved is still registered with the Indigenous Peoples and Local Community Conserved Areas and Territory and BRWA for the Mujaning Tembeling traditional village area. The goal is to protect this customary area.

Epilogue

Small footprints in caring for the nature of Nusa Penida through this ecological program have not stopped. The COVID-19 pandemic has proven that our work is not just a project, but rooted in the spirit of endless caring.

In March 2020, the pandemic that swept the world had an impact on Nusa Penida. The economy of a society currently relied on 10,000 tourists per day is now 0 (zero) tourists. Restrictions on entry access for residents who are not from Nusa Penida made this island completely deserted.

Based on the distributed questionnaires, 99 percent of respondents said they had been affected by the pandemic. A total of 72 percent of community food sources were obtained from buying in stalls or markets, 18 percent from garden or field products, 5 percent from seafood and 5 percent from assistance from other parties. This shows that the dependence of the people of Nusa Penida on the island of Bali was very high. There was no more income from the tourism sector. Most residents stated that they could only survive to buy food for the next three months and after that, it was not clear.

Several community groups involved in the current ecological program just felt the importance of the knowledge given previously and the importance of not depending on tourism alone.

"Now many members of the community members at Pusering Saab Temple are continuing the farming model as we applied and they are getting more

enthusiastic," said Ning Palupi from Wisanggeni, conveying information from members of Pura Saab.

"The seeds that we gave earlier are now starting to be planted in people's gardens to anticipate food needs during this pandemic," she continued.

Several statuses on social media showed that more and more residents were finally moved to cultivate their land and apply gardening techniques in planting media such as used pots or bottles at home.

Another story was revealed by Suwarbawa from Lembongan Village, "Now many people go to the sea again to plant seaweed and look for crabs at night for their alternative food."

The development of seaweed seeds showed the increase in the number of farmers who cultivated them, from five to 60 in December 2019. The work of the last two years with partner institutions and community groups was fruitful. Now Ceningan Strait is full of seaweed. Hundreds of people have been guaranteed their survival by seaweed in the midst of this pandemic.***



Ngayah is Life

The joys and sorrows of protecting the forest at Pusering Saab Temple, Nusa Penida, which is a protector of biodiversity and a place of worship.

Author: Ning Palupi, Wisanggeni91

AMAN was busy cutting the big trunk and branches of *Rudraksha* tree with a chainsaw. "Ngieeeeeng...! Ngieeennggg...!"

Not far from the roar of the saw, a bulldozer roared. The heavy equipment pushed the big trees up about 30 meters. Keerrraak! One by one the trees with trunk diameters as wide as an adult's arm fell.



Figure 36. Tree felling in the area in front of Pusering Saab Temple

On Monday, September 7, 2020, the felling of the *rudraksha* trees or also known as *ganitri* took place outside the Pusering Saab Temple complex, Batumadeg Village, Nusa Penida. This temple is one of the worship complexes built when Hindu kingdom in Bali was led by Prabu Renggan. Around this worship complex there were a number of *pelinggih* or places of worship, and statues made of stone. The roar of chainsaws, the roar of bulldozers, and the sound of fallen trees broke the silence of the atmosphere in this sacred area.

"We finally uprooted this tree because it was leaning and when we examined it, the inside of the trunk was rotten. I'm afraid it will fall into the building," said I Ketut Adisutama, Chair of the Pusering Saab Temple Committee, who is usually called Sutama.

Some people moved pieces of tree trunks. Pieces of tree trunks and twigs were placed at the end of the entrance to *wantilan* or meeting hall at the temple which is usually used for worship.

"Before we cut it, we asked for permission (*maturang*). And through a dream, we were allowed to cut this tree because it was old. It was difficult. The first tree took a long time to fall. Even with a bulldozer, then *senso* (chainsaw) only collapsed," said Sutama.

The man who often wore a hat added about sacredness of trees in the forest area of Pusering Saab Temple. "In the past, there was an incident when *ganitri* wood was used to build houses. Not long after, the wood was rotten, damaged and something bad happened to the family who used the wood. From the same wood, when it was used for temple shrines, for decades, it is still intact until now," he said again.

The sound of falling trees clattering and the roar of bulldozers made Aldo, a black haired mutt, barked loudly. From inside the temple, the dog ran out into the courtyard. Hewas disturbed by the roar of chainsaws, the roar of bulldozers, and fallen trees. woof! woof...!

Even though it was the decision of the temple, the felling of tens of years old *rudraksha* trees was too unfortunate.

HOT WEATHER in mid-June 2019. Two friends of mine, Muhamad Ramadhan and Eko Martono and I traveled to *Pusering Saab* Temple located in Banjar Dehan, Batumadeg Village, Nusa Penida. From Denpasar, we took a speedboat to the island.

The temple complex was surrounded by towering trees. The long drought in the middle of the year made the leaves fell.

"*Nuse* (Nusa Penida) begins to be hotter," said Sutama.

Sutama then took the three of us to the Jaba area, the temple in the north.

The forests in Nusa Penida were not only overgrown with lush trees full of shrubs and wild animals. In Pusering Saab Temple, Puncak Mundi Temple, Tembeling area, the forests were overgrown with gamal trees, Dutch teak, gold teak, shrubs and grass. During the rainy season, all was green. In the dry season, the trees withered, the soil dried up and the rocks were clearly visible.

Similar to other areas in Bali, the forest in Nusa Penida also has its own meaning for the community even though the character of the forest is different from the forests in mainland Bali. Its sacredness continues to be maintained from time to time as evidenced by the existence of various *awig-awig* (regulations), both written and unwritten. The goal is to maintain harmony between humans, nature and God. For example, *awig-awig* regarding sacred buildings in temples that are not allowed to use any type of wood. Temple buildings must use certain types of wood that are classy and considered sacred, such as sandalwood, genitri, agarwood, majegau, wangkal, pule, and jackfruit.

"Now it's a bit difficult to get the wood. At the temple, we have to wait for the sacred and big wood to fall down, then we can use it so we use teak and other woods. But still we can't cut down trees carelessly," Sutama explained to us.

Sacred trees with large diameters are generally grow in forests. However, none of the residents dared to cut down the big trees. Even if the tree is not bandaged with a *poleng* cloth (cloth with a black and white checkered pattern) as a sign as a sacred tree, the local community will not cut it down. The temple management has submitted various applications to various agencies, foundations, institutions or agencies for the care and management of this temple.

"Nothing has worked yet. We don't know what else to do. At that time, we got 'daksina' coconut seeds from a farmer group and we planted them in the front parking lot," said Sutama, pointing to the temple parking lot.

"Here we have difficulty obtaining materials for the ceremony. All are taken from outside *Nuse* and expensive. We sincerely hope and ask if you can please help us so that we can plant plants for ceremonial needs including fruit. We also have more monkeys. It's hard to plant. If it's dry, we also have trouble finding animal feed," he said.

Me, Rama, and Eko listened to Sutama's explanation while taking notes and recording our conversation under the hot sun. Sutama's explanation was in line with our arrival to the temple and meeting Sutama that afternoon. We were involved in environmental conservation activities that have been practiced by the community for generations.

We work in an institution called Wisanggenig1 community, an organization founded in 2004. Members of the organization come from various professional, educational, ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds based in Batubulan-Gianyar. At the beginning of its formation, this community held many discussions about studies, especially Sufism. Over time, the awareness grew to ground the knowledge gained from the discussion into a necessity. This community then developed into a youth organization in exploring each other's potential into small-scale collective work. Its vision is to create a sustainable, harmonious, civilized environment by studying sources of knowledge, practicing it in the smallest, closest, real scope.

In September 2018, the community held a "Rebo Ijo" in the joint secretariat area. Similar activities were then held in several places such as Lembang, Renon, Sanur, Negara, and Plaga. The success of the Rebo Ijo activity became our capital to expand our range of work and add assisted partners to other areas in Bali including Nusa Penida.

WISANGGENIG1 COMMUNITY received support from Indonesia's Global Environment Facility-Small Grants Program (GEF-SGP) to carry out a demonstration plot development program for monkey-food agroforestry, crop intercropping and vegetable gardens in Nusa Penida in 2019. Rama was appointed as the coordinator for programs implemented in forest areas, around Pusering Saab and Puncak Mundi Temples.

The conversation with Sutama continued in further discussions with Jero Mangku I Wayan Darya Susila, a stakeholder at Pusering Saab Temple and Puncak Mundi Temple. He fully supported the activities in the two temples. Next, we had a dialogue with a number of residents, traditional leaders and leaders, including village officials. In addition to a series of meetings to absorb opinions and suggestions, we also started hunting for various types of upakara plants and fruit trees requested by Sutama and Jero Mangku.

In October we held a series of activities and campaigns with the title 'One Seed for the Earth'. This movement involved various communities from young musicians,

underground musicians or underground as well as a network of friends of each personal member of the community and collected more than 50,000 seeds. The success of collecting these thousands of seeds has raised our hope to help the temple administrators in obtaining tree seeds that will be needed for worship ceremonies and temple repairs.



Figure 37. "A Seed For Earth" Concert

The seeds were then sown using the seed bomb technique in the Pusering Saab Temple area and the land of the former *Gerhan* Pura Puncak Mundi program from December 2019 to March 2020. *Gerhan* stands for for the national movement for forest and land reforestation. This policy was published in the era of the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono administration in 2004 which then reissued in 2017 under Joko Widodo presidency.

We also formed a working group tasked with conducting program socialization, training, and field practices with the community. Our first work was with Pusering Saab Temple working group then continued with Puncak Mundi Temple working group.

The seed planting program is part of Wisanggenig1 Community's agroforestry program. Agroforestry is also popularly known as agroforestry (*wanatani*). This is a land use system that combines woody plants (trees, shrubs, bamboo, rattan and others) with non-woody plants or with grasses (*pasture*), and sometimes livestock or animal components such as bees and fish, so that interactions are formed ecologically and economically between woody plants and other components.

We also studied inspirational stories about agroforestry practices in a number of areas in Indonesia, which later taught us many things when we were in the Pusering Saab Temple Protected Forest.

"We are even more excited by the number of young people and people who are involved and voluntarily support," said Rama, who leads the program.

A group of young volunteers from various regions and active workers crossed to Nusa Penida monthly. We named them Popeye's Crew. They were Dani, Redik, Imam, Bowo, Pras and Yoga. This young group was involved in the demonstration plot development program for monkey food crops agroforestry, crop intercropping and vegetable gardens.

During the activity, they spent the night in several places alternately; sometimes in Panca Mekarsari traditional hall, resident's house, or Pusering Saab Temple area. The atmosphere was quiet, and the occasional sound of gamelan was heard in the middle of the night accompanied them. "We learned a lot and continued to learn life. In Nusa Penida, we forged; cried, laughed and joked together," Redik told his experience.

They also attended traditional invitations held by traditional leaders as well as residents, such as the three-monthly baby ceremony, cutting teeth, weddings and even death.

"We are grateful that the residents, community leaders, and temples have received very well. We are allowed to stay at the traditional hall, at the temple. We cooked and did many things even joining the temple ceremony," said Eko.

"I am amazed. They (young volunteers) are our strength," said Rama, who hope that the young seedlings will grow to preserve and protect the forest.

ACCORDING TO the data from the Central Statistics Agency, the forest of Pusering Saab Temple has an area of 11 hectares. This is a protected forest. This means that legally, Pusering Saab Temple forest area is protected because it has important benefits and tasks in maintaining the ecosystem. The main function of this forest is to protect life support systems to regulate water systems, prevent flooding, control erosion, prevent sea water intrusion, and maintain soil fertility.

Based on the existing germplasm and the condition of the soil which is full of humus, Pusering Saab Temple Forest is estimated to be primary forest and includes a buffer/water catchment area in the southern part of the island. There are various types of trees that are decades old, such as *genitri/rudraksha*, *meranti*, *tingkih / candlenut*, *pangi / pucung / keluwek*, *kepah*, *pregiding*, *majegau*, *angih*, and *gunda*. There are also rattan, lontar, bamboo, mahogany, ipil, and tebil-tebil.

This forest is a habitat for long-tailed macaques, albatrosses, various types of butterflies, pythons, cobras, green snakes, and various types of *luwing / millipedes*

(gray, black, black and orange, yellow, red) are *pelaba* of Pusering Saab Temple. As land for the temple plaza, forest products may only be taken for the benefit of the Pusering Saab Temple, for example to fulfill ceremonial needs. People are prohibited from cutting trees and taking anything from the forest, including leaves for animal feed. In this forest there are three temples, namely Pusering Saab Temple, Batu Paras Temple, and Ratu Gede Dalem Slimped Temple. Pusering Saab Temple includes Sad Kahyangan Temple (six main temples) in Nusa Penida. When the rainy season begins, various types of mushrooms, ferns, and small chilies can be found in this forest.

No resident dares to cut down trees in this protected forest area carelessly. In addition to being protected by state law, residents also protect this area through customary rules. Everyone who enters this area must comply with various taboos when in the forest. A person who enters this forest, for example, is prohibited from speaking harshly or dirtyly. If there are several people in the forest, it is forbidden to ask which way to go. It is forbidden to take anything in the forest before performing the supplication ceremony. No shouting in the forest and littering. Not only that, if one sees something like a snake or something surprising, he may not immediately shout or tell others.

The residents believe that the trees and animals in this forest are creatures that participate in guarding and protecting the sacredness of the temple. According to Kadek Jiwa, not anyone can enter and leave the forest for any purpose. This old man was one of the officers assigned by the Pusering Saab Temple to guard people who want to enter and leave the forest. He also has a duty as *pengempon* or the person appointed to perform rituals of worship at Pusering Temple. As *pengempon* he is also responsible for the ceremonies held at the temple such as *odalan*, *galungan*, *kuningan* and other big days.

Kadek Jiwa is never afraid to go in and out of the forest alone. His main weapons are a sharpened sickle and a ball shoe (a rubber shoe with serrations at the bottom like a soccer shoe). On a typical day, in the morning, Kadek goes to the fields or looks for grass. By noon, he goes to the temple, makes coffee or just sits for a while. He also worked odd jobs, including climbing coconut trees, chopping bamboo, felling trees, chopping shrubs, and looking for animal feed.

"No one dares to enter the forest other than Kadek Jiwa," said Sutama. Kadek is always alone in the forest without friends. Other people often run away because they often see something or experience strange events. According to Sutama, there were even people missing in the forest.

"No one dares to cut down a tree other than Kadek. Even people who are considered sacred and strong here are also afraid," continued Sutama.

Kadek recounted that there was a large snake that was underground in a position circling the temple in the forest of Pura Pusering Saab. "The snake will appear when something happens," he said.

The large trees that surround the temple complex not only serve to provide the shade and tranquility needed for a sacred atmosphere in worship. There are various other benefits that can be obtained. An example is the *Rudraksha* tree.

Rudraksha is a word in Sanskrit. *Rudra* means Lord Shiva and *raksha* means eye. *Rudraksha* is then believed to be Lord Shiva's tears that fall to the earth and grow into a rudraksha tree and have good energy for anyone who gets and wears it. *Rudraksha* seeds are used as prayer beads by Hindus in India. The seeds are 0.5 centimeters in diameter. When dried, the seeds will be wrinkled and hard. Wrinkles of the skin form streaks called *mukhis*. Each seed has a different *mukhis* and becomes a measure of efficacy. On average, rudraksha has *mukhis* under 8, while the majority of people are looking for are *mukhis* 9 to 30 as they are rare. The higher the number of the *mukhis*, the more expensive it is. It is said that the energy is also getting stronger, both for health and for mystical things, such as luck and spiritual enlightenment.



Figure 38. Rudraksha Tree and Its Derivative Products

The local people believed that *rudraksha* seeds are efficacious to overcome a number of diseases. These seeds are considered to have electromagnetic power so that if they are worn, they can control blood pressure, reduce stress, and overcome various mental illnesses. These seeds can also help cure medical diseases such as epilepsy, asthma, hypertension, arthritis, and liver/cirrhosis. In order to get the medical benefit, one drinks water of *rudraksha* seeds which is previously soaked for 30-45 minutes or leaving the soaked water overnight and drinking it in the morning when the stomach is still empty.

PRESERVING PROTECTED forest also means taking care of Pusering Saab Temple. For Made Danta or Made Betet, Pusering Saab Temple is like a second home. More than 15 years he served in the temple. There he helped prepare *canang* and *pejati*, *kamben*, *senteng*, *tirta* and other necessities for residents from outside Nusa Penida who wanted to pray at the temple. He also made *rudraksha* necklaces and bracelets and feeds the *kucit* (piglets) kept on the outskirts of the forest near Dalem Slimped Temple.

There were times when he made rings from coins minted in 1991 and coins from several countries with simple equipment. He got the coins by collecting them for years and buying them from someone who also collected coins from other countries. While at the temple, Betet was accompanied by three dogs named Aldo, Goji and Unique.

"I'm performing *ngayah* here," he said.

Ngayah custom grows and develops in Bali. This is a kind of mutual help, mutual cooperation, or working sincerely without expecting anything in return. The practice of the local wisdom is carried out while still following the customary rules and social rules that apply. *Ngayah* is a social obligation of society. By performing it, they fulfill their social and religious obligations of Hinduism. *Ngayah* is usually performed in a *banjar* or similar area of the Neighborhood Association or in a sacred place such as a temple.

The practice of *ngayah* does not look at educational background, occupation, or social status. Anyone with sincere heart and intention can participate. The pattern applied is to rotate each *banjar* for young or old men. Young people usually do it

to represent their parents. The schedule of activities adjusts to the local traditional calendar; it can be at the beginning, middle, or end of the month and lasts from one to two weeks.

Long before deciding to be a temple guard, Betet worked whatever he could in Denpasar and changed employers many times. He met the woman who later became his wife there. Feeling that working in Denpasar was not enough to change his fate, he even had the desire to become a transmigrant. Because his family did not allow him, he finally decided to return to work in his village, Batumadeg Village.

"There were no guards at the temple because he joined transmigration to Sulawesi. I'm still *ngayah* in the temple until now and I'm just happy doing it," said Betet.

Over time, he became familiar with the ins and outs of the temple. He was fluent and deft in preparing all kinds of ritual facilities that he did not know before. He was also fluent in Indonesian and masters some English vocabulary. He knew various types of animals and vegetation around the temple, and was also patient in dealing with various types of people who asked for help or bring him here and there. Recently, he has grown to love plants.

When we met, Betet was sorting and drilling the *rudraksha* seeds. Next to it, a pile of *canang* filled with flowers and sliced pandan leaves wrapped in striated plastic.

"These seeds are used to make bracelets and necklaces," said Betet, correcting the angled position of her glasses and placing the electric drill to the right of where he was sitting cross-legged. "These little ones are good but hard to find," he continued.

The brown seeds strung together into bracelets and necklaces were obtained from the *rudraksha* tree growing in the temple area and in the forest. Three trees were on the road to Ratu Gede Dalem Slimped Temple, two trees were in the forest on the west side of Pusering Saab Temple, and the other two were on the side of the road to the Pusering Saab Temple entrance. No one knows for sure how old each *rudraksha* tree is.

"When I was little, maybe five years old, the tree was already there. It was tall and big," said Betet. The tree was said to only grow in the forest of Pura Pusering Saab.

"Once it was planted in other places, but nothing was alive," he said.

We invited Betet to plant the seeds that had been collected through the "Seeds for Earth" action. He was devoted in guarding the temple and had knowledge of a number of trees.

THE MIDDLE of November 2019. The leaves fell and the dry air caused white scales on the skin of the body. Popeye's crew shared roles such as carrying an electric sprayer, carrying and picking up mahogany and fruit seedlings, holding used aqua bottles plus ropes and *qjir* (bamboo sticks cut into small pieces), pushing a bow filled with husk charcoal, compost, etc., bottles filled with liquid organic fertilizer or more commonly called a POC and a bucket filled with water as well as carrying a hoe and carrying a sickle.

With determined steps, the young people combed the outskirts of the Pusering Saab Temple forest which bordered the community's agricultural land.

"We want to create a buffering zone. A food park for monkeys," said one young man.

The buffering zone is intended so that in the future, fruit trees such as soursop, juwet and sapodilla kecil will not only be used for food, but also for monkeys and residents.

On the east side of the temple in the forest, in loose parts with Kadek as a guide, Betet and other men who are were also performing *ngayah* planted productive fruit crops such as avocado butter, green avocado round, rambutan, mango, durian, sapodilla sedan, and jackfruit. In the north, they grew mango garifta, mango golek, soursop, srikaya, and sapodilla kecil. In the western part of the temple they planted mangosteen, guava and cempaka. On the south side of the temple and along the road to Ratu Gede Dalem Slimped Temple they grew durian, soursop, juwet, ampupu, cempaka, red guava and tabebuya.

The planting hole was made using a hoe. Once the holes were made, the plants were planted immediately and then sprayed with POC solution. After that, next to the plants, aqua bottles were filled with POC solution and the cap punched with a needle. Then the bottles containing the POC solution were tied with bendrad wire and tied to a bamboo stake.

Bowo explained, "This is called infusion technology." This technology is intended so that the plants can survive as long as they were not watered or rainwatered.

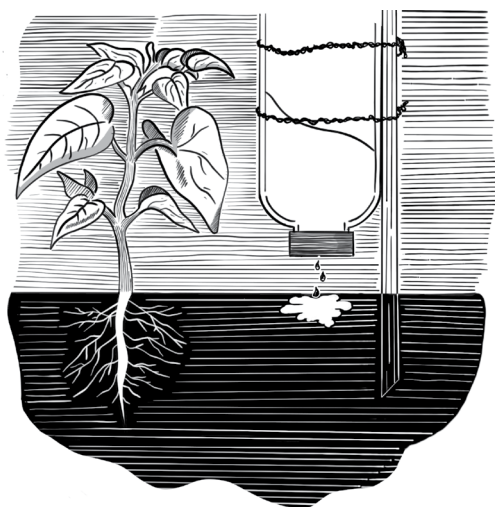


Figure 39. Simple Infuse Water Technology

Tree planting was also carried out in several elementary schools, Klumpu Satu Atap Senior High School, village office areas, banjar halls (Angas, Bila, Tiagan, Tulad, Rata, Subya), Griya Bangun Urip, and Paibon Pasek Gelgel Temple. Outside the Kumpu Village area, planting was also carried out in Penida Temple (Sakti Village), Tunjuk Pusuh Temple (Tanglad Village), Penataran Ped Temple (for Nagasari Trees-Ped Village), Nusapenida Police Office area (Ped Village), very small ship port area, (Batununggul Village), and Bukit Keke Learning House (Ped Village).

Other activities carried out by the Wisanggeni⁹¹ Community team together with volunteers included the construction of a hatchery, nursery and seedling transit house at Pusering Saab Temple. The construction of a transit house for seedlings was also carried out at Puncak Mundi Temple. Mandala gardens and vegetable gardens as well as *bebungkilan* gardens took place at Pusering Saab Temple. Not only that, the team also installed irrigation installations at Pusering Saab Temple and Puncak Mundi Temple. Training on making POC, vegetable pesticides (pesnab) as well as simple seed breeding was held at Pusering Saab Temple. At Puncak Mundi Temple, they made plant protection devices from monkey disturbances. More than 13,000 trees were planted, including productive fruit trees, fruit trees for monkey food, perennials for reforestation, ornamental plants and traditional crops. All these activities involve the community as the main actor through the *Ngayah* custom.

The agroforestry program slowly began to pay off. Until March 2020, an

agroforestry demonstration plot for monkey food plants, traditional crops, productive fruits and vegetables in the Pusering Saab Temple area was established on an 11-hectare land. Most of the approximately 8000 seeds of various types of productive fruit plants, monkey food fruit, and reforestation trees were planted together by the residents.

Various vegetables with a weekly life cycle and have even been harvested several times. They were kale root, mustard greens, pokcoy, pumpkin, and okra. The residents flocked to the temple. They also whispered, talked and spread the news to their neighbors and acquaintances.

"Mimiih, ade Nak Jawe medagang sayur di pure oo. Engken to?" (Wow, there are Javanese people selling vegetables at the temple, how is it possible?)

"Pang meli anggo mepunia ring pure." (Let's buy them for the alms at the temple.)

Some residents did not seem to believe that vegetables can be planted in the temple area and thrive.

"I didn't think that it would be possible to grow vegetables here and it's fertile. This means that the land here can actually be cultivated. I want the seeds and fertilizer. I also want to grow plants at home," said Kadek, a travel driver who buys fresh vegetables.



Figure 40. Vegetable Sales and Purchase Activities in the Temple Area

All proceeds from the sale of these vegetables go to the temple treasury and are referred to as *punia* funds.

The Pumpkin and Okra Gardens adjacent to Mandala Park also produced good and abundant fruit. The pumpkins were used for consumption by males in *odalan* (temple birthday) and some were used as seeds and distributed to the residents. Okra fruit was processed into infused water and named *Toya Seger*, a beverage for *pemedek* (people who come to pray during the ceremony) and the deputy regent's entourage who pray at the temple.

I Kadek Cik, a resident whose garden was in the south of the temple participated in *ngayah* and was involved in the training. He built a vegetable garden (green mustard, pokcoy, kale, cucumber, lemongrass, bitter melon), and fruit (watermelon, banana) using local raw materials for the manufacture of compost and vegetable pesticides. In the dry season (July to August) when there was no vegetable supply from mainland Bali which is exacerbated by the pandemic, he harvested his vegetables. Residents and shop owners flocked to buy.



Figure 41. Odalan Event at Pusering Saab Temple and Toya Seger

In Banjar Tengaksa, on land borrowed by a relative, Betet with minimal equipment and resources also buildt a vegetable garden. Betet who decided to

stop being a guard at Saab Temple is now working any jobs. Together with his wife and two young children, they invited children around their house to garden in polybags by planting long purple eggplant, cayenne pepper, green mustard, pokcoy, and cucumber, in an area of about 10 acres. There were approximately 1200 polybags there. From these activities he distributed the first harvest to his neighbors.

"Some were sold to stalls and neighbors, *Mbak (elder sister)*," said Luh, Betet's wife happily.

"Because no one grows vegetables here, so many people asked for the vegetables when harvested. Some who already knew the taste then bought the veggies. Cucumbers were not harvested because they were for seeds," Betet replied.

He hoped to continue to develop farming activities by increasing the area of land, either borrowing from his family or renting it.

Pekak and Kadek Jiwa who were also domiciled in Banjar Tengaksa also experienced the same. They used manure and produce POCs to fertilize their corn, sorghum, beans and pumpkins. They admitted that during the dry season last year, their plants almost died and did not bear fruit. When the rest of the residents did not have anything to harvest, they harvested corn, beans, and pumpkins.

"*Dini nganggo POC, jagung-jagung dadi mebuah (now by using POC, the corns become fruitful)*," said Pekak which was agreed by Kadek Jiwa.

In Banjar Dehan, I Ketut Utama, the Head of the Pusering Saab Temple Committee together with the village secretary of Batumadeg made POC in their respective homes and used them to fertilize corn, sorghum, root kale, beans, mustard greens, etc.

"This will later be developed into farmer groups. Sorghum has been harvested and will be used for seed again. Some have been asked by the residents," said Utama.

Residents and *pengempon* also harvested *gemitir*, *ratna*, *sandat* flowers planted in Mandala Park. Various types of upakara plants such as the crown of the gods, grapefruit/jerungge, flower cut, nagasari, red rice, tuberose and several other types of plants were also grown in the temple. The temple became more and more beautiful. Many residents even took selfies there.



Figure 42. Pemedek Harvested Mitsir Flowers at Mandala Garden of Pusering Saab Temple

END OF March 2020, bad news came from the State Palace. In an effort to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 outbreak, the central government announced a policy requiring local governments to apply regional restrictions. In Bali, Governor Wayan Koster immediately issued a policy to limit the mobility of citizens, except for urgent or special interests. Residents were prohibited from visiting crowds, entertainment centers, and delaying plans to go to or leave Bali.

"So that we can control it so that the risk of spreading COVID-19 can be managed properly," he said as reported by *Suara.com*. The provincial government of Bali, according to Koster, urges all traditional and religious activities to be attended by a maximum of 25 people.

The pandemic period was a difficult time for me, Wisanggenig1 team and a number of young volunteers to interact directly with the residents. The program which was scheduled to be officially closed in April at the Saab Temple was also canceled. Communication and coordination with the temple committee, community leaders and our residents is done via telephone and WhatsApp (WA). The new normal implementation policy was issued by the regional government in August. In the end of the month, we decided to return to Nusa Penida.

During the pandemic, we canceled a number of plans, including the plan to plant the remaining seeds by residents. Tree seeds such as gaharu, sandalwood,

majegau, intaran, mahogany, tabebuya, cempaka, ampupu, juwet, and soursop were neglected and many died. No watering. The temple guards said that the water line was shut off.

In the area of Puncak Mundi Temple several monkey food plants (sapodilla kecil, soursop, and juwet), *upakara* plants (gaharu, majegau, nagasari, jerungga or grapefruit, intaran, sandat, and cempaka), and greenery plants (mahogany, ampupu, tabebuya, and durian) were still alive. Productive fruit crops such as durian, jackfruit, sapodilla, avocado, rambutan, mango garifta, mango golek, and mangosteen were distributed to residents through Jero Mangku Darya Susila. Klumpu Satu Atap Senior High School obtained plants such as mahogany, tabebuya, agarwood, soursop, and mango. Tabebuya trees with yellow and purple flowers were planted in Klumpu 1 Elementary School and along the road to the Klumpu village office. Around 20 percent of the plants that had not been planted during the pandemic were distributed to residents, Penataran Ped Temple, Banjar Angas, Banjar Bila, Banjar Tiagan, Griya, and Penida Temple. Most of the plants that historically came from the Amazon forest area, Brazil, could grow well in these places.

MAY 2020. The management and traditional leaders of the Pusering Saab Temple conducted deliberations and evaluations related to temple management. The Covid-19 outbreak had an impact on temples. The number of visitors and residents from outside decreased. The performance of a number of worshipers guard was also evaluated, including Made Betet.

Betet decided to back off. There was no information from the temple regarding Betet's resignation. As a result of the position emptiness, many plants in the Mandala Park died. Seedlings in nurseries were not taken care of. Polybags in blisters or beds with limestone borders that used to be filled with vegetables were empty and dry. Vegetable gardens, pumpkin gardens, and *bebungkilan* gardens left traces of dead plants. About 15 durian trees planted along the road to Ratu Gede Dalem Slimped Temple gone missing.

We reported all this to the Wisnu Foundation, the organization that served as our liaison to the GEF-SGP. The team from the Wisnu Foundation asked Wisanggenig1 team to reorganize the Mandala Park. We moved quickly considering the activity period in Nusa Penida was getting shorter.

We immediately communicated and discussed with the temple committee. As a result, the temple committee asked us to provide back all the seeds such as

cucumber, pumpkin, kale, chili, eggplant, and mustard greens. They also asked for seeds of long-lived and short-lived flowers such as roses, frangipani, arjuno shoots, jasmine, tuberose, mitir, pearl flowers, and broken. Not only that, the committee also asked for equipment such as paranet, polybags, husk charcoal, manure, and liquid organic fertilizer, in order to reorganize Mandala Park and vegetable gardens.

We could accommodate these requests. All procurement of seeds, seedlings and equipment was purchased using the Wisanggeni 91 cash. After discussing with the temple committee members, it was agreed that the delivery of seeds and equipment would be carried out in September the first and second weeks before the Galungan and Kuningan holidays. Seeds, seedlings, and equipment to reorganize the Mandala Park were sent from Denpasar by speed boat.

On September 5, 2020, according to the delivery time agreement with the temple committee, thousands of seeds and others arrived at Banjar Nyuh port and were immediately taken to the Pusering Saab Temple. On Saturday from the port of Banjar Nyuh the Wisanggeni91 team brought seeds and supplies to the temple.

Shortly after arriving at Pura Saab, the team discussed with the head of the temple committee the plan for planting and plotting the location. The time and day for replanting was agreed on Monday, September 7th. However, in the discussion, I Ketut Sutama revealed that the temple committee had also planned renovation activities around the Mandala Park. He said the committee would make the outskirts of Taman Mandala permanent without changing the design of the planting location. He also stated that the arrangement and replanting of damaged and dead plants could still be carried out on the same day as the initial renovation activities. Two new people performing *ngayah* and Kadek Jiwa were assigned to assist the Wisanggeni91 team.

PLAN stayed as plan. Monday morning, September 7, 2020, Mandala Park was completely dismantled. When we arrived, a number of large trees began to be cut down. Concrete was erected. Some of the plants such as sandat, jerungge, red rice, tuberose, moringa, nagasari, crown of the gods, were pulled out and piled up. There were only a few trees left. The pumpkins and cucumber seeds were torn down and the *pelupuh* (vegetable beds supported by limestone) were also removed.

The demolition process was carried out to the east of the temple. About 15 meters from the asphalt road, machines and heavy equipment cut through the trees. Some of the seeds planted in January, such as tabebuaya, durian, avocado, rambutan, and jackfruit trees were scratched by a bulldozer and damaged by a large fallen tree.

Concrete backs were erected along the road leading to the entrance of the temple area to the back which is straight with the temple's wishilan. The Wisanggenig1 team recorded the damage to the plants that had been planted for more than half a year. More than half of the trees planted were damaged. Meanwhile, in the northern part of the temple, of the total 104 soursop trees planted, only three trees remained. Another hundred soursop trees were cut down, uprooted, covered with shrubs and filled with building demolition materials.

We found all the seeds of mahogany, cempaka, intaran and ampupu were piled up and buried alive under a coconut tree covered with dry leaves and some of the material from the demolition of the building. About 200 sandalwood seeds also died.

Seeing the demolition activities with heavy equipment that knocked down hundreds of plants and trees, we were forced to give up our intentions and plans to carry out planting activities. All agendas for organizing Mandala Gardens and plotting vegetable gardens turned to plant data collection. We decided not to hand over the equipment for the garden and seedlings requested by the temple committee and sent from Denpasar two days earlier. We finally decided to give the paranet, manure, husk charcoal, eggplant seeds, chili seeds and cucumber seeds to residents who from the beginning wanted to make demonstration plots of vegetables in their respective yards.

Back at the temple, Wisanggenig1 team and I saw the chainsaws cutting through the trunks of big trees so fast. I imagined how long the trees would grow and provide shade around the temple. Ngieeeeeeng...! Ngieeennggg...! Not far from the roar of the chainsaw, a bulldozer roared.***



About the Authors

Brigita F.A Rumung is the Project Coordinator of the Kupang Alfa Omega Foundation (2018-2020) for the Community-Based Ecotourism Village program in Uiboa and Bokonusan Villages, Semaui Island. Having experience working and studying in various non-profit organization projects since 2017, the graduate of Communication Studies at Atma Jaya University Yogyakarta (2016) has been one of the awardees for the 2019 YSEALI Fall Academic Fellowship at The University of Montana. She is also active in the NTT Bacarita Community as a Program Coordinator as well as one of the storytellers. She actively writes on his personal blog: brigitashere.blogspot.co.id and can be contacted via Instagram at @brigitayu.

Semaui Consortium is a collection of 1 Host of PIKUL and 8 Partners including Dalen Mesa, OCD Beach and Cafe, Tafena Tabua, Kupang Batanam, Imut Motor Gang, CIS Timor, Alfa Omega Foundation and Cemara Foundation from GEF SGP Phase VI project on Semaui Island. It carries out activities related to issues of organic agriculture, agrosilvopastoral, agroforestry, local food, ecotourism, water catchment conservation, renewable energy and multi-stakeholder forums.

Edi Harto was Born on October 10, 1989 in South Olo Village, Kaledupa District, Wakatobi Regency. He spent his elementary and high school years on Kaledupa Island and pursued his undergraduate education at Haluoleo University, Faculty of Law, Criminal Law study program in 2012. After completing his education, he decided to return to his hometown and help his parents in gardening and establish the KAMALI (*Kaledupa Baca Lagi*) community; a learning community of elementary-high school children that emphasizes the local wisdom of Kaledupa. Now, he is active in Kaledupa Toudani Forum (FORKANI).

Bambang Mamangkay Born in Moyongkota, December 26, 1997, he completed formal education at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, State University of Gorontalo (UNG) majoring in Biology. He is currently active in Japesda Association; one of the local NGOs in the province of Gorontalo and studying for a Masters degree in UNG Population and Environment program. He can be contacted via email at bambangmangkay@gmail.com.

Fatra Hala. She has been active in social activities since 2010 with an institution that focuses on the issue of HIV-AIDS. Now, the woman who is more familiarly called Atay is a member of WIRE-Gorontalo and serves as secretary at the institution. In addition, she is also active in the Gorontalo Peneti Theater community.

Sugeng Sutrisno. Sugeng Sutrisno. He has studied with the village community since 1997 in North Sulawesi. Initially he had decided to work in the world of environment and social justice with the Manado Management Foundation. Then in 2001 he founded Japesda. During his service in the world of movement, he has worked for the SUSCLAM (sustainable coastal livelihood and Management) project supported by CIDA Canada in Tomini Bay and the MFF (Mangrove For the Future) project in Gorontalo supported by IUCN-ARO. After becoming the Director of the Gorontalo Japesda Association, he founded the Agrarian Institute. This institution focuses on the issue of agricultural culture in Gorontalo.

Fransiska Natalia is the program coordinator and manager of community engagement at JED (Village Ecotourism Network) Bali, Indonesia. After completing her undergraduate education at Udayana University majoring in Agricultural Technology, she took Australia Award Indonesia sustainable tourism program. She enjoys traveling and reading and has worked for environmental-focused social companies such as Kono Green Living and Forum Fair Trade Indonesia. In 2019, supported by Wisnu Foundation, GEF-SGP Indonesia and UNDP, she worked with villagers to develop alternative tourism and promote community-based ecotourism in five villages in Nusa Penida.

I Wayan Karta was born in Ped Village, March 09, 1986. He received his primary - high school education in his hometown, Nusa Penida Island. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in Chemistry Education at Ganesha University of Education (2008) and completed a Master of Science in Applied Chemistry at Udayana University (2012) with excellent scholarships. He was a Lecturer in Chemistry Analyst at Undiksha (2008-2014) and a permanent lecturer at Poltekkes, Ministry of Health Denpasar (2014) and was one of the founders of the Taksu Tridatu Foundation. He is also a mask artist and actively participates in developing the Bukit Keker Learning House in various ecological activities such as renewable energy, waste management, organic farming, animal husbandry and silvopastoral, as well as cultural arts.

Ni Made Denik Puriati was born in Mengwi on November 3, 1973. She is usually called by her childhood name; Denik. The youngest of four children, she attended elementary to high school education in Mengwi village and completed her bachelor's degree in 1996. Since her childhood she has preferred farming and social work and has been involved in grassroots movement activities and has worked in the world of non-governmental organizations since 1997. Since 2000 she has been active in Wisnu Foundation.

Ning Palupi, Born in Malang, she completed her undergraduate and postgraduate education at Udayana University, Bali. She writes issues on diversity, gender equality, agriculture and environment. Her works can be found in Sangia, Hui, Sang Hyang Dollar and the Star Readers (2021), Humanity During the Corona Outbreak (2020), Mobiling VCT (2017), Picking Up Obstacles Tolerance (2009), etc. She can be contacted by email at Nirmalapia@yahoo.com



Eastern Dawn to Twilight of Islands:

Anthology of the Quest for Taste on Four Regions

When it comes to learning, it's not merely about achievement. Failure should also be used as a learning tool so that it does not repeat itself in the future.

This book is a reflection of lessons learned by GEF SGP Indonesia partners in four regions, including Gorontalo, Semau, Wakatobi, and Nusa Penida. The story follows a group of partners as they searched for agents of change in the field. It is written in a simple narrative yet challenging implementation. The hue of the text is also different; distinct. The diverse perspectives and approaches of partners in community activities are reflected in diverse speaking style. In interacting with communities, a wide range of behaviour, steps, patterns, and techniques emerge. This diversity is valuable because it empowered local communities, provided them with the ability to speak up, and gave them a bargaining value for their life, environment and land. It goes as what a legendary writer Chairil Anwar once wrote, "Everything deserves to be noted. Everyone deserves a place."



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