



Lessons from Community-Led Actions for Strengthening Disaster Resilience in Indonesia: A Case from Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Image source: YAKKUM Emergency Unit

Key Messages

- Community-based women's groups demonstrated their leadership by collaborating with local governments to serve the interests of their communities, which include vulnerable households and women, to advance disaster resilience.
- Disaster risk assessments and resilience priority setting they led empowered community-based women's groups to advocate for the integration of disaster resilience priorities into village plans and budgets.
- Engagement and dialogue between communities and local government throughout the process was a key factor in building collaborative relationships and bringing disaster resilience to the wider development process.
- In addition to embedding disaster resilience elements into development plans, budgets and programs, women's advocacy resulted in making local decision-making processes more inclusive, transparent, and accountable.

The Project

This project demonstrated how community-based women's organizations can integrate their disaster resilience priorities into development programs and gain resources for advancing disaster resilience and recognition for their leadership. It also aimed to amplify awareness and action for resilience, as well as position grassroots women as knowledgeable actors through community-to-community networking and learning. This project is one of a number of community-resilience-focused pilot projects recently funded in Southeast Asia by the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Integrated Disaster Risk Management Fund and executed by civil society organizations¹.

The project was implemented in 10 villages (15,851 households) in the Gunung Kidul district of Yogyakarta Regency, Java, an area particularly vulnerable to drought and additional hazards, including earthquakes, landslides, and wildfires. The decentralization process happening in Indonesia since 2001, particularly the increasing autonomy of villages and the introduction of bottom-up planning, has provided an impetus for community agenda setting. Villages receive funds directly from central government to finance their development priorities identified through annual participatory village planning and budgeting meetings. This process must include community representatives such as religious leaders, farmers, fishermen, women groups, and marginalized people. While disaster preparedness and emergency planning are becoming integral aspects of village planning, much needs to be done to strengthen long-term disaster resilience.

Background

The project demonstrated how a community-based approach empowered women in poor and low-income communities to take the lead in strengthening community disaster resilience. A process that continuously engaged local government and mapped out disaster risks affecting infrastructure, rural livelihoods, and natural resources were prioritized and integrated into formal village planning. Substantial progress was achieved in securing resources and advancing resilience actions.

The project was part of a larger initiative implemented in the Philippines and Indonesia and overseen by the HC, an international nongovernmental organization (NGO) that works to empower grassroots women's organizations. The HC provided strategic management for the project, including learning, networking, and overall monitoring activities. In Indonesia, the project was implemented by YAKKUM Emergency Unit (YEU), which undertook series of key activities as summarized in Figure 1.

¹ The Integrated Disaster Risk Management Fund established by ADB in 2013 and supported by the Government of Canada aims to assist the development of disaster risk management solutions for ADB's Southeast Asia developing member countries. The objectives of the pilot programs were to support innovative gender-focused community-based solutions to strengthen resilience.

Key Achievements

- Information gathered through participatory disaster risk maps—including the identification of vulnerable households undertaken in 10 villages and 86 sub-villages—was incorporated into the official government database and subsequently been used to deliver social protection programs to ensure vulnerable households were prioritized in emergency planning.
- Community disaster resilience priorities were included in formal emergency preparedness plans, mid-term village development plans, and used successfully by women's groups to negotiate the allocation of resources for resilience activities.
- Hazard-prone communities gained access to resources for food security and livelihoods priorities, including small infrastructure, training, and awareness raising, as well as grants for sustainable livelihoods as a result of grassroots women's targeted advocacy based on their risk mapping and disaster resilience initiatives.
- Grassroots women became more actively involved in formal village planning and broke out of their traditional roles as spokespersons restricted to the themes of education and health. Many were also trained to become members of the drafting committee of the Village Mid-Term Development Plan to ensure that women's advocacy and priorities were officially recorded and prioritized for implementation and funding.

Figure 1



Figure 1. Main Project Activities

Source: Huairou Commission 2016. *Closing the Gap: Empowering women to link resilience priorities to decentralized development*. Inception Report.

- Grassroots women leaders benefited from a peer learning exchange where they hosted a team from the Philippines and learned from other Indonesian initiatives. Indonesian women presented their innovative resilience practices and learned from the community savings, livelihoods practices, organizing processes, and strong advocacy of Filipino women. The exchange also reiterated the importance of women's groups being incorporated so they can access government resources. Many are now formally registering as community-based organizations.

Lessons Learned

Women who were historically excluded from decision making require resources, capacities, and opportunities to engage local government, influence programs, and advocate for the inclusion of women's priorities in budgets for disaster-resilient development.

Community engagement with local government from the beginning through formal and informal channels was an important factor in successfully bringing disaster resilience to the wider development process. The engagement facilitated a deeper understanding of how local government can collaborate with organized women's groups for more effective social services delivery in the future.

Community risk mapping was effective in enabling community-based women's groups to prioritize concerns and understand disaster risks, educate the village government, and advocate for inclusion in resource allocation.

The identification of vulnerable households undertaken by community-based women's groups as part of community risk mapping can contribute to the effective delivery of government social protection programs and emergency planning.



Source: YEU



ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City
 1550 Metro Manila, Philippines
www.adb.org