

ONLY ONE STEP AWAY FROM THE PEOPLE: COORDINATED LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS ASSIST FLOOD VICTIMS IN ACEH

CASE STUDY



Along with PKPA, an ER team (a SMART consortium member) distributes food packages in Rantau Pakam village on March 25 2023

In 2022, Indonesia faced the staggering number of 3,531 natural disasters, with floods being the most prominent, constituting 43.1% of all incidents. Among the most severely affected regions was Aceh province, particularly North Aceh and Aceh Tamiang Regencies. By the end of the year, extensive flooding in Aceh Tamiang left more than 29,000 families displaced, isolating 66 villages and submerging 146 others.

In the context of the ToGETHER programme, PKPA became a Local Humanitarian Partner (LHP) and formed the SMART Consortium (Sumatera Assessment and Response Network), an NGO network that includes 35 members from across five districts in Aceh and North Sumatra. All members have training in humanitarian response and disaster preparedness. The SMART consortium closely cooperates with the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) when responding to disasters in its area.

Together with the SMART consortium, PKPA immediately started to collect data from local communities and institutions. Proximity to the disaster sites made quick and efficient surveys and coordination with village governments easier, yielding accurate data on affected villages and displaced families. The SMART Consortium's

preparedness expertise made quick decision-making in the communities possible and cooperation among the 35 members speeded up the response. Using digital tools such as the Kobocollect application, the consortium facilitated quick assessments, distribution, communication, and selection of project participants. Online discussion groups streamlined information-sharing among consortium members and the community. This joint emergency response effort successfully supported 1,448 households with essential items like hygiene kits, school supplies and food, showcasing how effectively a collaborative approach can address immediate needs during disasters.

1. Impact for the SMART consortium:

- The SMART Consortium fosters skills development among members through peer-to-peer capacity-building initiatives and by promoting the sharing of expertise.
- LHP PKPA's Disaster Learning Center (DLC) podcast programme produces podcasts that contribute to SMART Consortium members' disaster awareness, education, and community engagement.

- SMART Consortium members in Aceh Province gain valuable knowledge and skills in managing humanitarian projects through collaborative pilot initiatives and emergency response efforts, enhancing disaster resilience. Members join the entire process of all ER activities, from rapid needs assessments to post distribution monitoring and evaluation.

- The provincial Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) of North Sumatra and Aceh recognizes the commitment and work of the SMART Consortium and has offered access to its facilities, such as their offices in the district, to be used as base camp or as a coordination centre. Consortium members can also use BPBD equipment such as sound systems or cars, that way adding to the consortium's impact.

2. Impact for LHP PKPA:

- By collaborating with the SMART Consortium, LHP PKPA plays a pivotal role in advocating for localization as a fundamental approach in humanitarian work across North Sumatra and Aceh provinces. This emphasis on local context and community involvement enhances the disaster response and preparedness initiatives.

- LHP PKPA's positive branding as an organization that actively supports organizational partners and local governments, contributes to building trust and credibility. Through capacity-building, LHP PKPA empowers partners to

better address disaster challenges and serve their communities.

- The local government in North Sumatra Province (BPBD) benefits from accessing PKPA's expertise to facilitate disaster-related activities. This collaboration fosters efficient disaster management and greater community resilience.

- The local government in Aceh Tamiang Regency (BPBD) expresses appreciation and hope as PKPA assists in preparing essential disaster management documents. This partnership strengthens disaster readiness and coordination at the district level.

3. Impact for local government institutions:

- Capacity-building enhances a local government's ability to respond more effectively to disasters. Regular and continuing investments in training, skills development and knowledge sharing contribute to better disaster management practices. This helps to keep government institutions prepared and resilient, even in the face of evolving challenges.

- Through collaborative pilots and projects that PKPA and the SMART Consortium offer, local governments are able to narrow the gaps in their disaster response and preparedness. Targeted interventions that address local contexts and specific needs, improve resource allocation and community engagement. Tailoring solutions to local realities always creates better outcomes.

- Local governments work together with organizational partners to develop comprehensive disaster plans and manage crises together. These partnerships make a more holistic approach possible, pooling expertise, resources and community networks. Involving and integrating community-based organizations ensures context-specific solutions and more ownership.

- By opening up space for collaboration, local governments can actively strengthen their organizational capacities. Partnerships with NGOs, consortiums and other stakeholders, enhance knowledge exchange and resource sharing. An open mindset encourages innovation, knowledge transfer, and adaptive capacities.



A distribution of school kits for 48 children from Marlempang Village in Aceh Tamiang District. PKPA and the SMART consortium team did the distribution and project participant assessment together.

4. Impact for communities:

- Communities have local organizational partners as references for discussing and sharing disaster situations in the community.
- The SMART Consortium and LHP include community representatives in the project team, which improves project implementation, for

example when it comes to identifying and finalizing potential project participants.

- Groups of women volunteers, so-called 'cadres', who support family planning initiatives and food programmes in the villages, also help to mobilise and involve the village representatives.
- Communities are increasingly connected with local governments in disaster management.

Center for Child Study and Protection (Pusat Kajian Studi dan Perlindungan Anak or PKPA), Indonesia

PKPA works to safeguard children's best interests by advocating for policies that enhance their welfare, protection, and rights.



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