Case study: Coalition Building in Cities Program *Semarang and Ternate, Indonesia*

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Background

Why is the program needed?

The number of people in urban areas exposed to hazards, shocks, and stresses is rapidly increasing, leading to increased fragility and vulnerability.

This program aims to help more urban communities to carry out resilience activities that are climate-smart and tailored to their local circumstances.

The Global Disaster Preparedness Center has developed and tested tools and services to assist Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies to increase urban collaboration around climate-smart resilience and coastal risk reduction.

The *Building Coalitions in Cities Program* has been piloted in Indonesia and Vanuatu and is currently underway in Myanmar.

The program works with and builds upon existing processes led by local government. The program brings together other stakeholders such as the business community, universities, community organizations into a network that focuses expertise, capabilities, and resources on priority risks facing vulnerable communities in the city.

Where was the program carried out?

The high potential for natural disasters has earned Indonesia the nickname "Supermarket of Disasters."

Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI) - Indonesian Red Cross Society, with the support of American Red Cross, chose to pilot the *Building Coalitions in Cities Program* in two very different cities.

Semarang is located on the island of Java and has a population of 1.7 million people. It is vulnerable to flooding and land subsidence and is seeing increasing effects of sea level rise.

Community Disaster Management Team (SIBAT) in Wonosari Village, Semarang – the SIBAT teams were strengthened through the coalition project and carried out disaster risk reduction work in the targeted urban villages

Ternate is a small island city on North Maluku in Eastern Indonesia, with a population of 270,000. It is located on a small island that is dominated by the volcano Mt Gamalama. Eruptions between 2011 and 2014 caused deaths, injuries and disruptions. Ternate's water supply is vulnerable to drought and saltwater intrusion. The program was a new concept for stakeholders in the city.

PMI has a lot of experience working in disaster response. The *Coalition Building in Cities Program* provided the opportunity to strengthen their capabilities in preparedness and risk reduction activities. PMI was also able to develop a new way of working with urban partners – bringing stakeholders together and facilitating a collaborative approach to understanding and addressing risk and vulnerability in the two cities.

1 https://vnso.gov.vu/images/PublicDocuments/Census/2016/Provincial_Fact-sheets/Sanma_Factsheet.pdf

What was the process?

| Building and strengthening multi-stakeholder coalitions | Training stakeholders in using City-wide Assessment Toolkit | City-wide Assessments and reports | Human-centered design workshops for coalition members | Implement solutions to address priority issues | Continued collaboration through stakeholder forums |

Creating the coalitions

The *Coalition Building in Cities Program* was piloted in Indonesia from 2016 - 2018.

In Semarang, Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI) was able to build on the existing networks and momentum previously established by the Rockefeller 100 Resilient Cities program. A Chief Resilience Officer (CRO) role was established in Semarang through 100 Resilient Cities Program and played a key role in coordinating resilience initiatives, so it was important to secure the CRO's involvement in the coalition.

In Ternate, there were no pre-existing resilience or coalition mechanisms in place, and PMI did not have strong city-level stakeholder relationships in Ternate City. PMI brought in the expertize of Semarang's Chief Resilience Officer to help Ternate stakeholders develop a foundation of understanding around resilience and the need for a strategy.

"It's very important to involve other stakeholders in the development of the city. When you involve many stakeholders, many problems can be solved." Ternate Assistant Mayor Muhdar Din.

In both cities, PMI approached partner organizations from government departments, NGOs, universities, community organizations and the private sector to participate in the program. The participants were brought together for training on the city-wide risk assessment process and in designing solutions.

A letter of decree was issued by the Mayor that tasked departments with involvement in the coalition. This provided a strong platform for the two city coalitions, providing a formal basis of agreement and endorsement for the projects.

Universities were important members in both coalitions. Their experience in assessment, analysis, and report writing helped with the city-wide assessment and planning processes.

Their research and data informed planning of individual projects and continues to contribute to government planning in Ternate.

PMI learned that stakeholder awareness and experience in collaborating have a big impact on the program. Stakeholders in Semarang had more experience and required less support than in Ternate. This also meant the program had a bigger impact in Ternate in terms of awareness and capacity as the concepts were new.

Assessing risks and vulnerabilities

The City-wide Risk Assessment Toolkit was designed to help stakeholders identify vulnerable city systems and communities and potential shocks and hazards. The information was then used to determine the priority issues to focus upon for mitigation activities.

The city-wide assessment had a strong impact in Ternate, where it was carried out in full as a field exercise (in Semarang it was a desk-top exercise based on the work previously completed by the 100 Resilience Cities program). There was strong buy-in to the process and the results were used by government agencies to target vulnerability and inform their planning and mapping processes.

Community Disaster Management Team and PMI personnel looking at mitigation blueprints, Semarang

The assessment training in Semarang included members of the disability community, with sign-language translators present for deaf participants and other accommodations made to ensure the event was inclusive.

Priority risks in Semarang

- flooding
- landslides
- dengue fever

Priority risks in Ternate

- waste management
- water availability
- volcanic eruption

Addressing the risks

The two coalitions created working groups for each of the focus areas to determine the actions the coalitions should take in addressing the priority issues. Activities carried out through the coalitions included:

- Setting up an early warning system

- Evacuation route and signage development

- Provision of command center equipment

- Retaining wall renovation

- First aid and disaster preparedness training

- Installing rain harvesting units

- Waste management education

- Contingency planning and disaster risk reduction training with the private sector

PMI worked with its Community Based Disaster Preparedness Teams (SIBAT) in the target villages in Semarang to implement the activities and strengthen knowledge around preparedness and risk reduction.

The city-wide assessment results were also incorporated into the planning and work processes of some stakeholders. For example, the district Disaster Management Agency (Badan Penanggulangan Bencana Daerah) in Ternate used the assessment results to inform volcano early-warning planning.

Preparing for volcanic eruption in Ternate

Mt Gamalama, Ternate City

The Volcano Working Group used data provided by the university to select urban villages to work with. They carried out further consultation with the communities, created a contingency plan and carried out activities to raise their capacity to prepare for eruptions – such as teaching the communities about evacuation procedures.

After the program ended, members of the working group created a Disaster Risk Reduction Forum, which has used the learnings from the coalition program and extended the risk reduction work to another ten urban villages.

Landslide early warning system in Kelurahan Bendan Duwur village

Landslide detection in Semarang

Development of the hilly areas of Semarang has led to increased vulnerability to landslides.

In Semarang City, PMI and the coalition supported local SIBAT teams (community level disaster management groups) to develop early warning tools for landslides and floods using solar cells.

Addressing water security in Ternate

Seawater intrusion and decreased underground water resources through drought and population pressure make water security an issue of concern in Ternate.

The coalition used the results of the city-wide assessment to secure additional funding from American Red Cross to install rain harvesting equipment in 43 education, health and religious facilities. Support from local government has extended the Rain Harvesting Project into more communities after the coalition program ended.

Coalition members and students with rain harvesting equipment at a local school in Ternate.

Increasing awareness

"It's not easy to raise awareness around waste management, water and volcano risk. Many people need to cooperate to solve this problem." Nani Nagu, Khairun Ternate University

The coalitions worked with the media to raise awareness of resilience issues and of city-specific risks. They ran campaigns to profile the practical things that people can do in everyday life and distributed information and education materials.

The Ternate coalition provided education about waste management and processing in schools and in Maliaro urban village. However, achieving meaningful behavior change on issues such as water use in Ternate was noted as a difficult on-going challenge.

In Semarang, the coalition had an agreement with the public radio network Radio Republik Indonesia to cover the activities of the coalition for one year and facilitated media access to accurate information on risks and vulnerabilities in the cities.

Media outlets were enthusiastic about the program and it was suggested that they be involved as coalition members in future programs.

What has the program achieved?

Participants have built and strengthened working relationships and improved communication through working in the coalition. Coalition members remain in contact and share information through WhatsApp groups and forums, even after the official program ended.

Coalition members have embraced the concept of working together – they have seen how their work can be more effective and better informed by combining their knowledge and skills.

People in the targeted communities have increased awareness regarding the risks in their neighborhoods and are better prepared.

PMI have extended their knowledge and skill base - expanded its work into coalition building, learning how to facilitate collaboration between multiple stakeholders and how to advocate with local leadership at the city level.

The risk assessment work has been incorporated into local government planning and the city Mayors have committed to supporting the continuation of structural mitigation activities (pending post-election budgets).

The inclusion of local universities in the coalitions created a strong base for advocacy and action through their data and research and improved the information flow to government departments.

"We learned how to assess, how to collect data, make connections. It strengthened how we worked and prepared us to work with others in disaster." Rusihan Ismail, PMI North Maluku

What were the challenges?

• Both coalition programs found it difficult to involve the private sector. There was some success with the private sector participating in business continuity training, but Red Cross struggled to engage companies at the strategic level, such as city risk reduction planning.

• It was challenging to carry out the program within a two-year timeframe. Training in new processes, relationship building and awareness raising takes time and coalition members would have liked to continue the program for longer to see more progress with mitigation activities.

• The design of the program is complex and there was a lot of learn for PMI – initiating and facilitating a collaborative program, working with senior government officials, understanding the program and the risk reduction focus were new challenges for the National Society.

• Maintaining momentum was difficult when the representatives involved in the coalition changed roles – bringing new members up to date on the program takes time.

"Two years is very short. We need time to build our spirit for togetherness." Edi Wulayo, PMI Semarang.

How can other cities use this approach?

"It is our responsibility to make people aware. The coalition program gave Semarang a lot of support and training."Luthfi Eko Nugroho, Chief Resilience Officer, Semarang

Every city has a different starting point when it comes to resilience building and collaboration. The tools in the City-wide Risk Assessment and the Building Coalitions for Urban Resilience toolkits can guide a city like Ternate to begin their journey. For cities like Semarang that have already begun to take action, the tools in the City-Wide Risk Assessment and the Coalition Building toolkits provide a systems approach for analyzing vulnerability at the city-scale and ensure that stakeholders are working from a shared understanding of the risks, vulnerabilities, capacities and opportunities in their city.

Tips

- Undertake relationship building and the groundwork needed for local government endorsement and involvement. Formalizing the relationship helps to bring other stakeholders on-board.

- Focus on making the coalition sustainable long term – for example by including key risk issues and mitigation activities into the long-term planning of local government agencies.

- Involve the media in your city to increase public awareness about resilience and risks.

- Be innovative with communicating – how do stakeholders in your city prefer to receive information and communicate with each other?

- Be broad and inclusive when building a coalition. Academic institutions can connect the coalition with research and data and help to build an evidence base for its work. The private sector are a key aspect of city and community resilience and bring another perspective to the table.

References and more information

Tools

• City Wide Assessment for Urban Community Resilience toolkit

• Building Coalitions for Urban Resilience Toolkit

• Co-designing Solutions for Urban Resilience Toolkit

Red Cross volunteers next to a barrier wall installed to help protect a Semarang village from flooding

For more information about the Coalition Building in Cities program, visit: https://www.preparecenter.org/activities/coalition-building-coastal-cities