

YAYASAN PLAN
INTERNATIONAL
INDONESIA

Affiliated with:



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CEA)

CASE STUDIES

LEMBATA, MAMUJU, AND LUMAJANG RESPONSES



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Yayasan Plan International Indonesia (Plan Indonesia) has responded to multiple emergencies in 2021, namely Ile Lewolotok volcano eruption and tropical cyclone response in Lembata (East Nusa Tenggara/NTT province), earthquake in Mamuju (West Sulawesi province), and Mt. Semeru eruption in Lumajang (East Java province). In responding to these emergencies, Plan Indonesia has been working closely with subnational Community Engagement and Accountability Working Groups (CEA-WGs). This case study aims to provide an analysis of the implementation of the three pillars of CEA in the recent three emergencies in Lembata, Mamuju, and Lumajang to which Plan Indonesia had responded. The experience and lessons learned are expected to positively contribute to improvement in accountability and effectiveness of future humanitarian response in Indonesia.

The first case study in Lembata showed how resources were allocated specifically for promoting CEA and initiating feedback mechanisms in an emergency to the long-term social accountability through the call centre 112. Learning from earlier responses to volcano eruption, Plan Indonesia dedicated resources (budget and human resources) to set up initiation process through multi-stakeholder engagement CEA workshop and training. Communication channels were made available and various IEC materials were developed for wider outreach. Sharing feedback analysis with other humanitarian actors, including governments, was aimed to influence collective commitment for improved assistance. Some invaluable feedback including the preference of family kit over distributed construction toolkit, dignity kits for adolescent boys (not only girls), and feedback for priority needs and eligible families for the CVA program. This feedback was received, followed up, and closed once successfully responded.

The second case study highlighted the establishment of CEA-WG in Mamuju through technical facilitation to strengthen the local leadership.

Plan Indonesia supported a deployable technical consultant who assist to convene and facilitate coordinated meetings before definitive leadership was in place. Supported by Plan Indonesia's partner, Yayasan Karampuang, the establishment of Displacement and Protection Cluster and CEA-WG were fruitfully facilitated, including pilot implementation of feedback mechanisms in 3 villages. Despite some political dynamics and coordination challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the pilot provided key lessons on what communication mechanisms worked better with the rural community whose connectivity and ICT infrastructure are limited.

The third case study emphasised the integration of the existing social accountability platform, LAPOR Lumajang for AAP purposes. At the initial stage, Plan Indonesia team supported the response lead with a summary report in the cluster meetings as an entry point for discussing the needs of CEA. Technical training for Community Information Group (KIM) was agreed to be a strategic step to leverage the public information outreach and proactively collect feedback from the community. Since the platform was designed for general feedback to public services, the platform is not suited for handling sensitive issues/reports, especially because of its requirement for personal identification, timeliness issues, the lack of integration with the non-governmental feedback mechanisms, and accessibility issues (web-based platform). On the other hand, the platform offers the potential for a scalable model for promoting commitment to nexus.

Throughout responses in three regions, it is concluded that effective CEA requires the right mindset and commitment, quality coordination, the right resources for the right cause, local leadership, and strategic community capacity building. On the other hand, the presence of COVID-19 has stretched local resources and capacity to respond to feedback in regards to requests for assistance. As such, some key recommendations include investment in evidence-based advocacy messages and inclusive engagement, increasing wider visibility of CEA-WG and maintaining its regular engagement, improving cross-cutting issues understanding in CEA, addressing capacity gaps of humanitarian organisations at the subnational level, and setting up coordinated and accountable responses to coping with multiple emergencies.



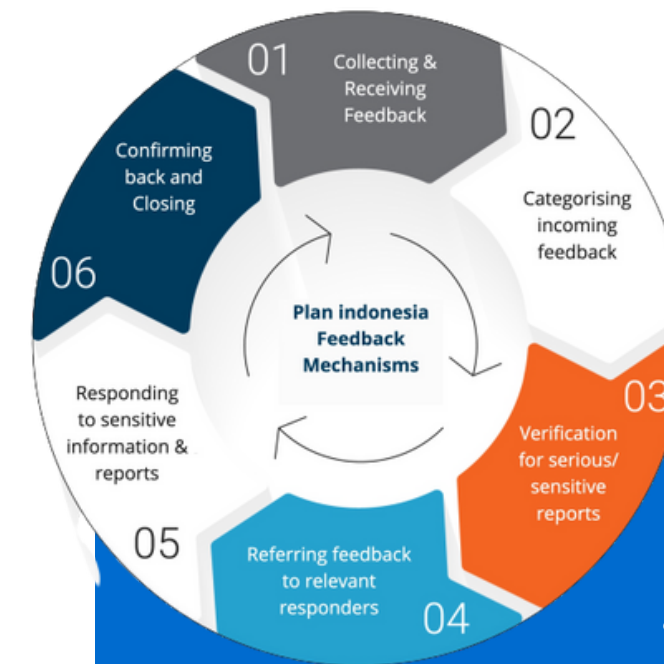
BACKGROUND

Yayasan Plan International Indonesia (Plan Indonesia) has responded to multiple emergencies in 2021. Ie Lewolotok volcano eruption and tropical cyclone response in Lembata (East Nusa Tenggara/NTT province), earthquake in Mamuju (West Sulawesi province), and the most recent Mt. Semeru eruption in Lumajang (East Java province). The deployable Emergency Response Teams closely engaged with the local stakeholders, including governments and non-governmental responders to ensure a coordinated response. The National Cluster for Displacement and Protection (Klanas PP) was locally activated in each emergency location. It became the central hub for response coordination, under which the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) Working Group was established.

The CEA-WG works to promote the Accountability to Affected Population (AAP). The CEA reflects the commitment of humanitarian responders to use power responsibly by taking account of, giving account to, and being held to account by the people they seek to assist. The Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS) specify commitments, key actions, and organisational responsibilities to improve the quality and effectiveness of the assistance they provide. Community engagement and accountability have three pillars: 1) Ensure relevant and inclusive communication channels to ensure survivors, community organisations, and

government obtain reliable information; 2) Facilitate inclusive feedback mechanisms for survivors, government and non-government organisations, especially in disaster or crises; and 3) Increase community participation by facilitating good practice sharing spaces for community involvement practitioners.

This case study seeks to document and provide an analysis of the implementation of the community engagement and accountability pillars in three Plan Indonesia's emergency responses in Lembata, Mamuju, and Lumajang. The case study will use the preliminarily identified learnings of the CEA implementation with a deeper analysis of three key takeaways: the role of local leadership and political dynamics, the use and abuse of technology application, and promotion of long-lasting social accountability. Key findings formulated in this case study is a consolidated result of desk studies and in-depth interviews with Plan Indonesia key staff and partner representatives.



Community Engagement and Accountability is a term to describe how humanitarian agencies engage with communities affected by crisis through three main activities:

- Providing information to affected communities about their work.
- Listening to affected communities.
- Ensuring that agencies' decisions respond to the views of affected communities.

As a humanitarian organisation working to advance children's rights and equality for girls, Plan Indonesia is committed to implementing child-friendly feedback mechanisms. Information and feedback channels are adapted to be inclusive that suit girls and boys of all ages, sensitive to the needs of people with special in needs and put in place measures to ensure safety in all steps of the feedback loops.

Feedback mechanisms are key to Plan's accountability as they provide disaster affected people with relevant information and conversely, feedback to improve its quality of response. When designed and implement collectively, feedback mechanisms could lead to a more effective humanitarian response and contribute to the empowerment of communities, including children and young people.

CASE STUDY 1

BUILDING FOR A LONG-LASTING SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN LEMBATA

In response to Mt. Ile Lewotolok's eruption on the first of December 2020, Plan Indonesia immediately conducted Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) following the declaration of emergency by the District Government of Lembata. Four months later, on 4 April 2021, a tropical cyclone Seroja hit East Nusa Tenggara province, including Lembata. The needs assessment found sectoral gaps in emergency shelter, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), Education in Emergencies, and Child Protection in Emergencies. Plan Indonesia also supported multi-purpose Cash and Voucher Assistance. Plan Indonesia's Program Implementation Area (PIA) Office in Lembata led the first phase emergency response targeting two sub-districts affected the worst by eruption and cyclone, namely Ile Ape and Ile Ape Timur. The response mainly focused on delivering life-saving assistance and non-food items, which benefited 1,860 disaster-affected families.

The Displacement and Protection Cluster (DPC) was established in Lembata district under the leadership of the District Office for Social Affairs (Dinsos). Following the DPC establishment, Plan Indonesia facilitated the establishment of a Community Engagement and Accountability Working Group (CEA-WG/Pokja PM) with government agencies taking part, including the District's Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), District Office for Social Affairs (Dinsos), District Office for Communication and Information (Diskominfo), and Youth Disaster Response Team (Tagana). Plan Indonesia facilitated a multi-stakeholder engagement workshop and training on CEA. These activities were a critical entry to build a shared understanding of why CEA is important and secure stakeholders' commitment to implement CEA plans, including dissemination of crucial information about the response and situations to increase awareness of hazards and risks.

Channels for communication were made available to improve connectivity, reach and levels of community knowledge such as Videotron, handouts posters, and notice board. Situational updates, government recommendations, and project information, including criteria and list of target beneficiaries, were agreed as standard information to disseminate. More feedback generation channels were set out to promote inclusivity, including Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) using child-friendly feedback mechanism (CFFM) form, suggestion box, face-to-face questionnaire/interview, and the call centre 112. District regulation on Call Center 112 has been ratified by the Regent of Lembata, contributing to longer-term social accountability.

After receiving feedback, Plan Indonesia categorised feedback into nine categories.¹ While there was no report on sensitive issues (Category 7 to 9) or significant dissatisfaction with services/aid provided by Plan, there was invaluable feedback received that helped Plan and other responders, including governments refine their services or assistance. Some useful feedback recorded include how elderly and woman-headed families preferred family kit over the distributed construction toolkit, a request for inclusive dignity kits (undergarments/underwears) for adolescent boys not only girls, and feedback for priority needs and eligible families for the CVA program. Incoming requests for clean water assistance were responded to immediately by Plan Indonesia through water trucking to respond to the inaccessibility of safe water for displaced families who had left the displacement centre. All feedback received and addressed to YPII were registered, followed up, and closed its loop when they were successfully responded to.

¹ Nine categories of Plan International's feedback in the Child-Friendly Feedback Mechanism: 1) Expression of gratitude, 2) Suggestions for improvement, 3) Request for information, 4) Request for Assistance, 5) Minor dissatisfaction with services/aid provided, 6) Major dissatisfaction with services/aid provided, 7) Report of Breach of Policy on Children and Young People Safeguarding, 8) Report of Breach of Code of Conduct, and 9) Security risks or incidents.

CASE STUDY 2

ENGAGING WITH LOCAL LEADERSHIP TO CREATE AN INCLUSIVE SPACE FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN MAMUJU



Following a Rapid Needs Assessment after a major earthquake on 15 January 2021 in Mamuju, West Sulawesi, Plan Indonesia's Emergency Response Team developed an emergency response plan. One of the gaps identified in the response was the need for technical support for the local government that led the overall response operation, including establishing and operating the provincial Displacement and Protection Cluster (Klaster PP). The DPC plays strategic roles as it serves a wide range of sectors, namely shelter, WASH, camp management and security under the Displacement Sub-cluster, and Protection Sub-cluster that includes working groups for child protection, protection for people with disabilities, protection of the elderly, minority groups, and protection and response to Gender-based Violence and Women's Empowerment, and Psychosocial support. Assessment findings also indicate a weak implementation of feedback mechanisms and the absence of public communication strategy. It was no surprise that hoax information was rampant and neither humanitarian respondents nor local leaders expressed commitment and action to address these.

In response to the situation, Plan Indonesia hired a deployable consultant to provide technical support and worked closely with the Dinsos (Office for Social Affairs) as the lead of DPC. Supported by Plan Indonesia's partner, Yayasan Karampuang, the consultant facilitated initial multi-stakeholder coordination meetings which led to the establishment of CEA WG. Dinsos, Diskominfo (Office for Communications and Information), PMD (Office for Community and Village Empowerment), and a few NGOs actively participated in regular coordination meetings. Plan Indonesia also provided online data management training for CEAWG. The onboarding of the new Regional Secretary (Sekda), who was the lead of CEAWG, delayed the working group to launch. Upon the official set up of the CEAWG, Dinkominfo was in charge of the feedback mechanisms implementation in close collaboration with Dinas PMD that was assigned to socialise and increase the demand in the feedback system.

Plan Indonesia and CEA Working Group launched the feedback mechanisms in three villages as a pilot through three communication channels provided: WhatsApp, emails, SMS/mobile phone. The pilot indicates a low demand in the use of channels even though SMS was a more popular channel because it did not rely on internet connectivity. Further feedback gathering found that some people were concerned about the political interest of relief assistance provided to them. Dinkominfo recorded incoming feedback and categorised the feedback before sharing them with the most relevant governmental agencies. During the pilot, there was no sensitive report received and the majority of feedback received was related to requests for assistance.

The pilot implementation of feedback mechanisms facilitated by the CEA Working group was running well in the first three months despite some political dynamics and coordination challenges due to COVID containment measures. Dual leadership of Dinsos as the lead of DPC and BPBD as the overall lead of response was confusing at times. Competing sectoral interests and COVID-driven budget cuts has disabled the governments to respond to additional requests for assistance, while the local NGOs had their limit to actively contribute after three months. Furthermore, mobility restriction during the pandemic had forced stakeholders to interact virtually while the ICT infrastructure and connectivity were not reliable in the region.

CASE STUDY 3

PROMOTING AND OPTIMISING THE LOCAL MODALITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE FEEDBACK MECHANISMS IN LUMAJANG

Plan Indonesia carried out a 3-month emergency response in the most affected Lumajang District in response to Mt. Semeru eruption on 4 December 2021. A Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) was conducted within 72 hours aftermath. The assessment was the first engagement made with the affected community as well as with the local government agencies such as District Military Command (KODIM), District's Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), District Office for Social Affairs, and District Office for Information and Communication (Dinkominfo). Access to affected communities and emergency services had been challenging as roads were blocked by mud and fallen trees. The evacuation was chaotic, and many footages of the eruption events have caused horror and panic. Moreover, misinformation and hoax also played a significant role in worsening the situation.

Having no experience of dealing with disasters of that magnitude, the local governments were overwhelmed but over time, started to develop a plan, including multi-stakeholder coordination. Some strategic decisions resulted in the following process. The Displacement and Protection Cluster was set up and the needs for public information and outreach and feedback mechanisms for the response. While providing life-saving assistance to the affected communities, Plan Indonesia also supported the government's effort to improve overall response through 1) developing a summary report for the district coordinator and cluster meetings in coordination with Head of Kodim 0821/Lumajang; 2) supporting the socialisation of LAPOR Lumajang platform targeting marginalised groups; 3) supporting dissemination and publication of the analysis of LAPOR Lumajang on an emergency response back to the community.

LAPOR Lumajang is a web-based platform for grievance mechanisms developed to collect and receive community feedback on government public services. The platform that Dinkominfo manages was designed as a

tool for promoting social accountability through which people could file a complaint of the public services. Despite the platform not being designed explicitly for accountability to the affected population in the crisis, it offers a potential integration considering that many people have been familiar with the platform. An official page of LAPOR Lumajang was also available on Facebook as an alternative outlet for people to file their complaints. A pilot was launched to proactively encourage people in the eruption affected villages to use the platform, implemented by the Community Information Group (KIM), a village-based voluntary group that serves as a local reporter and supports the government on public information outreach. Engagement of KIM in the response has been pivotal, primarily to raise awareness of the platform. Plan Indonesia provided technical training for KIM on feedback mechanisms and produced IEC materials to support their work.

LAPOR Lumajang offers a replicable model for accountability to the affected population even though it also poses some challenges. Firstly, the platform does is not best suited for reports or complaints about sensitive issues (violence and exploitation, violation of code of conduct and fraud, and safety-security). The system does not accommodate anonymity but instead requires personal identification (name, ID number) of the reporter/complainer for case verification purposes. Secondly, the system needs to better deal with the timeliness issues. The platform requires dedicated resources from the government to moderate and categorise, refer to, and update the status of complaints on the website. The business process to close the feedback loop needs a high commitment from complaint-responders and resources to respond. The latter remains a significant challenge when the government responds to two major crises: eruption and pandemics. Thirdly, the data analysis to inform and influence decision making and policies, more importantly, to improve the quality and timeliness of accountable emergency response. The current state of data analysis is still limited to receiving and responding to feedback, not leveraging the study for a greater purpose. Lastly, LAPOR Lumajang works on website and social media that needs ICT device internet connectivity, which could exclude low-income families, the illiterate, the elderly, persons with disability and other disadvantaged groups.

LESSONS LEARNED



CEA IS ALL ABOUT THE MINDSET AND COMMITMENT TO BE ACCOUNTABLE

“The coordination mechanisms in the response didn’t work. There was a strong sentiment that the feedback was only a tool for a complaint to responders’ performance instead of using the feedback for improvement. Because of that misconception, coordination was weak at all levels among all stakeholders, which also led to many issues related to data, volunteer management, response planning and distribution of relief aid.”



COVID-19 HAS OVERSTRETCHED LOCAL RESOURCES AND CAPACITY TO RESPOND TO FEEDBACK (RELATED TO REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE).

“Responding to the earthquake in the time of COVID-19 was very challenging. Refocusing the public budget driven by COVID-19 made things more difficult after the earthquake struck. It limited offline meetings when online meetings were not a great choice because local infrastructure and skills are not ready for that. The government works on their priorities. They did not acknowledge contribution and assistance from NGOs to achieve their priorities.”



COORDINATION IS A KEY TO PREVENTING AVOIDABLE PROBLEMS.

“There were cases where communities or [humanitarian] organisations did not coordinate with the cluster or CEA Working Group or the government with an excuse to ensure fast distribution of aid. This was creating a problem in the case of food assistance. The quantity tends to be more significant but less in quality. That was ample instant noodles and some instant foods found to trigger allergic reactions. There was also no registered assistance that was impossible to track where it came from. So when there was a complaint, we did not know whom to be held accountable.



THE RIGHT RESOURCES FOR THE RIGHT CAUSE.

“Dedicated a focal point [to support CEA] has significantly contributed to a good implementation of the feedback and response mechanism. We could collect, respond to, and monitor the status of incoming complaints. Dedicated personnel proactively collected feedback from disaster-affected people, including marginalised people who may be illiterate unable to speak out. We provided different channels of communication so people would be able to choose which are more convenient for them to use. Having a dedicated person, a local talent who understands the local dynamics, culture, and social structure, has good communication skills, knowledgeable and has strong local networks could be the best choice for CEA focal point.”



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEANS ENGAGING WITH THE LOCAL LEADERSHIP.

“We could not discuss Community Engagement and Accountability if we had not set up a Displacement and Protection cluster (Klaster PP). The role of our partner, Yayasan Karampuang, which is based in Mamuju, was critical to assist us in approaching the government, particularly the senior staff of Dinsos (District Office of Social Affairs). From the initial meeting, we agreed that cluster meetings would be regularly conducted under the leadership of Dinsos and Plan Indonesia, and Yayasan Karampuang would support and facilitate the initial meetings.”



FEEDBACK MECHANISMS WOULD WORK BEST WHEN THE DEMAND FOR ACCOUNTABILITY IS ALSO PROMOTED.

“Kelompok Informasi Masyarakat (KIM), initiated by Dinkominfo, played a critical role as the extension of information that serves as local journalists for the communities in Lumajang. Some villages have established KIM, but they don’t have a workplan. Upon consultations with the Coordinator of Semeru Response, we organised an essential capacity building for KIM on feedback mechanisms.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Invest in building a deeper understanding of why social accountability matters, especially in humanitarian settings. This will require investment in evidence-based advocacy messages and resources to raise awareness during the non-emergency situation. Engaging with youth communities, disability communities (e.g. GEMA Difabel), and indigenous leaders could help the team with advice for broader and more inclusive outreach.

2

Increase wider visibility of the CEA Working Group on as many occasions as possible, ensuring stakeholders are aware of what the Working Group aims for and has been doing to achieve that. This will increase acknowledgement of the issues as well as the Working Group.

3

Maintain and strengthen engagement with interested and motivated members of CEA WG. While resources are often limited in non-emergency situations, through resources sharing, some activities can force the ball rolling. Regular interactions could also be used to expand investment in a mechanism that allows humanitarian responders to act quickly in preventing harmful practices in future emergencies such as widespread hoaxes.

4

Improve our understanding of how various cross-cutting issues in the CEA would affect the effectiveness of CEA design. Some increasingly concerning issues such as data privacy, technology and democracy are critical to be analysed further as these cross-cutting issues could link with a larger scope beyond just humanitarian. Piloting prototypes of closed-loop feedback mechanisms could be a worthy investment where all cross-cutting issues are incorporated into the system design.

5

Address capacity gaps of humanitarian organisations, especially at subnational levels. The capacity gap could be addressed by providing access to technical training via any possible methods, offline or online. This would require a list of rosters for cluster or CEA facilitators qualified to set up a subnational cluster, build engagement and facilitate initial processes in both DPC and CEA WG.

6

Make plans to cope with multiple emergencies through coordinated and accountable responses. The plans should also include how Plan Indonesia would invest in its in-house capacity for trainers, resources, and networks that can be mobilised to respond to capacity building needs in CEA.