



NTA
East Indonesia Aid

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1 A Visit to Maradamundi Village

Kupang Post 1/4/09 Reporter Adiana Ahmad

The adage “united we stand, divided we fall”, once used in the movement against colonialism, is relevant to today’s fight against poverty. It has certainly inspired the villagers of Maradamundi (Kambatamapambuhang *Kecamatan*, East Sumba *Kabupaten*) to “revolt” against poverty.

Maradamundi is located near a riverine area. Up to now the rainy season has been a nightmare for residents, with their fields subject to flooding, while in the dry season the land near the Kambaniru river has enabled them to eke out an income. But an income is not guaranteed. In 2006 their situation began to change following the introduction into their area of the Participatory Integrated Development in Rain Fed Areas (PIDRA) program. The Pidra fieldworkers inspired the local villagers to work in groups (*kelompok*) to set about freeing themselves from their poverty trap.

Nine separate *kelompok* have since been formed within the village, each with 20 or 22 members (one with female members only). These *kelompok* are not just social gatherings but sources of knowledge about how to manage a group and run a business venture. The

9 *kelompok* plan, implement and evaluate projects such as raising livestock (cattle, goats and chickens), growing vegetable gardens (the produce of which is sold to the villagers and in the *Kabupaten* capital Waingapu), saving money made from group activities and managing group credit facilities.

The *kelompok* have made a palpable difference to peoples' lives, with those formerly having nothing now possessing livestock and saving money. For example, one of the *kelompok*, established in 2006, now has cash reserves of Rp. 6m (\pm A\$775.00) (not including money already re-invested in other projects).

The *kelompok* have also had the effect of rekindling a true spirit of *gotong royong* (cooperative self-help) in the community, which has benefited not just *kelompok* members. For example, the *kelompok* have cooperated with local authorities to build a reservoir and develop a system of reticulated water for the village. They have also constructed simple roads (suitable for two-wheeled vehicles) to surrounding *kampung* one of which (Laimbonga) has never before been accessible to vehicles. These simple roads, when passable (in the dry season only), enable the residents of these *kampung* to transport and sell their excess vegetables, which is a great step forward for them..(more)

2 Diaconia Centre Launches Program to Strengthen the Economy

Kupang Post 1/4/09

Mata Air: The Diaconia Center (a private body set up by a young NTT businessman (Ruben Tahik) to promote development of benefit to the common people) has given the residents of Mata Air village (Central Kupang *Kecamatan*, Kupang *Kabupaten*) 100 pigs in an effort to strengthen the village economy. Speaking on 28/3 at a handover ceremony to villagers gathered for the occasion, Ruben Tahik explained that strengthening the village economy was very meaningful, if it made villagers think about strengthening the economic situation of their own families. One of the aims of the Center's short-term assistance programs (like the gift of pigs) was to train people to think in a forward looking manner and to act quickly in a way that would enable them to stand on their own feet. So far as project implementation monitoring was concerned, the Center would work with NTT's Livestock and Agriculture Service and local NGOs. In addition to the pigs, the Center also provided a well (plus a pump and water tank) to one of Mata Air's wards. This was consistent with the Center's vision that everyone should have access to fresh drinking water.

Several community leaders present at the ceremony praised Ruben Tahik, saying that he had set a good example for other young people on how to think smart about development.

3 85 Malnourished Children in Kelapa Lima

Kupang Post 4/4/09

Kupang: Figures received from 22 *posyandu* (integrated health service posts) in Kelapa Lima *Kecamatan* (City of Kupang) for the period Jan-end Feb 2009 recorded 85 *balita* (children under 5) as undernourished (according to the ratio between their weight to their age/height), according to head of the Pasir Panjang *Puskesmas* (Community Health Centre), Ivyane Luanlaka. Of those 1 was given supplementary food and 14 others were simply provided with milk. Luanlaka explained that the *puskesmas* was not funded to deal with undernourishment – help in the form of biscuits and milk was usually provided by the Health Service of Kupang City for distribution to children in need. She explained

that some children had been given help 3 times – the problem being that the supplements provided were also consumed by other family members, resulting in further loss of weight by the original sufferer. So treating malnourishment was like pulling on an endless piece of string. The *Puskesmas* did not have a special area for the treatment of undernourished children; cases causing particular concern were taken to hospital for treatment. ..(*more*)

4 Seaweed Processing Plant Being Developed in East Sumba

Kupang Post 4/4/09

Sabu Island: During a working visit to Sabu Raijua *Kabupaten*, NTT Governor Frans Lebu Raya told a public meeting in the *Kabupaten* capital Istana Raja Sabu Teni Hawu that the *Kabupaten* had great potential in the areas of agriculture, plantations and edible seaweed production. He noted in particular that edible seaweed had become a favourite crop of farmers as it gave very good returns for concerted effort. The sector had great potential in NTT (particularly Flores (including Lambaga), East Sumba, Alor, Rote and Sabu) and prices for the commodity were very promising. He said that a seaweed processing plant was currently being developed in East Sumba *Kabupaten*, and once it was in place it was hoped that Sabu Raijua would be one of its suppliers of raw material for processing. The factory would also mean that NTT did not have to send its seaweed elsewhere for processing and could export its future seaweed product in a semi-processed form....(*more*)...

5 Rp 5 billion Worth of Jatropha to be Planted on Rote

Kupang Post 4/4/09 (editor's note: the planting/production figures don't quite add up, but they are as per the original of the article).

Ba'a: As part of its plan to have 5 000 ha. of *jatropha curcas* trees in Rote Ndao *Kabupaten*, the government of the *Kabupaten* is allocating Rp 5 billion (\pm A\$646 000) in its 2009 budget for the planting of *jatropha curcas* saplings, according to the head of the *Kabupaten's* Agriculture, Plantations and Forestry Service (Daud Ch Balukh). Balukh told *KP* that the plantation area had already been surveyed and planting would be done in the rainy season (December). One million saplings would be planted in 500 ha. in West and South Rote. The expected yield per tree was 0.3 kg of seeds in the first year, rising to 1 kg per tree in the fifth year. Thus each hectare (with 2 500 trees) was estimated to be able to produce 2.5 tonnes of *jatropha curcas* seeds each year, estimated to be enough to support the operations of two *jatropha* processing plants already in place, one in Nemberala (West Rote) and the other in Daleholu (South Rote). But all would depend on the commitment of the people. If they took good care of the saplings/trees, the project would certainly succeed...(*more*)..

6 Nutrition Treatment Centre Treats Child for Oedema

Kupang Post 4/4/09

Kefamenanu: As at the beginning of April, the Nutrition Treatment Centre (PRG) in Bitefa (North Central Timor (TTU) *Kabupaten*) was treating just one 18 month old *balita* (child aged under 5) for malnutrition (with added complications possibly related to TB), according to the Centre's manager, Dr Lambert Tokan. Since the beginning of January until two weeks ago the Centre had treated a total 16 *balita* for malnutrition, but they had all recovered and gone home. Dr Tokan attributed the decline in the number of *balita*

being treated to this year's good harvest which had provided good nourishment for children. Nonetheless PRG staff continued to monitor a number of areas to provide support for any children suspected of being malnourished. Dr Tokan explained that the problem was that the local people had an uninformed view about food and eating and thus needed to be watched and guided. There was one recent case where a father had come to the Centre and forcibly taken his child home, even though it needed treatment....
(more)..

7 WFP Suspends Biscuit Distribution Program

Kupang Post 6/4/09

Kefamenanu: In the wake of the discovery of pins, staples etc in biscuits being distributed as part of its School Feeding Program in West Timor, the WFP has decided to suspend the program, according to WFP's Public Information Officer in Jakarta (Mitra Salima Suryono).. The program (first started in 2005) was targeting 654 primary schools and 1 219 *posyandu* (integrated health service posts) (encompassing an estimated 105 000 young children) in the *kabupatens* of Kupang, South Central Timor and Belu as part of an effort to combat malnutrition. Suryono said that an investigation was underway to pinpoint the problem so that the program, which was regarded as strategic, could be re-started. He did not provide details on the monetary value of the program or why the Saudi and Australian governments were involved as donors. He did say, however, that there was no doubt about the quality of the biscuits being used in the program, as they had undergone thorough testing in a laboratory (evidenced by the Indonesian Food and Drug Oversight Agency (BPOM) certification they carried).(more)...

8 Diarrhoea Strikes Fatuleu: 9 Dead

Kupang Post 6/4/09

Kupang: Diarrhoea killed 9 people in March in the villages of Naitasi and Poto, West Fataleu *Kecamatan*, Kupang *Kabupaten*, according to the *Bupati* (Ayub Titu Eki). Titu Eki told *KP* that, when he had heard of the problem from a citizen of West Fataleu, he had gone immediately to the two villages concerned only to find that the 9 had already been buried. Titu Eki instructed health official to treat other people who were suffering symptoms of diarrhoea and demanded a report from the *camat*, who confirmed that 9 had died during March in Poto and Naitasi. Titu Eki expressed his regret that local health officials had not provided the required health services to the people concerned. The head of the *Kabupaten* Health Service (Dr I Wayan Ari Wijana) told *KP* that an investigation into the health issues that had caused the deaths was underway. A combination of factors could have been involved: the heat, vomiting and upset bowels, with complications from malaria and diarrhoea. Whether the problems were caused by polluted water or other factors was not yet clear. Wijana went on to say that the people would be reminded that, in order to minimize the risk of diarrhoea, cleanliness and clean water were important. He added that the *putu* (village level auxiliary *puskesmas*) in each of the two villages would also be supplied with rehydration fluids and antibiotics.

9 1 642 Young Children With Severe Respiratory Tract Infection

Kupang Post, 6/4/09

Tarus: According to Matheos Guterres, a staff member of the Tarus *Puskesmas*, Central

Kupang *Kecamatan*, Kupang *Kabupaten*, up to 1 642 *balita* (children under 5) and other youth received treatment for severe respiratory tract infections in Feb-March at the Centre. Guterres said the most likely cause of the infections was the change of season. Most of the patients were given free treatment, with some paying Rp 1 000 (±\$A0.13) (though medication was free for everyone). Other health problems treated during the period included clinical malaria (376 cases), dengue fever and diarrhoea. *Puskesmas* staff continued to educate the people about the importance of maintaining a clean living environment.

10 Hoorah for Education Beyond School Walls Program

Kupang Post, 6/4/09 Report by Frans Krowin

Kupang: The Education Beyond School Walls (*Pendidikan Luar Sekolah (PLS)*) program being run by NTT's Education, Youth and Sport (PPO) Service received plaudits during NTT Governor Lebu Raya's visit to Sabu Rajua *Kabupaten*. Rev. Joseph Moneke (Evangelical Christian Church of Timor (GMIT)) told Lebu Raya how a people's empowerment program run by the PPO as part of PLS (aimed in part to eradicate illiteracy) had inspired the people to do better. Before taking the PLS course, they had been losing interest in seaweed production, but after it they had redoubled their efforts and finally achieved very good yields. For his part, the Governor complimented the ingenuity of the local people and called on them to build on it. He hoped that seaweed production would become an iconic part of Sabu Rajua's economy. Already, even though production levels had not achieved their full potential, local people had shown their prowess by processing edible seaweed into foodstuffs and soft drink.....(*more*)....

11 NTT Banks Advance Credit Totaling Rp.5 370 Billion in Feb '09

Kupang Post 6/4/09 Report by Frans Krowin

Kupang: Speaking at a press conference on 3/4 called to discuss NTT's economic performance for the first quarter of '09, the head of Bank Indonesia (BI) Kupang (Lukdir Gultom) said that in February '09 NTT's general banking system had provided Rp. 5 370 billion (±\$A693.4m) in credit to the community (down slightly on the Dec '08 figure, but 28.79% higher than that of Feb '08). Third Party Funds (DPK) accumulated during February reached Rp. 8 050 billion (±A1 034m) (up slightly on the Dec '08 figure and 13.26% on the Feb '08 figure). Only 1.5% of the credit extended by the banks was problematic or non-performing (down slightly on Feb '08).

Gultom said that NTT's economy was estimated to have grown by between 3.5% and 4% in the quarter (Jan-Mar '09). Sectors contributing most to the economy were agriculture (34.26%) and services (28.73%).

Total credit advanced to the micro, small-scale and medium-sized ventures sector (UMKM) in Feb '09 amounted to Rp. 5 200 billion (±A\$671.4m), an increase of 28.24% over the Feb '08 figure. This represented 99.08% of the credit advanced by the general banking system, indicating that the UMKM sector still had great potential for growth.

Gultom said that BI Kupang took every opportunity to recommend to the NTT government that it do whatever it could to stimulate growth in the UMKM sector. He underlined the very important role played by the government in achieving higher economic growth rates in NTT.

Gultom said that, in an effort to help NTT to achieve its full economic potential, BI

Kupang had been working since last year with the Institute of Agriculture (IPB) in Bogor to conduct research on NTT's leading commodities. That cooperation would continue in 2009. Recommendations would be made to the NTT government only after research in 20 *kabupaten* had been completed. He did say, however, that one of NTT's leading commodities was edible seaweed in East Sumba *Kabupaten* and the Bank of NTT was channeling funds into that area. The seaweed farmers were generally happy with what they were achieving and were currently making lots of money..*(more)*...

12 NNT Life Expectancy Below National Average

Kupang Post, 6/4/09 Report by Apolonia Dhiu

Kupang: In a speech to the staff and students of the Academy of Health Sciences (STIKES) in Surabaya on 3/4, the Deputy Governor of NTT (Esthon L Foenay) expressed the hope that the students from NTT being trained at STIKES would become catalysts for improved health standards in NTT. He noted that NTT continued to have many health problems. Life expectancy (65) was below the national average (66.2). The death rate among mothers and babies remained high: the death rate of mothers in childbirth in NTT was 306 per 100 000 births (compared to 248 per 100 000 births nationally); in NTT 57 babies per 100 000 died in childbirth compared to 34 per 100 000 nationally. There were also problems of undernourishment and malnutrition among young children: NNT's malnutrition index was 7.1% (compared to the national index of 8.8%); its undernourishment index was 30.7% (compared to 19% nationally); and the good nourishment index was 61.6% in NTT (compared to 69.15% nationally). In regard to education, Foenay informed the audience that 300 000 people in NTT were still illiterate with the average education level of the population being primary school....*(more)*....

13 112 Civil Service Doctors for NTT

Kupang Post, 6/4/09

Kupang: 112 civil service doctors (consisting of 85 generalists and 27 dentists) were assigned to NTT from 3/4/09 and will be assigned to *puskesmas* (Community Health Centres) throughout NTT which up to now have had no doctor.....*(more)*...

14 The Number of Poor Households Rises in West Manggarai

Kupang Post, 6/4/09

Labuan Bajo: The results of a census done by the West Manggarai (Mabar) *Kabupaten* branch of the Bureau of Statistics (BPS) in 2008 show that the number of poor households in Mabar has risen from 27 688 to 29 257. All these household will receive a portion of the 5.266 tonnes of rice to be distributed in Mabar under the *raskin* (rice for the poor) program...*(more)*...

15 Sikka Short of 49 Doctors

Kupang Post, 6/4/09

Maumere: According to the head of the *Kabupaten* of Sikka's Health Service (Dr Delly S Pasande), as at April 2009 Sikka is short of 49 medicos (38 doctors and 11 dentists) needed to service 22 *puskesmas* and 62 *pustu* (village level auxiliary *puskesmas*) which up to now have not had the services of a doctor. Pasande said that there were significant

lower level staff shortages as well (including health analysts, pharmacists, dental assistants, nurses and midwives). Pasande explained that the hope was to upgrade a number of *pustu* to the level of *puskesmas* and to improve existing outpatient only *pustu* by equipping them with in-patient facilities. In regard to the general hospital in Maumere (RSUD TC Hillers), there was shortage of about 4 specialist doctors...*(more)*.....

16 After 64 Years of Independence, Yerara Residents Still Use Horse Transportation

Kupang Post, 6/4/09

Waibakul: The residents of Yerara *Kampung*, Mara Desa Village, Umbu Ratu Nggay *Kecamatan, Kabupaten* of Central Sunda, are complaining that, although Indonesia has been independent for 64 years and people generally have road transport to/from their villages, they (the residents of Yerara) still have to use horses for transportation. At present there is no main road connecting Yerara to Mara Desa (up to 4 hours walk apart), only a muddy dirt track dotted with loose, slippery boulders, which is impassable in the rainy season. The residents have asked the *Bupati* and his deputy to address the problem... *(more)*....

17 Moderate quake shakes NTT

The Jakarta Post 6/4/09

A moderate earthquake measuring 5.2 on the Richter scale jolted NTT early this morning, according to the Meteorological and Geophysics Agency (BMG). The BMG said the earthquake's epicenter was located at a depth of 53 kilometers below the sea level, about 98 kilometers northeast of Kupang, the provincial capital of NTT. The earthquake had no potential to create a tsunami, state news agency *Antara* has reported.*(more)*....

18 Police Probe Claims of Sharp Objects in Biscuits

The Jakarta Post, 8/4/09

Kupang: North Timor Tengah police are investigating reports of sharp objects being found in biscuits donated by the WFP to elementary schools in the region. The police have so far questioned nine witnesses, including headmasters and students who claimed to have found the objects in the biscuits. They also have seized evidence and asked the schools to stop distributing the biscuits to students. "We have yet to name a suspect in the case because the investigation is still ongoing," police chief Adj. Sr. Comr. Adi Wibowo told reporters Tuesday.

Thousands of boxes of biscuits donated by the Saudi government through WFP and distributed by Care International to help curb malnutrition in the regency's 17 districts were reported to contain sharp objects such as razor blades, glass splinters, gravel and pins. Adi said the case had drawn international attention because it involved foreign donors and organizations. "We have sent a letter of summon to Care International, but it has yet to show up so far," said Adi, adding a forceful pickup would be conducted if the organization ignored the third summons. Although no fatalities were reported in the case, many students claimed to be "traumatized" by the incident. At least eight of the hundreds of recipient schools claimed to have found the sharp objects in the biscuits. One headmaster said the objects were found sandwiched between the biscuits.

19 A Look Behind the Scenes: Child Labour in Belu

Kupang Post, 8/4/09 Reporter Ferdinandus Hayong

Child Labour is becoming a serious problem in Atambua, capital of Belu *Kabupaten*, as hundreds of children (below 15) drop out of school (foregoing their childhood and childhood play time), so that they can help their parents provide for their families. They do whatever work they can find: hawking peanuts or meat, pushing carts (in markets, to transport wood or collect used plastic), doing labouring jobs or just scavenging around. A number of organizations and NGOs are involved in trying to meet the needs of these victims of child labour, in particular the International Labor Organization (ILO), the Child Labour Elimination Program (CLE) of Belu, North Central Timor and South Central Timor *Kabupatens* (chaired by John Bria), the Committee for Economic and Social Development of the Diocese of Atambua (PPSE-KA) and several Community Learning Activities Centres (PKBM). The BKPMs, schools without walls offering a non-formal user friendly education for school drop-outs, are operating in various places in Belu.

In an effort to lift these children out of their sad situation, the ILO, PPSE-KA and CLE have set the target of getting 1 000 of the children to attend PKBMs by 2010. The aim is to help the children become responsible adults in future (and not just remain workhorses for their families). Daniel Un, the director of one of the PKBMs, told a meeting of NGOs and others on 14/2/09 that his centre had had four intakes of school dropouts and almost 200 had already graduated. The PKBMs lacked facilities and infrastructure, he said, but they had plenty of commitment and enthusiasm. Naturally the PKBMs were looking for support and assistance from all quarters, particularly the government.

The *Bupati* of Belu (Joachim Lopez) told the meeting on 14/2 that he acknowledged that child labour had become a serious problem. It was like a cancer: if not controlled it would spread. He said his government would work with NGOs and all other concerned parties to develop policies to help children caught up in child labour (and their mothers) and ensure that they receive a fitting education. The work already being done via the BKPMs was a good entry point for the government to become involved. He noted that there was a complex of issues bearing on the problem of child labour. One particular challenge was to change the attitudes of parents, many of whom did not regard education of children as indispensable. The *Bupati*'s comments were welcomed by those present at the meeting.