



A Case Study Drought Response in Indonesia



Wahana Visi Indonesia (WVI) is a Christian humanitarian organization working to create lasting change in the lives of children, families and communities living in poverty. Wahana Visi is a partner of humanitarian organization World Vision Indonesia and implements most of World Vision's programs. Inspired by our Christian values, Wahana Visi is dedicated to working with the most vulnerable people. Wahana Visi serves all people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.

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Cover photo: Drafting process of participatory wealth ranking, in Kawangu Village, Pandawai Sub-district, Sumba Timur District, East Nusa Tenggara Province. Photo: Uliyasi Simanjuntak/WVI.

Indonesia and El Nino

El Nino is an oceanic anomaly that is characterized by an increase of surface temperature in the Pacific Ocean around the central and east-central equator (around the coast of Peru). Since the ocean and atmosphere are two interconnected systems, a deviation in the oceanic condition will also affect the atmosphere, resulting in a climatic deviation as well. (Supari, Agency for Meteorology Climatology and Geophysics/BMKG).

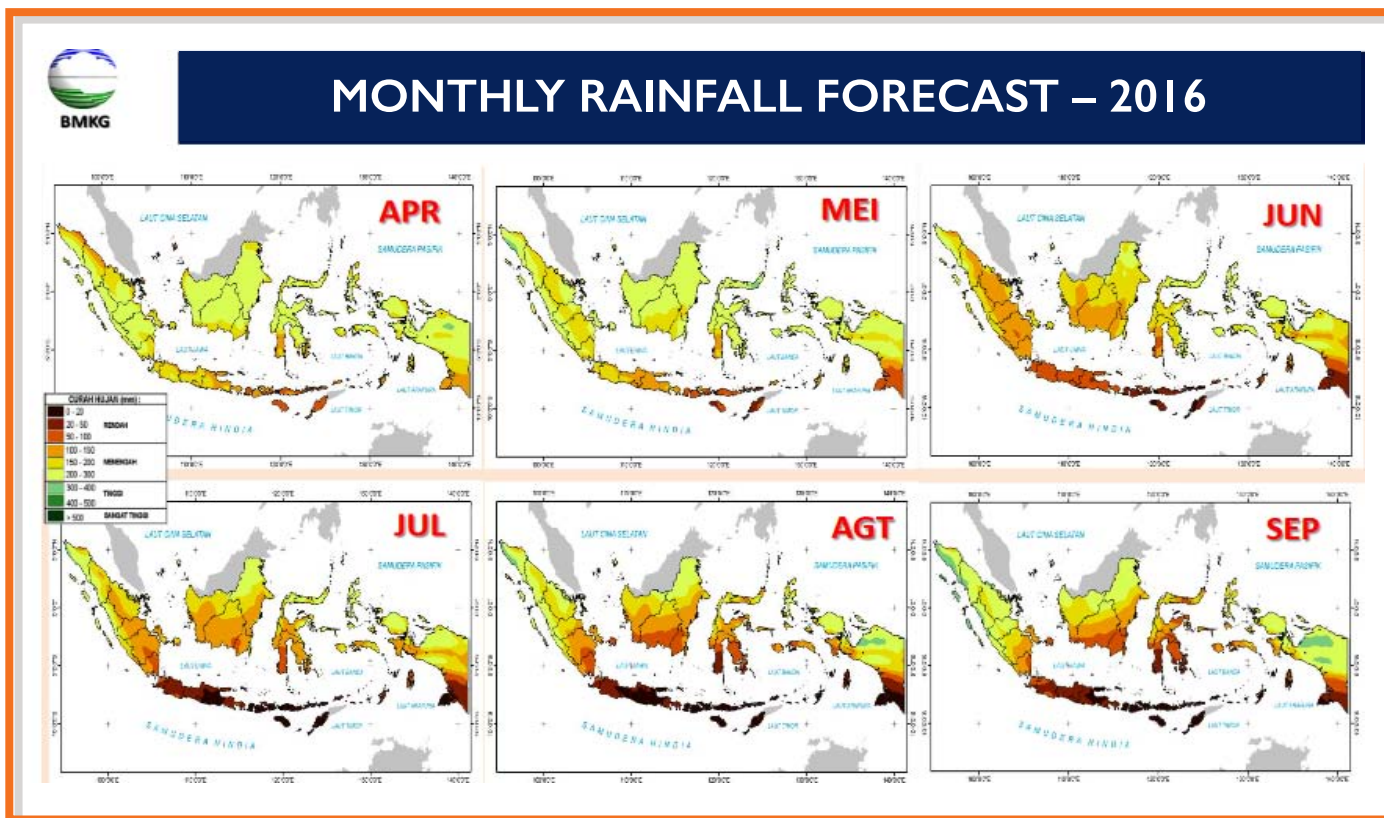
This anomaly has resulted in severe drought in Indonesia, which not only causes forest fires, but also crop failures in many farms due to poor rainfall. Overall, these prolonged droughts have an overarching impact to Indonesian citizens everywhere.

Background

A survey by the World Food Program (WFP) Indonesia released on February 2016 stated that the incomes of 3 out of 5 households have decreased due to the drought, and that 1 out of 5 households have reduced spending on food due to the drought. This survey was carried out in 2015 with 2,400 household respondents in eight cities/districts, including three

districts in East Nusa Tenggara (or Nusa Tenggara Timur/NTT), namely Kupang, Central Sumba and South Central Timor. The WFP report also found that extreme drought events will undermine the ability of communities in East Nusa Tenggara in fulfilling their utilities and ability to produce crops.

In terms of health, the Ministry of Health's Crisis Centre stated that the most vulnerable groups impacted by El Nino are children, the elderly, expecting mothers and those with specific ailments, such as heart and lung diseases. Failed crops reduce overall level of income and purchasing power, which in turn negatively affects the community's nutrition intake, leading to malnutrition. The results of a focus group discussion (FGD) that was conducted by Wahana Visi Indonesia (WVI) in NTT in January and February 2015 with a group of women, farmers and the government, indicates that the Community Health Centre (Posyandu) found several infants with lower than average weight due to a decrease in the amount and frequency of meals. This weight drop was also found in the adults. Another finding was that the occurrence of diarrhoea also increased during the dry months.



A map created by the United Nations (UN) and ACAPS (a consortium of disaster) using data from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the National Institute of Aeronautics and Space showed that the rainfall in NTT is far below normal levels. This area receives only between 50 and 70 percent of rainfall, causing negative impacts to the agriculture sector.

A report issued by the UN on developing a scenario on assessing impacts and humanitarian consequences of El Nino and La Nina during a ten-month period (March-December 2016) states that there are at least four scenarios, namely (1) delay in second harvest (July-October 2016); (2) delay and decline in second harvest (July to first harvest in 2017); (3) La Nina impacts village main source of income (September to first harvest in 2017); and (4) hike in rice prices (July-November 2016). These scenarios were developed based upon a combination of trigger factors that can have a severe impact on food security in Indonesia, including weather, quality and quantity of crops, water management, response capacity and market prices on rice.

Based on these scenarios, the UN has recommended a number of measures that would need to be taken to reduce disaster risks, as follows:

- Increase flexibility and scope of cash and food aid programmes;
- Prioritise and accelerate improvements on water catchment and irrigation networks in areas impacted by drought in eastern Indonesia
- Increase socialisation of information between ministries and other main actors in prioritising existing programmes and allocating required funding, and
- Develop a method to maximise community involvement in building community resiliency.

Furthermore, the WFP and FAO are currently leading a UN team focused on El Nino on a monitoring and review exercise to develop an emergency response plan.

Meanwhile in Indonesia, the government has established indicators as a mitigation measure for droughts, through rehabilitating irrigation channels, building dams and new wells, and distributing water pumps to farmers affected by the drought. Further, the Government of Indonesia has allocated IDR 3.5 trillion to finance the national rice stockpile and maintain food prices stability. FAO has also assigned three food security analysts in November to support the food security analysis, inter-organisational

collaboration and develop an Early Action and Disaster Response Plan to El Nino.

Based on a survey conducted by WFP Indonesia in 2015 in eight districts/cities, they recommended the following to the Government of Indonesia in responding to drought impacts:

- The Government of Indonesia should provide cash aid to poor households that rely on food production
- The Ministry of Agriculture should distribute seeds, fertilizers, irrigation and provide information to farmers directly, and
- The Ministry of Health should provide supplemental food aid to expecting mothers and nursing mothers, as well as to infants under 2 years old in all areas with acute malnutrition levels above 15% of WHO's critical limit.

(Source: WFP report The Impact of Drought on Households in Four Provinces in Eastern Indonesia, February 2016)

Objective of Case Study

The objective of this case study is to document the impacts of El Nino in Indonesia, especially in NTT. Furthermore, it was conducted to explore the measures of WVI in implementing the Drought Response in Indonesia project in East Sumba District. It is envisaged that this document will also provide lessons learned and challenges faced at each stage of implementation, both by WVI and the beneficiaries, as well as the partners, such as the Village Government, Bank NTT, the Local Agency for Disaster Management, BMKG, Agency for Food Security (BKP), District Health Office, the Agency for Agricultural, Fisheries and Forestry Extension (B4PK), and the District Social Affairs Office.

To conclude, this document will also provide recommendations on a follow up plans in preparing for El Nino, namely integrated programme, preparedness efforts at local government and community, as well as early warning system.

Drought Response in East Sumba, Indonesia

Having worked in the NTT Province since 1995, WVI has gained significant experience in working in the climate change adaptation sector, focusing on supporting small holding farmers in managing local resources for reforestation and improving the quality of soil nutrition that will in turn improve the quality of their crops. Through Area Development Programmes (ADP), WVI implemented up to 15-year programme that aimed at addressing

Location



6

villages in East Sumba

- Kawangu
- Kambajawa (Temu)
- Watumbaka
- Pinduhurani
- Tawui
- Billa

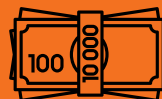
Project Duration

45

days


(17/03/2016 - 01/05/2016)

Intervention



- Cash transfer
- Early warning system

Beneficiaries

 **1,575**
Households

1 Households = IDR 908,000

Budget



£112,738
(IDR 1,950,669,958)

poverty and improving the quality of life of the local communities. WVI-ADP involved community members in the planning and implementation of the programme. In working with the community, WVI's priority is to facilitate the community members in finding solutions to improve their future, with a focus on the needs of children.

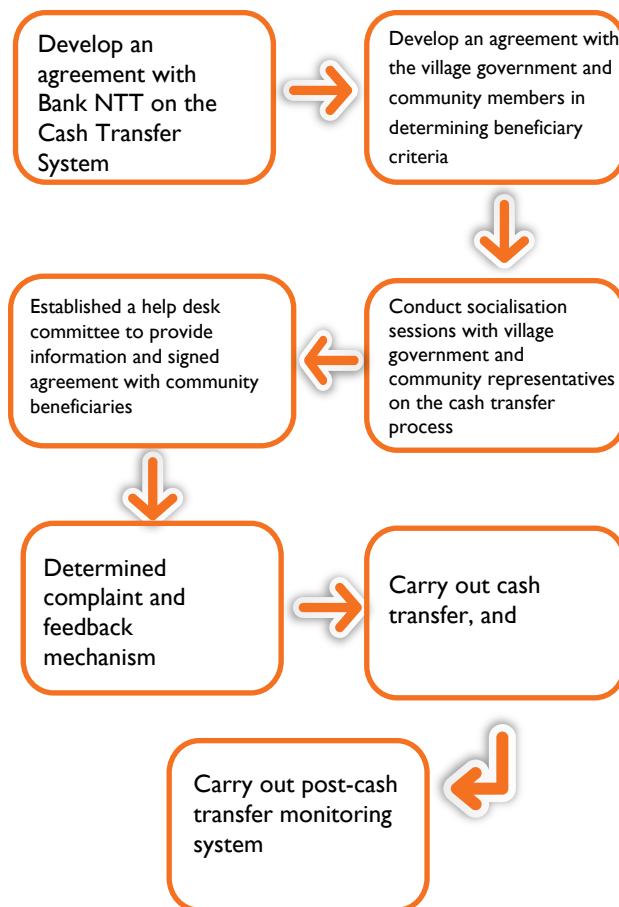
In this drought response project in Indonesia, WVI received funding from the Start Fund. The Start Fund is a consortium of 24 non-governmental organisations collaborating to strengthen the humanitarian aid system, focusing on rapid and early crisis response, as well as slow on set crisis response.

With funding from the Start Fund, WVI is implementing a Drought Response in Indonesia project in six villages in East Sumba district, namely Kawangu, Watumbaka, Kambajawa (Temu), Tawui, Pinduhurani and Billa Villages. There are no less than 1,575 households (approximately 7,000 people) beneficiaries of this project. During the 45 days of the project implementation, March 17-May 1, 2016, WVI in collaboration with the local government and community, focused their efforts on two main activities: conditional cash distribution and building a foundation for an early warning system. The Start Fund provided approximately £112,738 towards this project, which was used to fund activities and operational implementation. Of this total amount, about 75% was allocated to fund activities, while 25% was allocated for operational costs.

Survey results and assessments by the WVI team found that the average expenditure or household spending rate in the area ranged between IDR 757,789 and IDR 1,088,683 per month. Indicators of household consumption included total expenditure on food, seeds, health needs, transportation, communications and debt, as well as inflation rate of 7%. Based on these lower and upper limits, the team decided to provide a conditional cash transfer of IDR 908,000 per household. Together with community members, WVI determined that this case transfer will be done in two stages, half during the project duration and the other half would be transferred in June in anticipation of drought peak time. Each beneficiary would deposit the cash in their saving account, but would require a recommendation from WVI and the village to make a withdrawal. This mechanism was put into place to prevent misuse of the money.

Measures of Drought Response in Indonesia

A. Conditional Cash Transfer



A more detailed conditional cash transfer process is as follows:

1. **Develop an agreement with Bank NTT on the Cash Transfer System**
Prior to this response project, WVI-ADP in East Sumba and Bank NTT had already established a Memorandum of Understanding on children's savings account. Because of this prior collaboration, it was not difficult for WVI to establish another agreement with the bank. Although there were some aspects of the agreement that differed from prior agreements, such as community members being able to facilitate opening and withdrawal from a savings account, both parties were able to come to an agreement on the system.

“

This unpredictable rainfall has made life very difficult, with very little income. My side job as a driver is dependent upon available projects around. And because there are less projects, I have had to rely on my crops. However, my fields have not been yielding that much. I think that this cash aid has helped me in providing for my family and I can also use it to buy food.

”

Dominggus Uumbu Pati (resident of Temu sub-village, Kanatang Village, RT 15 RW 10)

“

This drought has caused all of my mature rice to dry out and die. Last year, my harvest reached 400-500 kilograms. This year, I only got 100-150 kilograms. The cash aid I received will be used to prepare for seeds for next year's planting season.

”

Jon Meha (resident of Billa Village)

2. Develop an agreement with the village government and community members in determining beneficiary criteria

WVI-ADP in East Sumba carried out a Participatory Wealth Ranking (PWR) exercise to determine vulnerable groups in the community that would benefit from the intervention. The response team involved representatives from the local government and community leaders in categorizing the community in different groups based on agreed upon criteria.

3. Carry out socialization on project mechanisms at the village government level

After the criteria of beneficiaries was established, the next step was to communicate to target community members on how this cash transfer would fold out, from the liquidation process to the social contract of the cash transfer.

4. Establish a help desk committee

WVI assigned a facilitator staff member to receive and respond to complaints and suggestions, as well as questions, from beneficiaries at each village. They were also tasked with communicating information from the organisation to the community. All information coming in and out was documented in a daily log, which is part of the feedback mechanism.

5. Establish a feedback mechanism

As a form of accountability to the community, a feedback mechanism a required criteria to transparent and responsible service to all stakeholders. Therefore, WVI provided a suggestion box for community members to give their questions or suggestion for the project, as well as provide them with the opportunity ask questions directly with the field staff or send a short text message to the cell phone number dedicated exclusively for the response project.

6. Carry out cash transfer

After the beneficiaries have carried out all required activities in their social contract, they can then register their savings account with the project team. For those who do not yet have a

savings account, staff members of Bank NTT will be on hand to assist them with opening a new account. The cash will then be transferred into their accounts, which they will be able to then use for their daily needs.

7. Carry out a monitoring system

WVI conducts project monitoring through surveys and focused group discussions. During these exercises, beneficiaries are able to express their opinions on the process and how they have used the funds. The survey and focus group discussion results are then used to improve future service operations of the organisation.

B. Developing an Early Warning System for Drought in 6 villages

Acquiring the commitment of the East Sumba District government to strengthen the early warning system from the village to the district level



Develop an early warning system in six villages with the Department of Social Affairs, BMKG, BKP, Health Agency, BP4K, and Regional Disaster Response Agency (BPBD) in East Sumba District



Promote Agriculture Insurance to farmers in case of disaster

These measures carried out by WVI on Conditional Cash Transfer and Developing an Early Warning System for Drought was extracted from discussion results with a specialist team at ADP. A number of activities of the two measures were carried out in parallel.



The process of Participatory Wealth Ranking in Kawangu Village, Pandawai Sub-district, East Sumba District, East Nusa Tenggara Province. Photo: Uliyasi Simanjuntak/WVI.

Case Study Methodology

In developing this case study document, the case study development team in collaboration with the WVI team used a research methodology of document review, including several internal WVI documents relevant to this project, such as proposals, situation reports, and policies. It also reviewed a number of external documents, such as

The Impact of Drought on Households in Four Provinces in Eastern Indonesia report, released by WFP Indonesian in February 2016; the report on Impacts of El Nino on the Health Sector, released by the Centre for Health Crisis at the Ministry of Health; and the 2015-2016 El Nino Early Action and Response for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition report, which was issued by FAO in November 2015.

A number of WVI staff members who were directly involved with project implementation were also interviewed, especially those who were working in the ADP team. The team also obtained direct information from the project site through interviews with relevant stakeholders, such as Bank NTT, BMKG, Agency for Food Security and community representatives at project villages.

Lessons Learned



Socialization on Agriculture Insurance in Kambajawa (Temu).
Photo: Uliyasi Simanjuntak/WVI.

The Drought Response in Indonesia project was implemented based upon recommendations of WFP Indonesia's survey report issued in February 2016. In this report, the first recommendation calls for the Government of Indonesia to provide cash aid to poor households that rely on food production. Implementing a cash transfer must be done through an accurate cash-based analysis and an appropriate monitoring plan.

Given that the government is already implementing a rice-subsidy programme for poor households, WVI decided to fill an identified gap in its drought response in NTT Province by providing a conditional cash transfer.

In this conditional cash transfer project, WVI ensured compliance with critical elements of a cash-based project, namely calculations based on household food consumption, selection of means of distribution that provides value added (beneficiaries must open up a savings account to better understand the concept of saving), and monitoring of the cash transfer through surveys.

After conducting monitoring and evaluation of the project, the team found a number of lessons learned of the drought response in NTT:

I. Selection Criteria of Beneficiaries

The selection process of beneficiaries in each village was carried out in a participative manner together with community members, facilitated by the WVI facilitator team. Each village had its own beneficiary indicator based on an agreement established through community meetings.

Some of these indicators included ownership of homes, farming plots, vehicles, education, livestock, water source, and electricity. Based on these indicators, the community created a welfare ranking ranging from low, middle to high income households, which would then be used to determine which households are entitled to receive the conditional cash transfer.



The head of Tawui Village thank WVI for its support in the village meeting and said that this drought response is something new for them.

Piter Nuhamara (Head of Tawui Village)
Photo: Uliyasi Simanjuntak/WVI.

After the community determined the names of people to receive the cash transfer, the WVI team would then directly verify this by visiting each beneficiary candidate and re-verified the data with the village government. This is a reliable system that helps to increase data accuracy. The facilitator team also ensured that vulnerable groups, such as women and children, were present and actively participated in these community meetings.

At an organisational level, the project was able to ensure participation based upon years of experience of working in the community. Community cadres such as members of the health centres were very

helpful in the project implementation, from socialisation and data verification to the cash liquidation process.

2. Social Contract of the Conditional Cash Transfer

The main challenge of a cash transfer mechanism is ensuring that the aid is used appropriately. The village's decision to establish a "social contract" that determines how the money is used is evidence of how successful the project has been at socialising the objectives of the case transfer. Some of the contract's articles included that the money can only be used to purchase food items and pay for health and children's education needs, all of which reflects a full understanding of this cash transfer's main objectives.

The social contract also included a number of joint activities carried out by the beneficiaries before receiving the conditional cash transfer, such as cleaning up the Community Health Centre (Puskesmas), painting the school's fence, or cleaning up the local cemetery.

3. Capitalising on Existing Partnerships

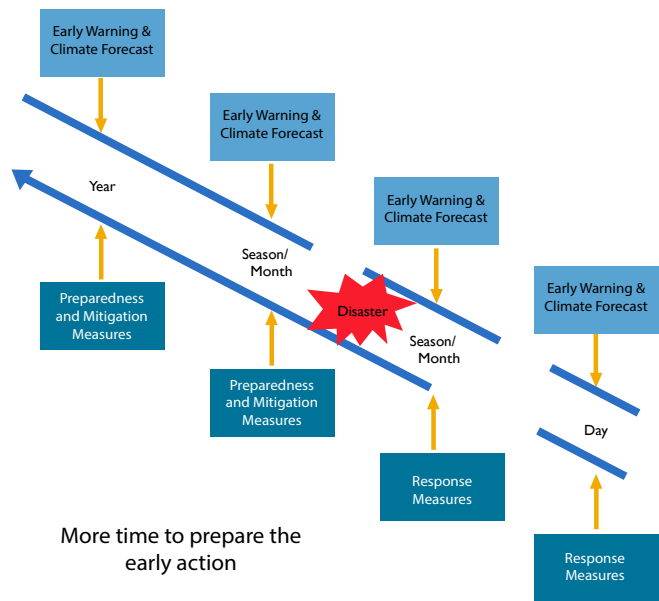
Bank NTT is a long-time WVI partner that has worked in various humanitarian programmes in East Nusa Tenggara for many years. In the Drought Response project, the community opened up a savings account with Bank NTT and it became the location for the cash transfer.

Team members of the branch office in the villages were also willing to travel to the project villages to drop off the money. In addition to facilitating the cash liquidation process, they also included an educational session on how to save and the benefits of savings for families in the villages. Furthermore, this information session also included the benefits of a savings account as part of an early action for long-term droughts.

4. Early Warning Early Action

As an anomaly of climate change, information on El Nino and its impacts can be extrapolated through annual information and seasonal forecasts. Therefore, it is important that the Early Warning Early Action is integrated into the early warning system. Using this approach, existing early warning information in any time frame (year, seasonal or month, week, day, hour) can trigger the appropriate early action to support more systematic preparedness mitigation and disaster response measures.

For example, in situations where annual or seasonal early warning information predicts a risk in drought, early action efforts can be focused at community capacity building, contingency planning, and others. When the early warning information is daily information, the best early action is oriented towards coordination among disaster response actors, both internally and externally with community members, to identify existing resources and prepare for response, as illustrated below.



This project, albeit short in duration, has been able to provide the initial foundation of an early warning system by supporting the local government and community preparedness for future droughts. On April 21-22, 2016, WVI invited several stakeholders to attend a workshop to discuss the benefits of an early warning system to the community, form a disaster response team and propose a legal framework for the team through a village ordinance, which in turn, would its budgetary allocation at the village level. The workshop participants included local community members, village officials, and representatives of the District Social Affairs Office, BPBD, BMKG, BKP, the BP4K, the District Health office and the District Agriculture Office.

BMKG, who actively channels information on El Nino to the Local Working Units (SKPD) such as BPBD, the Department of Health and Agency for Food Security, in the form of periodical bulletins and daily documents, sent by fax. At this level, each governmental agency then processes that data according to their respective parameters. This information is then forwarded to community groups, such as field agriculture extension or disaster preparedness groups that have a direct interface with the community.

On the other hand, the BMKG or the National Agency for Disaster Management (BNPB) also has its own information media which can be accessed directly by the community, such as Twitter, an SMS centre or website. Community members who are able to obtain information on climatology, the climate or predictions on the impacts of El Nino, which can affect their daily lives, like their farms, can serve as local mobilizers in disseminating this information to others. The early warning system can then be focused on finding out these types of information in order to help different actors prepare for the appropriate early action.

Basically, an early warning system should have four important elements, namely Risk Knowledge, monitoring and warning, dissemination and communication, and response capabilities. Based upon these elements, the village disaster preparedness team that was formed during this project, has an important role to play, which is to access early warning information, both directly (through online media) and from local government agencies.

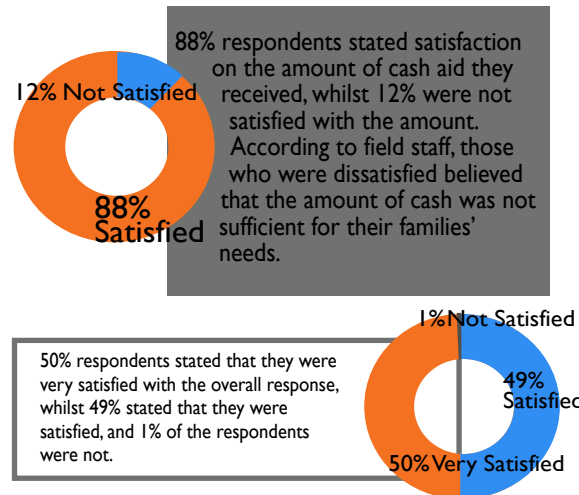
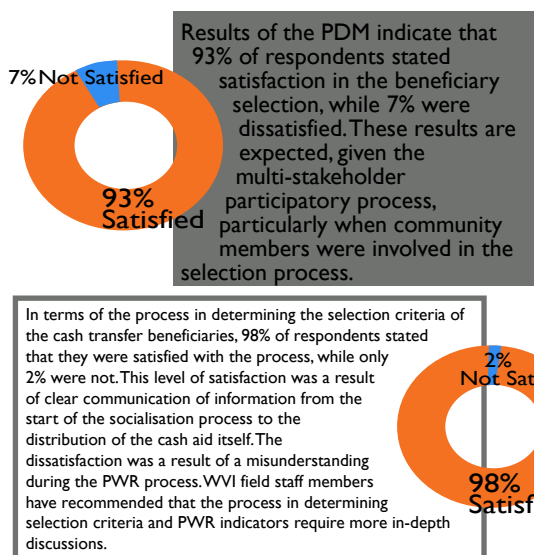
At the local working unit level, there needs to be good coordination among the agencies in determining or designing slow onset parameters so that the information from BMKG can be properly utilized and digested by the community. Additionally, at the village level, the disaster response team can function even better if supported by activities such as:

- form a preparedness team and formally appoint them as the early warning team
- ensure budget allocation from the village to support the early warning system in the community, and
- provide training, such as skills on how to read/translate data from BMKG and on reporting.

5. Post-distribution Monitoring

The project included one of the most important processes of a conditional cash transfer, the Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM). This process employed two methods, the first being a quantitative method by distributing a satisfactory survey to 95 beneficiaries representing 1,575 households from six villages, using the Lot Quality Assurance Sampling (LQAS), a random sample methodology with a small number of sample from a population. The second method was qualitative in nature, using key informant interviews, focused group discussions, and observation. Results of the survey are expected to support the project evaluation process.

The survey results indicated that the beneficiaries used their cash aid to purchase food (78 respondents), put towards savings (50) and purchase hygiene kits (31).



6. Accountability

WVI prioritizes accountability elements in each programme implementation, as reflected in the Programme Accountability Framework (PAF), which outlines minimum standards of accountability for every WVI programme, particularly those that include community interface. This framework is aimed at identifying and following up continuous capacity development needs as it relates to programme accountability in the organisation. In this PAF, WVI emphasizes four areas of programme accountability, namely (a) Providing Information; (b) Consulting with Community; (c) Promoting Participation and (d) Collecting and Acting on Feedback and Complaints, thus ensuring the implementation of an accountability mechanism in this Drought Response in Indonesia project.

WVI uses an accountability mechanism to accommodate suggestions and critiques as well as complaints from beneficiaries. This is a crucial element in supporting the flow of information in line with the implementation plan. WVI employs three methods of this feedback mechanism, namely (1) a suggestion box at each village; (2) consultation with WVI field staff; and (3) an SMS centre managed by WVI staff in East Sumba district. Every piece of information is recorded and reported periodically by relevant staff members.

Based on survey results, 42% respondents stated that they knew where to give their suggestions and complaints on project implementation. It was found from the FGD result for 2 villages (Kambajawa [Temu] and Tawui), they were able to provide feedback and complaint during the disbursement process. One method was practiced by the WVI staff in providing feedback and complaints mechanism was doing it during the aid distribution. In addition, WVI staff provided help desk where the beneficiaries would write down the opinions. The feedback report indicates that between March 28 and April 13, 2016, most of the 20 feedback comments received from

beneficiaries involved questions about the cash liquidation mechanism and selection process and remarks of gratitude. The staff members who received these feedbacks were able to provide an appropriate response. However, the survey also found that 58% of beneficiaries did not know where to give their suggestions and complaints. Additionally, 44% of beneficiaries were still experiencing difficulty in getting access to the cash aid. This suggests that although the organization has made an effort to provide a feedback mechanism, there are still some gaps, both at the organizational and staff level. Therefore, WVI needs to continue develop capacity in humanitarian accountability practices to ensure that beneficiaries needs are met.

Applying humanitarian accountability standards is expected to improve trust in the community, government, donor agencies as well as WVI's position and credibility in disaster response and community development programmes. It is therefore important to identify the areas to follow up on capacity development need by providing continuous improvement in WVI programme accountability.

7. Advocacy

From a time stand point, the impacts of the El Nino phenomenon are almost invisible without doing a case study. Nonetheless, the impacts are just as devastating as other rapid onset natural disasters, such as earthquakes, flooding and landslides.

In Indonesia, a number of humanitarian organizations have begun to respond to El Nino impacts since last year. However, a report by FAO claims that the impacts of El Nino began since 1997. Several disasters can be attributed to impacts of El Nino such as forest fires and field fires covering 2.3 to 2.8 million hectares, as well as food shortages. From these particular

impacts, the national government have begun to carry out early actions (FAO, 2015).

At the local level, the government's response has been limited to rice and clean water distribution initiatives. Since it is a slow onset disaster that takes place over a period of time, response efforts are not enough. There needs to be more intentional and systematic efforts to encourage the government to prioritise preparedness and mitigation initiatives that are integrated in long-term development programmes.

And when the government has yet to take optimal measures or fails to act effectively in responding to droughts, humanitarian actors must advocate for appropriate response. This can even be in the form of supporting the government in developing its capacity as a partner in meeting humanitarian needs. This project not only provides a conditional cash transfer to the community, it also lays a foundation for an Early Warning System for drought, which is the first step for WVI in advocating with the government through relationship building based on participation, partnership and joint activities in preparedness and response to droughts. Humanitarian organisations such as WVI must work harder to build partnerships with the government, other humanitarian organisations, the private sector and the community in taking the responsibility of influencing disaster management policies and transforming policy into action.

An assessment of drought impacts must also analyse relevant policy and government institutional factors that influence vulnerability levels in slow onset disasters. Once these factors are identified, an emergency intervention would need to include an advocacy strategy for change, which will make monitoring and evaluation of its impacts much easier.



The disbursement process for beneficiaries in Drought Response in Billa Village. The beneficiaries are showing their saving books and the cash. Photo: Uliyasi Simanjuntak/WVI.

Challenges

There were a number of challenges faced by WVI during the conditional cash transfer process, such as that many community members did not have a clear address that Bank NTT, the project partner, would use to differentiate from account holders that have the same name. To address this, the bank used the maiden name of the account holder when verifying their accounts. As a result, it took much longer for ADP to clarify the bank account procedure with the community members. This, in turn, created a delay in withdrawing cash for project beneficiaries in Kambajawa (Temu) and Kawangu, which have approximately 400 beneficiaries.

Another challenge is that although local banks are accustomed to transferring cash for local communities in East Sumba, this manual system impacted the speed of transfer. The temporary account used by WVI in Bank NTT was registered at the local level, so WVI was unable to use the internet banking system to transfer the cash aid. To solve this problem, the WVI headquarters office in Jakarta had to transfer the money to ADP's account in East Sumba, who then had to manually withdraw that money in the form of a check, and deposit it to Bank NTT. This affected the speed of response time in the field.

Indeed one solution would be to open an official WVI account in Bank NTT, instead of a temporary one. However, the process is quite time consuming and Bank NTT does not recommend it, because ADP only used this account for a short time.

The next challenge involved coordinating multiple stakeholders, especially with various governmental offices, such as the BKP, BPBD and BMKG, to ensure that the project sites are appropriate with the relevant need, such as those experiencing food insecurity or crop failure, based upon official parameters set by the government. Additionally, the project also needed to ensure that the beneficiaries were truly impacted by drought, which required many layers of verification from the village to the district level.

A cash transfer to community members is not an easy approach. Without proper preparation, this intervention could affect various aspects, such as the in-kind programme that WVI had been implementing so well. The potential for conflict among community members was quite high, which can be prevented by socialisations and reliable and accountable data verification. Based upon results of the focused group discussion discussing a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the early warning system, it was discovered that there had not been a contingency plan in place for prolonged drought. The existing contingency plan was only focused on natural disasters, such as earthquakes, landslides and flooding. Nonetheless, the BPBD regularly receives bulletins and climatology updates from the BMKG as reference material in developing climate change-related programmes. What is required in this situation is to develop a system where relevant information on droughts can be communicated to and understood well by the community.



Photo: Uliyasi Simanjuntak/WVI.

"About 80-90 percent of the community in this area, especially in Temu Village, are farmers. This drought has caused a lot of crop failure, which automatically results in a decline in food production. This cash aid has greatly helped the community in meeting their basic needs, while enabling them to engage in other economic activities, such as vending goods, carpentry or working in fields for those who have plots near a river bed."

Oktofianus Mbau (Head of Kanatang Village)

Conclusion

The Drought Response Project was implemented based on the urgent needs found in areas in NTT Province impacted by El Nino. The conditional cash transfer helps crop-dependent communities fulfil their daily food needs.

There were no fewer than 1,575 households that benefited from this project. The participatory approach used by WVI from the socialization process to the liquidation of the cash aid is appropriate as long as it reflects on the beneficiaries' consciousness to independently create a social contract that includes the mechanism of the conditional cash transfer.

The conditional cash aid also included a feedback mechanism and post-distribution survey in order to find out whether the targets of project were appropriate based on needs of the beneficiaries.

Recommendations

Throughout the course of this short project, there are a number of recommendations that can be relevant for other WVI activities. Below are the recommendations for improved response in the future.

Integration with other on-going programmes

Organisations need to understand that disaster impacts will also affect their development programmes. Therefore, the organisation needs to be prepared at an organisational level by providing skills, abilities and flexible funds so that the development programmes can also respond quickly to drought impacts. Additionally, development programmes also need to include a scenario that involves drought and its impacts into their programme design in the event that their project sites become vulnerable to droughts.

Improve preparedness efforts at the local government and community level

The government, particularly the BPBD have acknowledged (through a focused group discussion facilitated by WVI) that the existing contingency plan is only geared towards rapid onset disasters. Therefore, it is important for WVI to have better coordination with the government in sharing its experiences on community mobilisation in the field. It is also important that communities are not merely programme targets, but also sources of information in programme implementation. In that way, the community can support the government in drafting a contingency plan for droughts.

Improving the Early Warning System

In order for the early warning system to work optimally, it must include an indicator related to climate parameters. An early warning system should be based on weather forecasts, which includes rainfall intensity and La Nina forecasts. Additionally, crop predictions, such as chance percentage of crop success and failure, are also vital. Equally critical is data on food availability in the area. Therefore, WVI and relevant working units in the local government must work together to build the capacity of the disaster response team in the village, so they can access these early warning information and climate forecasts to then analyse and forward to the larger community.

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Socialization of Agriculture Insurance in Billa Village during Drought Response in East Sumba District.
Photo: Uliyasi Simanjuntak/WVI



*The disbursement process for beneficiaries in Drought Response in Billa Village. One of beneficiaries is showing her saving book and the cash.
Photo: Ulyasi Simanjuntak/WVI.*



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