

BELARASA KITA

CARITAS NEWS FROM COMMUNITY AND NETWORK



Milkfish Farming in Malaka, East Nusa Tenggara. Insert: 2 months old milkfish. Photo: Doc. Caritas Atambua

CAPABLE IN MILKFISH FARMING

Caritas Diocese of Atambua in coordination with Caritas Indonesia launched a milkfish farming assistance program in Malaka Regency, East Nusa Tenggara. This program is in the form of training for fishermen and providing milkfish seed, which has been going on for two months ago and to respond to the aftermath of the Seroja tropical cyclone.

Milkfish farming is common in Malaka where fishermen used to farm in five to six months for the harvest time. The training by Caritas aims to increase the fishermen's capacity so that they can farm the milkfish in a shorter duration and the harvest time will be in three months. Before, they have to wait until five months in order to get the fish ready to be harvested.



Distribution of seeds and equipment for milkfish farming. Photo: Doc. Caritas Atambua

This milkfish farming training program is part of the entire program of the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program in Malaka Regency, East Nusa Tenggara for the period 7 June 2021 – 6 June 2022.

Caritas on October 7 and 13 distributed the milkfish seeds to 31 Households as the beneficiary of this fishery program. This assistance is urgently needed by fishermen families in Malaka as their livelihood depends on the fishery and has been damaged due to the disaster.

Apart from seedlings, Caritas also distributes equipment to support farming such as nets, feed, fish scales, cool boxes, and buckets. The financial assistance of IDR. 750,000 was also provided by Caritas to support their initial business and to repair the pond canals.

The Progress

The target of the training held by Caritas is the fishermen who manage milkfish farming. In two months since the fish seeds were distributed, there has been good progress and it is hoped, according to the initial plan, the results can be harvested in the third month.

The beneficiaries feel the benefits of this program. Though still not ready to be harvested, the progress of the milkfish

is visible. The fish seeds that began to be distributed in early November 2021, now have grown and the weight reached about 100-300 grams each. With this progress, the fishermen in Malaka who is optimistic that they will be able to harvest in the third month.

Overall, the budget of the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program in Malaka Regency, East Nusa Tenggara is IDR 5,354,523,400 with coverage sectors in the WASH (Water, Sanitation, Hygiene), Livelihood, Capacity Building and staple food assistance.

Of this amount, since it was started in June 2021 until these six months, IDR. 2,390,339,757 or 45% of the total budget has been used. We certainly hope that all programs can run according to plan and achieve the targets. (ts, as, mdk)



The process of distributing aid to affected residents. *Photo:*
Doc. TSKKM

CHURCH'S SWIFT RESPONSE IN SEMERU

Natural disasters that follow the volcanic activity of Mount Semeru have been responded by various national parties, both the government institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The Indonesian Catholic Church, through the Humanitarian Solidarity Team of Malang Diocese (TSKKM) has also coordinated with Caritas Indonesia and responded to the disaster fastly.

The TSKKM responded immediately, opened a public kitchen for the displaced persons and distributed aid in the form of foods products.

One of the TSKKM staff, Benny, said that they were grateful for the food assistance distributed by the Church.

"We supply food, set up public kitchens, and distribute medicines. We also distribute donations, and they are grateful for our presence, which is fast in response," said Benny.

According to him, there are differences in the disaster response carried out by the Church and other NGO groups, in terms of immediate response to prepare the volunteers and provide urgent necessities.

Benny said that the community are very welcome to the Church's assistance as it was very helpful to relieve their sorrow.

"This assistance is seen by the community and is very well received," he said.

Continued Response

According to the National Disaster



Trauma Healing activity, at SMPN 2 Pronojiwo.
Photo: Doc. TSKKM

Management Agency (BNPB), as of December 21, 2021, the death toll was 51 people with 10,395 were fled to evacuation points spread across Lumajang Regency, Malang Regency, Blitar Regency and Probolinggo Regency.

In response to this disaster, TSKKM has opened two command posts, in Lumajang Parish and Tumpang Parish. The last post is located close to Pronojiwo District, the severest area hit by the pyroclastic of Mount Semeru.

Currently, many people have returned to their homes and are trying to rearrange their daily activities. Food assistance from the public kitchens was then stopped as they could meet their daily foods on their own.

In the fast response in Mount Semeru, the TSKKM also coordinated and distributed assistance from the Surabaya Diocese and Caritas Archdiocese of Semarang (KARINA KAS).

Caritas Indonesia and the TSKKM has carried out an assessment to determine the next steps for the response and found that most of the affected population are farmers and have their livestock such as goats or cows. Also, based on the observation, some of them started to have various health issues, mostly acute respiratory infection (ARI).

In addition, there are potential further volcanic activities, as especially the high

rainfall has predicted still happen to the end of February 2022.

Even though the community has started slowly their usual daily activities, they are still aware of the potential of disaster and remain precaution. Based on many testimonies in rural areas, until now there has been no mitigation related to the risk of disaster in Mount Semeru.

As part of the responses, the TSKKM and Caritas Indonesia are preparing disaster preparedness bags to distribute which include megaphones, handy talkie, first aid kit, vest, flashlight, glasses, and whistle. The bag will be given to coordinators in the communities and could be an emergency instrument for evacuating the community in the event of dangerous volcanic activities or other disasters. The evacuation plans, directions and locations have also been made.

In designing a recovery strategy, the option to provide a preparedness bag is in line with the Caritas Internationalis Strategic Orientation 2019 – 2023, to support in reducing the risks, saving lives and rebuilding communities. (as, mdk)



Donation of seeds and rice production facilities for farmer groups in East Sumba.

Photo: Doc. Caritas Keuskupan Weetabula

FOOD RESILIENCE IN SUMBA TIMUR

Pope Francis at the 42nd conference of the UN organization on food and agriculture (FAO) in Rome, June 14, 2021, said, “Conflicts, extreme weather events, financial crises and the current health crisis have brought famine and hunger for millions of people. Three-quarters of the world poor live in rural areas and depend mainly on agriculture for their livelihoods. However, due to lack of access to markets, land ownership, financial resources, infrastructure and technologies, these brothers and sisters of ours are the ones who are most vulnerable to food insecurity.”

The Holy Father emphasized that the Catholic Church supports every effort to make the world more just, especially the concern for serving those who are helpless and in need.

Reaching the Community

The efforts to prevent food insecurity through developing humanitarian programs

in the food sector are also carried out by Caritas Indonesia. Community empowerment and capacity building in the food sector is indeed implemented in the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program in East Nusa Tenggara.

In a broad sense, the food sector inside the program is not merely the distribution of ready-to-eat or food products, but also in providing various seeds, working equipment and capacity building or training in making organic fertilizers.

In Weetebula Diocese, for example, to strengthen food security for those affected by the Seroja Tropical Cyclone disaster and especially those who live in rural areas, Caritas Weetebula with the support of the Caritas Indonesia national network distributed 611 sachets of horticultural plant seeds, namely mustard, pakcoy, eggplant, chayote, long beans, and cayenne pepper.

In addition, 370 bottles of organic liquid



Laurensius Juang of Caritas Weetebula accompanies farmers in training to make organic fertilizer in Lulundilu Village, East Sumba.
Photo: Doc. Caritas Keuskupan Weetabula

fertilizer and 320 pieces of agricultural equipment in the form of hoes, shovels, and hand sprayer pumps as well as 4 units of cultivators, were also handed over to 185 farmers in East Sumba Regency.

This support is a form of the Indonesian Catholic Church's presence through Caritas in communities that have been affected by the disaster and are in need to rebuild their life. One form of Caritas' empowering accompaniment was the training to make organic fertilizer.

"We are very grateful to gain new knowledge on making organic fertilizers, and now we are able to produce vegetables for our community," said Deacon Silvester Pea, one of the training participants.

Measurable Program

Caritas' companionship in the food sector is in line with what Pope Francis has stated in *Laudato Si'*: "I appreciate and encourage the efforts the international community is making to enable each country to implement the necessary arrangements to achieve food autonomy, whether

through new development and consumption models or through forms of community organization that preserve local ecosystems and biodiversity. It could be very beneficial to draw on the potential of innovation to support smallholders and help them build capacities and resilience," (LS, 129.180).

Food insecurity must be avoided by planning and implementing a measurable agricultural program. Real actions to restore human life and get out of the food crisis by upholding local wisdom through persistent dialogue, need to be built so that enlightenment can wisely motivate those in need to reach food security.

In this way, the efforts in terms of various seeds that have sown, equipment, and knowledge that has been shared are just waiting for the time to see the result. Restoring lives will give an opportunity to reflect our steps in promoting sustainable agriculture and diversification that considers the important role of families and rural communities. *(as, mdk)*

ABOUT US

Belarasa Kita is a medium for disseminating information regarding programs implemented by Caritas Indonesia - KARINA in collaboration with the Caritas Diocese network as well as with other related institutions. The mandate of Facilitation, Coordination, and Animation is always carried out in collaborative and participatory humanitarian works.

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