

Kalyanamitra's Experience

Recovery Aceh after Earthquake and Tsunami: Looking at Women Participation in Housing Construction in Aceh Jaya, Aceh, Indonesia

I. Introduction

Rehabilitation and reconstruction of Aceh after the earthquake and tsunami are now in the third year. Indonesian government formally sets the rehabilitation and reconstruction Aceh until 2009 under the coordination of *Badan Rekonstruksi dan Rehabilitasi Aceh Nias (Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Body of Aceh Nias)*. In this process, the infrastructure development which includes houses construction becomes one of the program priorities in the first and second year.

Based on BRR data, by the end of 2006 15,000 houses and 57,000 permanent houses have been constructed. However, the construction is considered slow in comparison to the need for the houses which are 110,000 units not to mention the quality.

Based on gender perspective, many house constructions have not considered women's interest in terms of design and distribution. This is more because of the lack of women participation in planning, implementation and monitoring of the house construction. Therefore, the position paper will describe how the role, access and control of women are involved in the house construction in Aceh Jaya during rehabilitation and reconstruction Aceh after the earthquake and tsunami. The gender role will be focused on the process of house reconstruction and its distribution.

II. Data Collection

a. Method of Data Collection

The position paper is based on the study conducted in Dayah Baroe and Kampoeng Blang, Krueng Sabee sub-district, and barrack Passie Teubee, Teunom sub-district, Aceh Jaya district. It is conducted through in-depth interview to 20 respondents that represent program implementer, mediator (village apparatus and local government agency) and benefit receiver in Aceh Jaya particularly in Dayah Baroe, Kampoeng Blang and Passie Teubee.

b. Data Source

Respondents who are the data sources are individuals that represent the group of program implementer, mediator or benefit receiver group. The program implementer group includes BRR and International Red Cross as the party that gives aids of house construction in research area. The mediator group is represented by the village head that is responsible to manage data of receiver of house aid. The benefit receiver group is represented by 9 women villagers of Kampoeng Blang, Dayah Baroe and barrack Passie Teubee Aceh Jaya regency.

c. Data Management Technique

The data are classified based on the questions that will be answered. From the classification, a description of the finding is made by including the perspective of gender equality and justice and the principles of human rights. The analyses direct to description of reading of role, access and

control of women to the plan, implementation and distribution of house aids in Aceh Jaya after the earthquake and tsunami.

III. Field Findings

1. House Construction Planning

Planning is the steps to be made before constructing the houses. The plan for budget, design and selection of contractor that will conduct technical development of the house and procure the material is made by internal program implementer without involving the benefit receivers. However, program implementer first researches the need and makes feasibility study to the design of the house.

Though it has not particularly used gender mainstreaming in designing the houses but the program implementer such as International Red Cross has involved a team of consultant that also involves women. The main perspective that is used is the house can be a safe place to live in without using special gender analysis.

Selection of contractor is based on semi-open bid. The selection is based on the proposed bids which are supported by field staffs that represent the institution in the village. So it is considered more understandable to the people's need including the credibility of each contractor. The benefit receiver community is not involved in selecting the contractor.

The next step in program planning is socialization. The socialization is made in the residents' meeting. Though it is not limited to men's participants, the cultural value in the community still thinks that the meeting is attended by men. Therefore, they don't ask the women to participate, it is impossible for women to attend such a meeting.

The plan to donate house construction aids for survivors of earthquake and tsunami is raised and discussed in the meeting including the mechanism of its implementation. The meeting also opens the chance for the people to give proposals. Unfortunately, the presence of women in terms of physical and perspective is minimal, so the need for women has not become the attention in this discussion. Based on the information, there have not been many complaints in relation the house designs because the aids receivers can change the design as long as the materials are sufficient and the time and resources of the workers accord to the program owner. When the cost is excessive, the house owners should pay it.

One problem comes up when women do not attend this meeting because of the lack of information so women cannot have maximal role in the program implementation including the supervision. Though it does not disadvantage the women, the minimum involvement of women in planning makes their need cannot be optimally expressed.

2. House Aid Distribution

The process of house distribution is made one by one with a set of data per family head. Widows are priority of the development in the first phase. Data are gained by village administration. Data processing is agreed to be conducted one door by the village head. The program owner cannot verify that data. The list of names whose houses will be constructed in the period is put in meunasah so all people are aware of it. However, some people complain about it. With the remove of the names without any confirmation to the removed names, there is no clear reason for those whose names are removed.

The people are getting restless when new names often come up in the list of house receivers in that period. They admit that they are confused of the criteria of aid receivers who do not accord to the agreement that has been made in the initial socialization. This is mostly because the lack of information and facilitation from the program owner about the mechanism of house aid distribution and its development implementation.

Not far from the finding of first position paper, this second problem is getting expanded when the information gained by the people is unclear or incomplete. When asking the village administration, they said that the decision is on the program owner. When people complain to the program owner, the answer is data is entirely the responsibility of local village administrator.

At the moment, the level of critical awareness of the people including women is actually getting better. People have started to complain or to ask unclear information if they think it unclear, mainly related to the house aid that should be received. However, there is no department of special complaint or special facilitation provided by program owner. Therefore, when there is a person who knows well when the people come, people will gain the correct information, but if this person is not present, they will not get the information. According to the people, they often gain recommendation to be patient without sufficient explanation.

Therefore, the issue related to the data of aids receivers of the houses is data transparency and the clear information that people should get routinely and comprehensively. The misinformation among all parties apparently creates problems that will hamper the process of house aid.

3. House Construction Implementation

In the implementation of house development, the benefit receiver that gets part on a certain period, the uncertain period of house construction often brings nervousness to the people. For instance, it happens to the residents of barrack Passie Teubee. They get information that their aided houses will be constructed if they have submitted the administrative requirements, which include the cancellation letter of the plot of houses in the original village and have had lands for the location of house construction. However, 5 months after the requirements are submitted, the construction of their houses has not been clear, in fact, the barrack where they live so far is not feasible to live in. Returning to their villages is not possible anymore because the land of their houses have been damaged while the house aids in the original village will not be used because they have signed statement to cancel the house aid since they have decided to take the relocation house.

Arrangement of requirement to get the house aid is actually not too complicated. But the long bureaucracy, the distance of the related offices and the levies on the administration fees burden the people more. The tight requirement should be imposed to avoid data duplication so one person can get house aid more than one unit. However, facilitation to the people when they process all administrative requirements is required so these poor people will not be burdened more.

In implementing the house construction, the people's inspiration gets the attention. In the first step of house construction, it is not possible to change the selected design, in the next step, it is possible to the design the house as long as it is not far from the basic design and the materials do not exceed the allocation. When there is a lack of materials, additional working days are the responsibility of the house owner that should be coordinated with the contractor of house developer. In the third step of house construction, based on the reading of the requirement, the program owner like Germany Red Cross also gives the copy of list of materials that will be distributed so people can participate in monitoring the materials that are entitled to them for house

construction. This step can reduce the risk of misusing the materials that are used to construct the house so the quality of materials for house construction is based on the approval of program owner.

From the study, there are cases of the lack of coordination with all involved parties in constructing this house. This also prevents the house construction aids, for example, constructing the BRR house aids. The lack of coordination among program implementer causes unpayment of the workers so they stop working. As a result, the partly constructed houses are left behind and they are getting worse because of the rains. The materials are also damaged because they are kept in an open place exposed by the sunlights and rains so they are not good to be used for house construction.

4. House Design

In terms of the designs, the two program owners that have house aid programs in three villages that become the study locations do not use gender perspective in particular. The main perspective is security. There are some issues that have not accommodated the women's need. However, people in general can accept it and it brings a little happiness to the people when they are given some selections of designs. And the change of the design is possible as long as it is not too far from the basic design. People think that those houses have fulfilled their basic needs.

In relation to the design, it is a bit disturbing when there is difference between the designed house and the sample house that is socialized in the beginning of the program without clear explanation to the aid receiver community. The unclear information related to the reason of difference of design disturbs the people and influences their level of confidence to the program owner.

Though it has not fulfilled the need of its residents optimally, people just received the design that is made now. Except the house design from Germany Red Cross, in the first step, the kitchen and toilet are in one room having one door. However, since design change is allowed in the next step, this shortcoming can be accommodated. In terms of habit among the community of Aceh Jaya, the kitchen is big because women usually receive their guests or families in the kitchen while they are cooking. However, the need for basic house design is sufficient to fulfill basic need. But, the house aid from BRR is not accompanied with the construction of the well and septic tank so the residents still need to spend big money to use them optimally.

III. Gender Analysis and Feminism Perspective

Feminism perspective views gender equality from three main aspects namely role, access, and control. In the house construction program in Aceh Jaya in the recovery period of Aceh after the earthquake and tsunami, the role of women is apparent but its access and control are still limited.

On paper, most programs have included the gender mainstream in their planning. However, patriarchal culture has been so strongly planted in Indonesian community. The concept is not enough to push the access and control of the women to be involved.

Many meetings that do not involve the women in particular restrict women's access to information of house construction program comprehensively. The lack of information forces the women not to involve optimally in the program implementation. Because of infrequent involvement in the meeting of program socialization, the women less understand their rights and obligation that they can do in supervising the implementation of house construction. Women only understand that they receive

aids. They are just grateful to get house aid without understanding that it is their right which even should be fought when they have not received it fully.

The distribution of house aid under the family head restricts women participation. The Marriage Law in Indonesia states that the family head is husband. Therefore, a family does not have a husband the women will be prevented to take the role as family head to access the aids. For those who have widow status, it is easier because in the house development program, widow is one the priority group that will receive house aid. However, the access for the widows completely depend on data of village administrator because there is not special meeting held for them. Attending the socialization meeting is restricted not only because there is no special invitation but there is no understanding that women have rights and rooms to participate in the meetings. Women also have the rights to take decision.

This will influence women's awareness that women also have same right in making decision and taking action related to their house construction. When there is problem, women tend to let their husbands make the solutions and decisions. In fact women have more time to supervise their house construction.

IV. Recommendation

a. Program Implementation

- Improving the facilitation to the community related to the information on house construction development program for the people either in the procedure of proposal or monitoring the house development implementation.
- Verifying data of house construction receiver
- Strengthening the women to participate more in finding information related to the implementation of house construction including its supervision.

b. Data Accountability Holder

- To give information routinely and transparently to the people in relation to the changes of policy on the change of list of house aid receiver or implementation of house construction

c. Benefit Receiver

- Actively finding accurate information about the house construction to the authority.
- Improving the participation in supervising the house construction including giving input and advice to the authorized party.

V. Attachment

VI. Basic Question of Research

| Program Implementer | Mediator | Program Benefiter |
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| How many houses have been constructed? Where is the distribution? | What is the description of house construction program that is facilitated? | Which institution that is accepted in house construction program? |
| How is the basic policy of house construction program implemented? | How is the cooperation with program implementer or benefit receiver? | How is the designed house accepted? |
| How is the gender mainstreaming used in the program? | How is the complaint system facilitated from the program implementation or benefit | How is the house construction implementation conducted? |

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| | receiver? | |
| How is the process of house construction program conducted? | What are the obstacles and chances faced in the program implementation? | How is the house distribution implemented? |
| How is the process to determine the design and the house conducted? | How big is your role in the planning, monitoring or evaluation of the program? | Is the information about house construction program is received completely and clearly? Who gives the information? |
| How is the monitoring and evaluation system conducted? | In your opinion, how is the design of the constructed house? | Does the design fulfill your needs? |
| How is the cooperation system with the implementer of house construction? | How is the level of women's participation in the planning, monitoring and evaluation? | Does the system of house distribution go according to the agreement? |
| How is the level of women participation in the process of planning, monitoring and evaluation of the program? | What is the recommendation for the sustainability of the program? | Are you involved in the planning, monitoring and evaluation in the program? |
| How is the system of aids receipt in the program? | | Are there room and opportunity to complain? |
| What are the obstacles and chances faced in the program implementation? | | What are the plans and recommendations given to the program sustainability? |
| How is your evaluation to the program implementation? | | |
| Based on the experience, what are the following-up plan and recommendation to the program? | | |