

Can Collective Violence Be Prevented?

Project Report January 2006

Banda Aceh: Our arrival coincided with a special Muslim holiday. Women, children and men wore their most colourful and festive garb. Each household celebrates Iedul Adah by preparing their finest cookies. After the morning prayers the families visit each other. **Our women's group in Lampseunong** was doing just that when we arrived. The Swiss chocolate I brought was a very welcome treat.

The brick factory has grown since our last visit in October. The kiln for firing the bricks was under construction. The first firing of new bricks takes about one month. In addition to the money we received from Switzerland we also received a generous donation from Java. Combined, these gifts permitted a very happy team to buy the needed wood to fire the first load of bricks, already waiting. We will be present during this process for a period of time to assure a just distribution of profit for the participating women.

The small business women's group, fifteen in number, which, during our last visit had received an additional financial boost for their projects, was able to expand. One participant, for example, had increased her initial number of two ducks to a flock of twenty. Their eggs, salted and sold, bring in money. **Our women in the other camp**, also numbering fifteen, were ready to purchase the promised mattresses. The small kiosk, financed as a part of our projects, runs very well. This time we also collected exact information on the number of family members of each participant that perished in the Tsunami and on the number of families that are being helped by our small business projects. At present, forty-two families are benefiting. In each family at least two to three members perished in the Tsunami. In this particular area an estimated 22,000 people resided before the Tsunami. Now, approximately 3000 people are living here.

The discovery that most villages in the area now have access to minimal medical care, if needed, was a very welcome one. One of the great challenges still remaining is the water situation. Oxfam delivers the daily drinking water. The wells for washing clothes and people are salty and quite a few women suffer from excema, possibly caused by this water. Our regular three monthly emotional and financial support is warmly welcomed.

I was asked by a local organization to hold three day seminar in April for their social workers. My colleague Tiwi will translate.

Bali: This rainy season is of an intensity previously unknown, causing major flooding and landslides throughout most of Indonesia.

Tanggayuda Youth Center: Presently, two computer classes are being taught weekly, as well as two English classes and a once a week session with the Western music band. The table tennis equipment is used mainly after school is out. Our university students, in addition to their studies, keep the computers going and support Martini, our office manager, in administration of the Yayasan Lagu Damai. Six youths are attending high school. Two will finish school next year. Both, Agung and Ngurah, come from very poor families and are very anxious to find sponsors to be able who will support their university studies

Jiwa Damai Seminar Facilities: The damage caused by the incredible rains is slowly being repaired. The earthslides are being cleared from the pond and the never ending leaks in the roof are repaired after each strong rainfall. Both our doggies, Kinta and Blackie, are now five months old and are developing into great watchdogs. Tigerli is a very elegant male cat and loves to be talked to and stroked. Next, we plan to build a wall to dam in the river and prevent the flood waters from uncovering the roots of the beautiful old trees there. At this time Jiwa Damai can accommodate up to twelve people. It can be rented to visiting groups, as well.

Blitar, Java Children's Prison: On this visit we evaluated the October workshop held with the employees and wardens of the prison. The feedback was very positive. We are now planning regular seminars at three month intervals with both employees and children. Of our initial group of twenty children, three remain. A deep trust has unfolded over the past two years of our interaction. Each child, upon his release, was supported with clothing, travel money and a personal contact. One of the goals of the planned seminar series is to produce a manual to assist the prison personel in building trust and to empower the youth to be more motivated to study and learn skills in prison.

We thank you for your emotional and financial support.

One of our leading values is to support empowerment of participants through small scale projects effectively and with a minimum of administrative costs.

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