Strengthening Community Food Security in Dealing with Disasters

Bambang Catur Nusantara

(WALHI)

Lapindo Hot Mudflow in Sidoarjo

The Lapindo mudflow in Sidoarjo since May 29, 2006, has resulted in the displacement of at least 20 thousand families from their homes. The government has issued several policies to deal with this issue through many Presidential Regulations. The government policy continued to revise due to the continued impact of the eruption. The president decree decided to use a sale and purchase replacement scheme to manage the socio-economic impacts. In operating the volume of the mud erupted, the President decree rule to flow the hot mud to the ocean through the Porong river.

Multi-Dimensional Impact

- The Porong River is an important river for the lives of people in Sidoarjo from the past. The river water is used for agricultural irrigation and aquaculture water sources. Lead (Pb) and Cadmium (Cd) heavy metals are found in water, sediments, and biota around submerged areas and the Porong river. Research conducted by WALHI East Java in 2008 finds at least two types of heavy metals (Pb and Cd) that exceeded the safe threshold. In 2013, Tarzan Purnomo, a researcher from UNESA, discovered Lead metal heavy metals in fish, thousands of times above the safe limit.

- The mud eruption covered 1,300 hectares of the factory industrial area, rice fields, and settlements has resulted in the loss of people's living space. Economic resources are lost, health is declining, and social relations are in ruins. Some communities have tried to recover by optimizing their assets. The cultivation on their homestead that is still own, both in the village location and in the relocation area, has not shown the impact of contributions as an economic source.

COVID 19 and orientation changes

- The COVID 19 pandemic is pushing some communities to adapt to seeing their assets. The PSBB, large-scale social restrictions, make it difficult for communities to obtain economic income highly dependent on the resources of others. In the initial phase, the solidarity of other communities in helping the survivor community is enough to help members who are experiencing difficulties.

- Efforts made later are to increase efforts to adapt to securing community food sources quickly. Modifications and acceleration are carried out by:

Identification of community land as a food source asset

In Glagaharum, the village land is planned to be utilized for community activities. Problems with the condition of the laborer's water are managed by water recovery through phytoremediation. In Panggreh, a community relocation area, a portion of land has not to use for house construction and is then use for integrated agricultural cultivation. In Penatarsewu, community members plan to optimize their land by utilizing manure. In the Kesambi relocation, there are community members who use land that has not constructed with growing vegetables.

Identification of food sources

Community members identify high nutritional food sources in their area of residence. Information about nutritious food, such as Moringa (Moringa Oleifera) and Purslane / common purslane (Portulaca oleracea) is spread through WhatsApp communication media. Some community members have recognized and planted several types of plants: Telang, Okra, Chaya, and several other types.

Identification of community skills and knowledge

Some community members (men and women) were provided with cultivation knowledge and skills in 2017. Some of them have agricultural cultivation experience. Experience and knowledge have become key members of the community in utilizing home yards for food crop cultivation.

Identification of social situations and community organizations

Communities from various villages have different processes in dealing with the Lapindo hot mudflow situation. The environmental situation and impacts faced are different, including how community organizations deal with impacts. The differences are anticipated by diversifying the priority plan according to the conditions of each community.

COVID 19 pandemic in Sidoarjo and East Java has not shown a decline. The number of people being positive with COVID 19 is increasing. Even though the government announces normalization under the term New Normal, there is a greater risk to the community's safety. Optimizing community assets in providing food sources is one of the adaptations in reducing the risk of the spread of COVID 19 and its impacts. Merging science, technology, and social (community knowledge and skills) is expected to optimally secure community food sources and become an alternative source of income for community members.

Community actions, aside from their safety, also indicate the state's protection absence in the disasters they face. They must subsidize the state continuously.