

## 'WASH and Beyond –Transforming lives in Eastern Indonesia' Project.

### **Background:**

Plan International Australia, Yayasan Plan International Indonesia (YPII) were awarded the Wash and Beyond: Transforming lives in Eastern Indonesia project. Part of Water for Women which is five-year program funded by the DFAT. Outcome three of this project is a Participatory Action Research project with marginalised groups in two areas of Eastern Indonesia. There are other partners involved in outcome three including Edge Effect. This part of the Wash and Beyond: Transforming lives in Eastern Indonesia project is focused on increasing the advocacy and rights of marginalised communities for safe, accessibly and inclusive Water, Sanitation and Hygiene. Of the six groups of marginalised people involved in the PAR project, three groups are made up of people with different disabilities. The group who is the focus of this case study is made up with people with different disabilities, including people with physical disabilities and people who are deaf and hearing impaired. It is this group that I will focus this case study on.

This case study is intended to convey a process of inclusion and participation as shaped by using a Participatory Action Research framework. It is useful to note that there is an accompanying reference group made up by local leaders from the community and government that support and advise the PAR groups.

### **The PAR Cycles**

During the first PAR cycle visit, the PAR participants learned about the many different activities, services and materials that make up WASH. They decided that they wanted to focus on advocating for accessible toilets in public spaces. They spoke about the limitations of social and community connection when they are limited to private spaces, and how much being able to spend time with different friends affected their quality of life. The group decided that their PAR 1 action would be to map the different public toilets in the town and see how accessible the public toilets actually were or were not. During the time between PAR cycles, the PAR group took photos of different public toilets in the local area. Some in parks and markets, but also in the different Kelurahan (urban village head) offices, public medical centres, and places of worship. At worse, some of the toilets were in complete disrepair, with no doors, no water etc. At best, they did not meet the needs of many of the group members.

During the second PAR cycle, they explored what they would want an accessible washroom to look like. They developed a brochure to show what an accessible bathroom is. Some people contributed the writing, other took photos of examples of accessibility, some formatted it into a brochure at the computers at the local university.

During the third PAR cycle, the group did some theory of change work and stakeholder mapping and realised that there would be many other groups that would use accessible bathrooms, for example, parents of babies and young children and elderly people. That the community may also see this as beneficial and support the building of an accessibility toilet. Between PAR cycles, the group then created a petition of support for an accessible

bathroom at a main park in town. They went to the park in shifts and started talking to people about the importance of accessibility and get signatures.

During PAR 4 the group focused on solidarity mapping and mapping those who have the influence and power to support them. They decided that stronger relationships with government would be beneficial and supported our goal of increasing the advocacy and rights of marginalised groups.

Since this time the project has been in a type of suspension, with alternative activities taking place. No longer is the project team going to Eastern Indonesia about every 8 weeks, we are providing online support during the COVID-19 crisis. Much of this support includes providing the PAR groups opportunities to build their skills. For example, attend online workshops.

For the PAR groups, like one of the People with Disability groups in Sumbawa, it is an opportunity for the group members to take up leadership positions they had been working towards. The group started making face masks that had a clear plastic part so that people who lip read can continue to communicate with masks on. They also continued their agenda for more visibility and building relationships.

In July 2020 some members of the people with disabilities group met with their local house of representatives. In August, both PAR disability groups in Sumbawa met with the Vice-Regent. During this meeting they spoke about the right to legal documentation, the right to work, Violence against people with disability communities, WASH, Participation, and resource support for DPO's.

The different PAR groups made up with people with disabilities were engaged with both Plan Indonesia and various government departments to help create celebrations for The International Day of People with Disabilities in October 2020. One PAR participant in Sumbawa appeared to deliver a poem about being a person with a disability. This was broadcast live on TVRI (provincial level TV station). Another PAR participant was a member of a panel of people representing DPOs in NTB Province to advocate for WASH issues for persons with disabilities in a talk show at the same TV station. It was a panel discussion with representatives from DPO's on the WASH issues that people with disabilities face. She spoke about barriers women with disabilities face, especially in regard to WASH and she also talked about the PAR project.

This project embeds inclusion in many different aspects of the project. In this case, it is the people with disabilities who take an equal lead in setting the research agenda, and the group undertakes and analyses the research process in their own accessible ways. Leadership has moved from an enclosed 'safer space' within the boundaries of the project, and the groups are now starting to work together, stepping into roles that show disability representation and expertise in advocating for the changes they want to see.