



## Mis Ita, come, tell us stories!

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The IDP children in Lhok Me enjoying learning through real stories and drawing.

“Miss Ita, please, come here!” Some little girls called Yovita out. Yovita serves as a JRS education field officer for the IDP students in Krueng Raya.

Yovita came and invited the students of MIN Krueng Raya to gather under a coconut tree in a *Puskesmas*, Community Health Center, yard.

“Don’t sit so close to me, kids. I’m smelly. I’ve just come from the sea,” Yovita told the eight girls.

“Did you sail, Miss?” They were excited and smiled.

“Yup, and slept on the sea.”

“Did you?? On the deck, didn’t you?” The girls’ eyes were gleaming.

“Right; I got also a squid.”

Their attention was interrupted by boys fighting on the yard side. Yovita intervened and succeeded to break up the fight. However, the children had already scattered. At the same time, Yovita was surprised when the kids called her to set with them again.

“Miss, come on, tell us your story again,” they

asked her.

She sat on a stone surrounded by the children. “OK, but I want to ask you a question first. Whose father is a fisherman?” All the girls raised their hands. “Good. Who has ever sailed, then?” Nobody raised their hands. Yovita was shocked knowing this. “How come, you have never sailed?”

The children gave various answers. A girl said, “My father forbids me to sail, since I am a girl.” The other girl said, “We might

get seasick.” The other else said, “I am afraid. I may fall and sink.”

Vita then told them about the deck. She drew a deck on a piece of paper and began to explain what it is, and how the fishermen work. The children enjoyed the story, since they were familiar with everything related to boats.

“I know, Miss, there are always cabins and two small boats on the deck...,” a girl said proudly.

The warm encounter with the children did not last long. When the children left to prepare for a competition, there was something left deep in Vita’s heart.

“What is interesting is that a dialogue with them is enjoyable. Despite preparing for competitions, they remained focused, intense, and enthusiastic learning from events how to live. They not only learned, but also I learned from them how to centre myself, and not least, I learned their language... Learning from the children is indeed very enjoyable.” □ Paulus Enggal.

## Where should I sign, Sir?

Almost all of the schools in Meulaboh are stretched because of IDP students and a lack of teachers. Because many schools are in remote areas, JRS Meulaboh has

opened a registration of new teachers ready to be employed in the areas of West Aceh and Nagan Raya.

We were really astonished to see that the appli-

cants flooded in. Some were sincere, some seemed serious but turned out to be fake, and some were just bluntly not suitable to teach. We received 60 letters

each day. After 3 weeks, we obtained 780 applicants. We then closed the registration.

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We sorted the letters. Among them, we found two letters having the same senders with different school symbols. Another letter was inconsistent between content and the heading. Some letters were artificial, since there were various school symbols with the same names. We found out that class schedules were exactly the same in some primary schools. How successful, we thought, Suharto is in uni-

formization of educational programmes.

Money then 'flowed' in. There was an applicant promising 5 million rupiah if he was accepted. We also found some letters enclosed by 50 thousand rupiah, which Khadir, our local staff, returned to them.

Some applicants, introducing themselves as teachers, asked Mr. Nyaksih, one of our staff members in charge of the recruitment, "Where should I sign, Sir,



Some students learn in tent. Education is one of the important field to serve.



Santi, a JRS Staff (below, with eyeglass) and volunteers of teachers are ready to serve the remaining schools replacing the dead teachers and assisting the new IDP students who join in.

above the *Hormat Kami* (Sincerely Yours) or below?" What kind of teacher would ask such a question?

Mr. Nyaksih could not go home as usual. From early in the morning until late at night, he must receive new applicants. Even on Sunday, at 6.30 a.m there were applicants coming. "Papa went to bed late last night. He is still sleeping now," Maya, Mr. Nyaksih's 5 year old girl, told the visitors...

The Education Programme for IDPs is one of the programmes set up by JRS in Meulaboh. JRS distributed 15,000 educational packages for primary and secondary school students. In collaboration with the HMI, Muslim Student Association, JRS will recruit 150 teachers. JRS will also provide scholarships for 200 tertiary students in Meulaboh. □Afra Primadiana.

## Dendi often cries...

Dendi's eyes stared down at the floor all the time and he wove his fingers into one another. During the conversation, he answered just a word or two for each question. His grandma talked much about how his parents and sister were missing in the tsunami in December 2004. Dendi, a 4<sup>th</sup> grade student of a primary school in Meulaboh, has to stay with his grandma.

The grandma said, "Although he can get used to the new school, a State Primary School of Tapaktuan, he often cries and gets a headache every time he remembers his missing family. He is still traumatized by the disaster. Her mother ordered him to run with his sister, since she wanted to find her husband. But he lost her when the wave hit them."

Dendi is not alone. Ismail, a 1<sup>st</sup> grade student of a Junior High School in Meulaboh, lost both his parents. His brother and he have stayed in his uncle's house in Tapaktuan. The uncle said, "Now, he has become very quiet."

Another boy, Andra, also lost his family in Lhok Nga. He stays in his uncle's house at Samadua. He said, "I am continuing my study at the State Senior High School 1 in Tapaktuan. I am now preparing for final examination. My new friends here are kind."

Not all traumatic cases are visible. The survivor may give answers to every question, participate in activities, study and play as others do. If families or close friends would not tell their stories, we would never

know how much they endure. A JRS volunteer trained in psychology said, "Although they seem fine, they need time to recover. I saw a woman in Tapaktuan who suddenly ran away after she stepped on broken glass when she was washing. According to her neighbours, she often suddenly runs away as she is scared of water."

The stories above are just some of the larger stories found by every volunteer in their work for the IDPs. However, we cannot put them down away. Trauma is a serious burden to bear. JRS realizes that to face the problem, we are incapable of handling the situation completely. All we can do is to accompany the survivors as a friend. □Nia Susanti.



# The local government just talks

Langsa, a city in East Aceh District, was not hit by tsunami on December 26, 2004. However, it has received a wave of more than 12 thousand IDPs from Banda Aceh who sought refuge with their relatives or in safe places scattered all over 51 villages. Mr. *Keuchik* (*Keuchik is a title of a village head*), one of the IDPs, said, "The local government has promised the IDPs house materials worth as much as two million rupiah per unit, one million as a donation and the other one million as a loan which should be paid back in instalments. However, it seems to be just a promise. We haven't seen the realization."

Miss Ipung, a JRS staff member, said, "On April 22, 2005, we visited IDPs at Simpang Ulim and distributed packages of women's necessities such as underwear, sanitary pads, and *mukena* (Muslim white, head-to-toe prayer gowns). We also visited a sick IDP who had not received medical treatment for some days."

Mr. Iyung, another JRS staff member, explained, "Mrs. Jamal, our landlady, whose rooms we rent, has many IDP guests. Most of them are women who want to set up a discussion group as a means of psychological recovery. Miss Bas, one of our JRS staff members, will be the facilitator of this group."



The IDP children are enthusiastically enjoying the alternative education lead by Miss Ipung.

JRS approaches not only the grassroots people but also the local government. Three staff participated in a thanksgiving ceremony (*kenduri*) on the Muslim day of *Maulid Nabi* at Idi Cut. This ceremony is very important for the Acehnese people for all family members come together in this ceremony. At the governmental level, JRS met the head of Darul Alam sub-district to introduce themselves and ask for work permission in the sub-district. The Sub-district head welcomed JRS and its programmes, especially for health and education.

In health service, JRS signed a work contract with Darul Aman *Puskesmas*,

the Public Health Center, represented by Dr. T. Iskandar Rizal. The doctor said, "We are grateful, because JRS supports the operational costs, especially for transportation, for our six field officers and funds our medicines. We serve the sick IDPs and host communities in Idi Cut and Meunasah Blang."

In education, Miss Ipung and Mr. Iyung have approached children for alternative education. "We invite the children to learn drawing. They are enthusiastic. From them, we may learn the Acehnese language," Miss Ipung said. □Yeni Kristanti.

## A cappella for Nias

Yogyakarta, April 22, 2005 – JRS, in collaboration with the café Via Via and Duta Voices a choir from Duta Wacana University, organized a concert for the victims of the March earthquake in Nias. "We have no money, but we have a big hearts and good voices," Mrs. Esty said, to explain why Duta Voices took initiative to the concert. Ms. Mie Cornoedus and Via Via staff agreed to donate 50% of the evenings' income to JRS projects in Nias.

"The evening was very successful," JRS Program Manager Dedy Kristan-

to said. "Via Via was filled with people. The music from Duta Voices was beautiful and 5 million rupiah were raised. This we will spend to send supplementary feeding to children in Nias," he added.

1 million rupiah alone was raised on the initiative of a guest, Mr Sebastian Walas, to sell his dread locks for Nias. People could bid on his hair and come forward to cut it, something which was especially popular among the children. Milas, a handicraft project for street children, sold their

works for Nias, along with Cocoa Mania, who sold chocolate and Primera who donated drinks for the cause.

"It was a very nice atmosphere, and people were happy to be together and contribute to the important work in Nias," Ms. Mie Cornoedus said.

JRS participates in the emergency assistance in Nias and has brought medical personnel and equipment to

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the island. JRS rented a house in Gunung Sitoli to sustain the operational activities. The distribution of relief materials from the NGOs is concentrated around the government posts, especially in the vice regency building, which are slow and not fully able to reach all quake affected people.

A local institution, KRK, *Koalisi Relawan Kemanusiaan* Humanitarian Volunteer Coalition, and the coordinator of IDPs in Tuhemberua, a sub-district of 18 kilometers from Gunung Sitoli, asked JRS for help, as the IDPs have not received any adequate emergency aids. Therefore, JRS sent staff to conduct an assessment before sending a medical team, medicines and logistics. □Ingvild Solvang.



Mr. Sebastian Walas sold his hairs to raise fund for the quake-affected people in Nias.

## Newsflash

### ACEH

**Krueng Raya, Aceh Besar.** JRS livelihood programme in association with the Seaman Association Panglima Laot is making progress. 12 of 35 fishing boats are ready for use.

**Lamno, Aceh Jaya.** Head of District in Lamno endorses the plans of JRS to build 100 houses for student accommodation at the Islamic boarding school Dayah Budi. 10 houses have been built already. The school has 800 students.

**Pulo Aceh.** Heavy winds and rough sea challenges transportation between Pulo Aceh and Banda Aceh. Nevertheless, the 2 prototype houses by JRS partner ATMI are almost finalized. JRS is planning to build 500 houses in Pulo Aceh.

**Langsa.** JRS' alternative education programme has started for 33 children whose lives were changed by the tsunami. The children meet three times a week for play, music and training in reading and writing. The area where they live has also been affected by conflict. "The area is isolated because of war. It is important to give the children positive stimulation, which can help them cope with their difficult surroundings." Miss Bas, JRS Langsa Coordinator, reported.

**Meulaboh.** Material has been distributed, land has been cleared and land measurements done. The work to build 58 of the 113 houses that JRS plans to build in Kuala Tripa can now start. "This is a great step for JRS and our partners here," Miss Afra, JRS Meulaboh field coordinator, said. "It has been more than 4 months, since the tsunami and the people are very excited to go home."

### MOLUCCAS

**Ambon.** JRS provides training to 23 women in the relocation site in Lengkong, Ambon, all internally displaced persons from Iha, Saparua Island. The women are learning how to make cakes, puddings and snacks. "The women are highly motivated. We are working to form and strengthen a cooperative. There is a market for the snacks in the neighboring villages," JRS field officer Sitna Aisyah said.

**Langgur.** The internally displaced persons from Kesui will finally return to their home area. JRS has lobbied the government since 2002; finally this month, the first group of IDPs will return home. The local communities will, with the facilitation of JRS, proceed with a reconciliation program to ensure peaceful coexistence between the islands' Muslim and Christian population.

*Your continued support makes it possible for us to help the internally displaced people in Indonesia. If you wish to make a donation, please send it to:*

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