CASE STUDY 2

MAMPU: AUSTRALIA-INDONESIA PARTNERSHIP FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Country: Indonesia

Focus: Women's empowerment and better access to essential services for poor women at the grassroot level

Donor(s): DFAT

Organisation(s): PEKKA, Institut KAPAL Perempuan, KPI, Migrant CARE, 'Aisyiyah, PERMAMPU, YKP, Komnas Perempuan, BaKTI, BITRA, MWPRI, TURC, Yasanti, Forum Penyedia Layanan[1]

Timeframe: 2012-2020

FEBRUARY 2018

KEY POINTS

- Developing networks and outlining a consistent vision to work collectively for shared aims

- Working to influence multiple levels of government from the grassroots upwards

- Approach dependent on donor and government support

OVERVIEW

Women in Indonesia continue to be more vulnerable to poverty and to lag behind in workforce participation, access to services and in their levels of wellbeing. Gender inequality is persistent: it is underpinned by social norms and reinforced by institutions and social and political structures. Despite significant reforms, critical public services do not always reflect the needs of poor women, nor are they accessible to them.

Now in its sixth year, the Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (MAMPU) is working to address these issues. Since 2012, MAMPU has worked to strengthen broad-based coalitions, led by civil society organisations (CSOs), to influence government policies, empower poor women and improve their access to essential services.

Where MAMPU partners are influencing government policies, they are working to improve the access of poor women to services and benefits in five areas:

- Social protection

- Employment and workplace discrimination

- Overseas labour migration

- Maternal and reproductive health

- Violence against women

MAMPU directly supports 14 national partner organisations and their 93 local partners. Working collectively, these networks are achieving significant results through their activities in local communities throughout the country. MAMPU partners currently work in just over 900 villages, across 27 of the country's 34 provinces. More than 2,200 local community groups have been established with a membership of

POLITICALLY INFORMED

Being politically informed is a way of working that recognises that development outcomes are determined by the dynamics of power and politics. It is not about formal governance reforms, such as elections or civil service reforms. It involves analysing stakeholder interests and incentives to understand what is politically feasible.

GENDER AWARE

Being gender aware is a way of working that analyses how women and men, girls and boys, experience an issue differently and/or unequally, and the power relations that sustain these inequalities. A robust analysis also looks at how gender intersects with other forms of diversity, such as race, religion, ethnicity, class and disability, and non-binary gender identities or diverse sexual preferences.

more than 50,000 women. MAMPU partners work to empower their members to advocate for change within their local contexts and to influence how government policies are made and delivered 'on the ground'.

GENDER AWARE WAYS OF WORKING

While MAMPU is focused on delivering a range of specific and measurable outputs to improve women's access to services, the program's approach to achieving this has had a transformative impact on women's and gender-interested NGOs, CSOs and mass member organisations in Indonesia. By including these organisations in program design from the outset, strengthening links between and beyond partners in these sectors, and focusing on consistency of vision and understanding, MAMPU is supporting the gradual emergence of a broad-based and increasingly powerful movement for women's empowerment in the country.

During MAMPU's design phase, ten women's and gender-interested organisations were selected to review, revise and endorse the program's goal, outcomes and theory of change

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"Everything is about the connective tissue between organisations."

and its governance and management structures.[2] Interviewees highlight that not only did this help to ensure consistent gender awareness within program activities, but also to foreground the importance of working *collaboratively* from the start: "We needed to shift the gaze up, out and across organisations."[3] The success of this approach has depended in part on the skills of organisational leaders. For example, Nani Zulminarni, who heads the Program for Women Headed Households in Indonesia (PEKKA), has been identified as a critical actor who "has a deep understanding of the importance of organisations working as a network, not just silos".[4] Inclusion of women's and gender-interested organisations at the design stage and the leadership of individuals such as Zulminarni have been crucial to establishing trust between partners who often share gendered aims, but don't automatically galvanise because of rivalries which result from competition for funding.

In addition, although partner organisations are predominantly women-led, there has nevertheless been emphasis on establishing consistency of vision about gender among, for example, mass-member organisations at the local and national level, and those acting on certain thematic areas (such as migratory labour rights) which may not typically work with a gender lens. For

example, as one interviewee noted, following the inception phase a gap became evident in the design. There was little common understanding among partners of how women's empowerment should be defined. In response, an external gender expert was identified by partners themselves and commissioned to research the variety of ways in which this was articulated so that a conception and approach could be formulated that drew on their combined insights.

The support provided to help partner organisations work together towards a collective vision has contributed to a surge of community organising and "a massive mushrooming of women's groups around the country".[5] While concerns have been raised regarding the proliferation of 'groups for groups' sake', this development is in line with program objectives to foster women's empowerment by improving grassroots mechanisms for change. Furthermore, interviewees and program documentation report that many recently-formed local groups have been highly successful in building relationships with local parliamentarians and helping them understand their concerns in each of MAMPU's thematic areas, thus increasing partner influence on local government.[6]

In addition, the program has also adopted a more traditional gender mainstreaming approach in many aspects of its activities. For example, when engaging with the media it has ensured that groups of journalists, including both men and women, are invited to visit partner organisations. Reporters are also given the opportunity to hear the voices of female program beneficiaries and community members first-hand.

POLITICALLY INFORMED WAYS OF WORKING

MAMPU has sought to be politically smart and locally led from the outset through the selection of partner organisations based on their previously demonstrated capacity to be successful agents of change,

and by including these organisations at the program design phase to make the best use of their local knowledge. Furthermore, the program is ambitious in its aim to develop mutually beneficial relationships within and among partner organisations and at several levels of government.

Two key strands of MAMPU's approach, 'organisational strengthening' and 'parliamentary strengthening', are clear examples of politically informed ways of working to achieve gendered aims. 'Organisational strengthening' has included fostering the networks, collaborative approach and shared vision among women's organisations discussed above. 'Parliamentary strengthening' has included recognising the importance of securing parliamentary support for MAMPU's aims by identifying and developing relationships with male and female reformers and change agents within provincial and district governments.[7] For example, approximately 200 such individuals were selected by partner organisations (drawing on their local knowledge of potential collaborators) to attend a conference in Jakarta where they could be informed about MAMPU's aims and activities. This in turn led to provincial-level action planning between partners and local parliamentarians working together on local issues. An interviewee described this as "a question of bringing the right people together, providing the right level of support for relationships to grow organically based on mutual respect between politicians and CSOs; that way it has utility value for everyone and becomes sustainable".[8]

In addition to working with local parliamentarians, the program has capitalised on the high-level personal networks of (predominantly female) partner organisation leaders to secure dialogue with the national ministries and ministers relevant to MAMPU's thematic areas. However, having built networks between partner organisations, such meetings have been held with partners as a group rather than as individual organisations: "We went as a group and we prepped as a group, so we could speak on multiple issues, but with one voice. That demonstrated to government that it was advantageous to be connected to MAMPU."[9]

CONVERGENCE OR TENSION?

MAMPU is an example of a gender-focused program which, by working in politically informed ways, goes beyond simply securing positive outcomes for female beneficiaries, and is instead empowering women in Indonesia more broadly to act as a collective political force. This is partly because although "the role of women remains deeply contested at the national level, Indonesia's gender groups have been on balance more successful than elites at promoting reform in local government or in the town and villages where most poor women still live".[10] Therefore, noble aims to work from the bottom up and support women's autonomy are at the same time pragmatic routes to deliver program outputs. In the context of the MAMPU program, this means that working with a gender lens and a politically informed approach has been consistently complementary.

EFFECTIVENESS: CRITICAL FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

Interviewees agree that the most crucial enabling factor for MAMPU has been the willingness of the Indonesian government and DFAT to facilitate genuinely locally-led change. However, in early 2017 there were concerns that readiness to cede such a degree of control may be waning and MAMPU might be a victim of its own success.[11] Thus, while factors such as the political savvy and geographical reach of women's membership organisations, increased access to information through the internet and government commitments on gender equality have all been necessary to MAMPU's success, they may not be sufficient without continued political space for this emerging movement to act autonomously. In the period since then, MAMPU has shifted to the Directorate of Human Development, Society and Culture in BAPPENAS. This has resulted in greater alignment of MAMPUS the Government of Indonesia's agendas related to women's empowerment and gender equality.[12]

METHODS

A rapid review of select program documentation, combined with confidential interviews with at least two key informants per case. Informants include project staff, independent reviewers, donors and other stakeholders. Identifying and listening to local and/or female informants has been prioritised. Interviews for this case took place on 30.01.2017 and 03.02.2017.

SELECTED RESOURCES

http://www.mampu.or.id/en

http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/mampu-design-doc-part1.pdf

http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/mampu-design-doc-part2.pdf

http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/indonesia-mampu-performance-story.pdf

http://www.oecd.org/derec/australia/ode-brief-mampu-dec-15.pdf

1. PEKKA: Yayasan Pemberdayaan Perempuan Kepala Keluarga; KPI: Koalisi Perempuan Indonesia; YKP: Yayasan Kesehatan Perempuan; BaKTI: Bursa Pengetahuan Kawasan Timur Indonesia.

2. http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/mampu-design-doc-part1.pdf

3. Key informant, 03.02.2017

4. Key informant, 03.02.2017

5. Key informant, 30.01.2017

6. http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/indonesia-mampu-performance-story.pdf

7. http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/mampu-design-doc-part1.pdf

8. Key informant, 30.01.2017

9. Key informant, 03.02.2017

10. http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/mampu-design-doc-part1.pdf

11. Key informant, 03.02.2017

12. MAMPU (2017) MAMPU Strategic Plan, 2017 – 2020, 18 December 2017

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