

Aceh Launches Its Own Community Development Initiative

** Aceh Government replicates PNPM Mandiri community development model for special Aceh-wide program using provincial budget.*

** Aceh Government allocates one trillion rupiah to Financial Assistance for Village Prosperity program (Bantuan Keuangan Pemakmue Gampong) covering 6,411 villages.*

** Village Prosperity program to be supported by PNPM Mandiri facilitators and expected to improve systems and capacity at village level.*

Langsa, East Aceh 23 Aug 2009 – What works on a large scale, must logically work on a smaller scale. The Government of Aceh is set to embark on its own community development program, modeled after the hugely successful PNPM Mandiri (National Community Empowerment Program), to the tune of one trillion rupiah, or nearly one-eighth of Aceh's provincial budget for 2009. The one trillion rupiah is part of Aceh's Financial Assistance for Village Prosperity program (Bantuan Keuangan Pemakmue Gampong-BKPG), which will be broken down into block grants of one hundred million rupiah for 6,411 villages in 23 cities/districts and 276 sub-districts. As part of this program, each of the 23 cities/districts will also benefit from block grants of at least 50 million rupiah, taken from the provincial government's village allocation fund. The ceremonial handover of these funds recently took place in an East Aceh village, between Aceh Governor Irwandy Yusuf and several district heads and mayors on July 29, 2009.

“Today marks the delivery of a promise I made in June 2008 to provide financial assistance of one hundred million rupiah per village. Due to budget constraints this is the most the provincial government can provide for now. However, by next year we hope to increase the financial assistance to 125 million rupiah per village,” said Governor Irwandy in his speech at the handover ceremony. The Aceh Governor also stressed the need for proper reporting and accountability in using the village prosperity grants – a key hallmark of the PNPM Mandiri program. Unsurprisingly, PNPM Mandiri facilitators will be teaching village beneficiaries how to properly plan, execute and be transparent about their chosen activities. These will be the same PNPM Mandiri facilitators already stationed in various parts of Aceh under the state budget.

“It is hoped that the integration of the Aceh Government's village prosperity program and the central government's PNPM Mandiri program would help improve capacity and systems at the village level, and empower village communities to become more independent,” said Ali Basyah, who heads Aceh's Community Empowerment Agency – the agency tasked with disbursing the one trillion rupiah to the many villages. The agency hopes to complete the first phase of disbursement by the end of August 2009. The agency has also set up a hotline for community members to voice their complaints and aspirations via text message.

In terms of funding under the PNPM Mandiri program, 298 billion rupiah in block grants have been fully allocated and spent in 149 subdistricts of Aceh province.

For more information, please visit the [Projects website](#).