

The Role of the Women Empowerment Bureau (*Biro PP*) of the Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) Province in Increasing the Welfare of Women

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Prolonged conflict followed by the earthquake and tsunami disaster in December 2004 has made the position of Acehnese women particularly vulnerable. Women are often marginalised, lack access to information and adequate education as well as employment. Many are now widows, forced to carry on their lives as single parents and support their families on their own. It is therefore important for the government to intervene to help, especially through education, health, economy, legal, politics and religion.

The involvement of women in the developmental process is acutely important for Aceh's future. Within the perspective of Islam, women must aim at gender equity through all areas of family and national life.

Profile of the Women's Empowerment Bureau

The Women's Empowerment Bureau (*Biro Pemberdayaan Perempuan/Biro PP*) of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) province is one of the institutions focusing on the empowerment of women. It was initially established to coordinate the development of governmental policies pertaining to women empowerment in Aceh, but over time – as described below, its roles and functions have widened.

Biro PP of NAD was established by the Decree of the Governor of Aceh Special Region No. 58 year 1999, that took into effect on 20 January 2000. The Bureau is further strengthened by the Regional Regulation (*Perda*) No. 3 year 2001, which includes Biro PP within the organisational structure of the Provincial Secretariat (*Setdaprov*) of NAD.

➤ Roles and Functions of Biro PP

- a. To collect and analyse data in the development and implementation of pilot programs on women's empowerment in order to raise the standard of living and dignity of women.
- b. To develop and implement programs on women empowerment, organisation and other follow up activities.
- c. To increase the participation of the community, including increasing the capacity of institutions working for women empowerment.
- d. To evaluate policy and program planning, and to monitor and assess its impact on women achieving equality.

Biro PP has the following main tasks:

- a. To coordinate with all stakeholders in the development of women empowerment.
- b. To build the capacity of pilot programs on women empowerment
- c. To provide capacity building for women's organisations in the areas of operations, policy analysis, evaluation and reporting.
- d. To formulate policies on women empowerment.

Along with the increasing tasks of Biro PP, there is a plan within 2008 to change the structure from a Bureau, which is currently under the Provincial Secretariat, into a Body for Women Empowerment and Child Protection (*Badan Pemberdayaan*

Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak), which is an independent body and not under the Provincial Secretariat (although coordination with the Regional Government will still be maintained). The new structure is meant to accommodate the increasing issues affecting women, as well as seeing it begin to tackle child protection issues which will eventually become its main role.

Biro PP has been working in collaboration with other local and international NGOs and organisations to establish regional institutions for the empowerment and protection of women. They are:

- 1 The Integrated Service Center for Women's Empowerment (*Pusat Pelayanan Terpadu Pemberdayaan Perempuan/P2TP2*) - Rumoh Putroe Aceh.
- 2 Integrated Service Centre (*Pusat Pelayanan Terpadu/PPT*) for women and children victims of violence in NAD. PPT is currently located at the Bhayangkara hospital, Banda Aceh.
- 3 The Regional Indonesian Commission for Child Protection (*Komisi Perlindungan anak Indonesia Daerah/(KPAID)*) of NAD.
- 4 Task Force for the Elimination of Trafficking of Women and Children.

Apart from this re-structuring, a number of *Qanun* (regional regulation) as well as Provincial action plans are in progress. They are:

1 Draft *Qanun* on Women Empowerment and Protection.

The draft *Qanun* has been formulated and submitted to the Legal and External Relation Bureau (Biro Hukum dan Humas) of the Regional Secretary (*Setda*) of NAD province at the end of 2005. Dra.Lailisma Sofyati, head of Biro PP NAD says that the draft *Qanun* is among a number of *Qanun* planned to be enacted this year.

2 Draft *Qanun* on Child Protection (2007).

The draft *Qanun* also involves the Social Service (*Dinas Sosial*) to ensure the draft *Qanun's* holistic and comprehensive approach in dealing with the protection of children rights. According to Dra.Lailisma Sofyati, this specific draft *Qanun* has been formulated in view of the many cases regarding children post-tsunami. There are many cases involving conflicts over property left to an orphan which often leads to misuse of to the detriment of the child, and violence against children. As Social Services predominantly focus on disabled and neglected children, legislation which covers both these issues in a holistic manner is necessary.

3 Action Plan of the Provincial Task Force on the Elimination of Trafficking of Women and Children.

The task force works in collaboration with the police, district attorney office, religious leaders, as well as international and local NGOs. The Task Force has dealt with a number of trafficking cases in Aceh. However, as Dra.Lailisma Sofyati laments, there is still NAD still does not have a shelter for victims to ensure intensive case management, counseling as well as protection.

The Integrated Service Centre (*Pusat Pelayanan Terpadu/PPT*) for Women and Children Victims of Violence

The Integrated Service Centre (*Pusat Pelayanan Terpadu /PPT*) for Women and Children Victims of Violence was established in response to report by the National Commission for Women (*Komnas Perempuan*) regarding the many cases of violence against women and children post-tsunami. Its establishment was strengthened by the agreement between three ministers (namely the minister for social affairs, minister for women empowerment and health minister), Indonesian Police Chief (Kapolri), Biro PP, district attorney office, religious leaders and other organisations such as UNICEF, Plan, MiSPI. The Centre was established through the NAD Province Governor's Regulation No.260/322/2006.

The Centre's purpose of aid government bodies and law enforcement bodies as well as civil society in providing integrated services to women and children suffering violence and trafficking. In addition, it also aims at improving and strengthening the institutions for empowerment of women and protection of children in each district as well as encouraging the government in supporting efforts in these fields.

Victims of violence can obtain referral for medical treatment from the Centre, which is now located at the Bhayangkara Hospital, Banda Aceh. (although this is expected to relocate to Zainoel Abidin General Hospital). Lailisma further explains that at least 3-4 cases in PPT are currently being dealt with by the police. The Regional Police (Polda) of NAD province records that during January to November 2007 there were 39 cases of violence against adult female, 6 cases of violence againsts boys and 25 cases of violence against girls. Domestic violence is the predominant case, covering 75% among adult female cases, 66% of the cases of violence against boys and 88% of the cases of violence against girls.

This data however only shows the tip of iceberg as most cases of violence against women and children are not reported out of the victims' fear or shame.

To access the services of the Integrated Service Centre, one can visit the Biro PP at the office of the NAD Governor or visit the Task Force for trafficking, which also deals with cases of women and child abuse. In addition, people can also go to the Service Unit for Women and Children (*Unit Pelayanan Perempuan dan Anak*) at the Sectoral Police (Polres) up to the Regional Police (Polda) level.

Reports can also be made by phone to TESA (Telepon Sahabat Anak) at number 0651-129 or by text to 0651-7413834.