

## Case Study:

### Developing Village Regulations to support community-based Marine Protected Areas in Indonesia

#### Overview



The Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme supported the development of pilot village regulations in two districts of Indonesia's Nusa Tenggara Timur province in order to provide the foundation for community-based management of local marine resources. The case study shows the steps taken in this process which sought to reorient the legislative power and local acceptance of village regulations towards marine management. This approach has rarely been followed before in Indonesia.

#### Key Lesson Learned

- Village regulations, as the lowest rung on the Indonesian legislative ladder have an important role to play with regards to marine resource management.
- By developing the village regulation in a participatory way, the chance of successful implementation was increased as the majority of villagers were involved in its development and so understood and agreed with the content of the regulation.
- Despite the importance of allowing villagers to express their ideas and take them into account during the drafting of the village regulation, it is also necessary to seek the advice of relevant specialists in the area before finalizing draft regulations.

## Introduction

The Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of Indonesia policy on “Community Surveillance Systems for Marine and Fishery Resource Management and Utilization” aims to develop a community-based surveillance system that involves the government, the community, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. The implementation of this policy requires increased community participation in the monitoring of marine and fishery resources and improved cooperation and law enforcement, enhancing the community’s role in supervising marine and fishery resources.

The Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (RFLP) aim of strengthening the capacity of small-scale fishing communities and their supporting institutions towards improved livelihoods and sustainable fishery resource management is in line with this policy.

The operationalization of the policy at local level in Indonesia presented a major challenge. There were already many community level interventions designed to improve the capacity of the villagers, but it soon became clear that it was also necessary to build the capacity of village level government to facilitate the process of implementing community policies of the Indonesian Government. There was however an opportunity because village government have the legal authority to regulate common public properties. As a consequence, the main RFLP strategy in Indonesia focused on strengthening both the role and capacity villagers and the village government through the development of a village regulation giving legal approval for the active involvement of the community in supervising the sustainable use of their marine and coastal resources. Village regulations are the lowest level of government regulation in Indonesia, but they are often well implemented as they are in proximity to the local community.

## Context

Community-based marine protected areas are rare in Indonesia. In the Province of Nusa Tenggara Timur, where the RFLP worked, there were no community-based marine protected areas. Coral reefs in coastal areas were being damaged due to dynamite fishing and the use of potassium cyanide to catch fish. To tackle this issue, there was an urgent need to increase the direct participation of coastal villagers themselves in the protection of their marine resources. RFLP supported the development of this type of marine protected area, with the aim of improving the health of key ecosystems such as coral reefs, as well as improving the interaction between the local government and coastal communities. If successful, it was hoped that other villages would be keen to replicate the approach.

Four villages in Kupang district, namely Kuanheun, Tesabela, Oesapa, and Oeteta, and four villages in Alor district, namely Probur Utara, Kabola, Alor Besar, and Adang were selected for this pilot village activity. The selected coastal villages were unaware of the active role they could play in the management of marine and coastal resources in their local area. In addition, the village governments had paid little or no attention to issues related to marine and coastal management and resource utilization. Village development planning and budgeting were more focused on physical development and other land-based livelihoods such as agriculture and animal husbandry. This was despite the fact that all these coastal villages were highly dependent on marine and coastal resources as their main livelihood and household income source.



*Initial assessment in Probur Utara Village, Alor district*

## The initiative

With the lack of attention to the marine and coastal environment during village level activity and budget planning undertaken by village government, it was hardly surprising that marine and fishery resources of coastal villages were in serious decline.

Other existing district and regional marine protected area initiatives in Indonesia had not fully involved villagers during the operationalization stage, and so there was little buy in and ownership by local communities. As a result policies remained unimplemented, and there was no patrolling to protect these marine areas from illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities.

Aware of these issues, RFLP conducted a field assessment to find out about marine and coastal resource management at the village level, including the socio-economic situation and governance issues related to village development. A stakeholder mapping exercise was conducted to learn about the main stakeholders involved in marine and coastal resource management in the districts of Alor and Kupang. The pilot villages were selected because they were coastal villages with the

potential for the involvement of the local fisher community, and because these villages had previously received very little marine or fishery support from local government.

To initiate the process, RFLP conducted a training of trainers course on co-management and selected a core group of implementers from among the best trainees on the course. Two local NGOs, namely Yayasan Lendola of Alor district and Bengkel APPEK of Kupang district were engaged to run a program for building co-management initiatives in the selected pilot villages by providing training to community members and the local government on topics such as marine and coastal environment, the role of marine protected areas, and the importance working together (local government and community) to co-manage the marine and coastal resources in their own area. The expected outcomes of this program were i) the formation and revitalization of the village community control group (POKMASWAS) an organization formally recognized by the Government of Indonesia which had a role in supervising the use of marine and coastal resources at village level, and ii) to facilitate villagers and the local government working in cooperation to co-manage marine and coastal resources.



*Mapping of local marine areas*



The main objectives of the initiative were to:

1. Pilot co-management of marine protected areas implemented through the development and approval of village regulations that support the sustainable use of marine resources at the village level in four villages of Kupang district and four villages of Alor district;
2. Strengthen and build the capacity of the community control groups (CCG) through their participation in the planning, managing and monitoring of the marine protected areas based upon an approved village regulation which they have been fully involved in both developing and approving; and,
3. Improve the capacity of coastal village government in preparing and approving high quality annual and mid-term development activity and budget plans.

With the above objectives, the implementing partners began by building relationships and trust through a series of meetings, discussion groups and training and planning sessions with both the villagers through their village leaders and with village government officials.

During an intensive six-month interaction process, the following common steps were taken for the development and approval of the eight village regulations:

- Community meetings conducted to identify marine and coastal environmental related issues that were considered priorities by the villagers;
- Drafting of the village regulation;
- Conduct an initial round of public consultations (including the involvement of university scholars, NGOs, community groups, fishers and government staff) to obtain feedback;
- Revision of the draft village regulation and consultation with district law department on the content;
- Conduct a second round of public consultations; and,
- Finalize the draft village regulation (done together with the district law department) and submission to the District Secretariat for signing and approval by the government authorities.



*Public discussion between community control group members, villagers, village officials and USAID MPAG representatives in Kuanheun village*

The capacity of the community control groups was enhanced through a series of community education and training interventions related to marine and coastal environment and organizational strengthening. The implementing partners separated the topics to be shared with general community members and those topics to be shared with just village elders and members of the community control groups. The topics covered during education for the general community included: marine and coastal environment in general, sustainable fishing, over fishing and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, marine pollution, and the impact of unsustainable fishing practices to their economy and health. The following additional topics were also shared with village elders and members of community control groups: coral reefs, seagrass, mangroves, legal framework of a marine protected area, marine zoning, manta-tow techniques, developing work plans and budget, task distribution, reporting, etc. Village elders and members of the community control groups were also invited to attend the general community education and campaign.

The general community education and an awareness raising campaign took place prior to community discussions on the issues that should be prioritized for inclusion in the draft of the village regulation and during the awareness raising (socialization) and public consultation on the draft village regulation. While education for village elders and community control group members was done as part of the process of reviewing and improving the village development plan, training was also provided on how to develop a village regulation in a participatory way, and the forming of a community control group in a village.

Improving the quality of village development planning and budgeting took place in a participatory way where representatives of the villagers gathered and discussed their potential and problems, prioritized the problems, drafted possible solutions and related activities, and integrated them into the village development plan. Finally, discussions were facilitated with villagers about financing the development plan where the source of funds and in-kind contribution from villagers was clarified for each line item. Once the activity plan, budget and source of funds were agreed, then the local

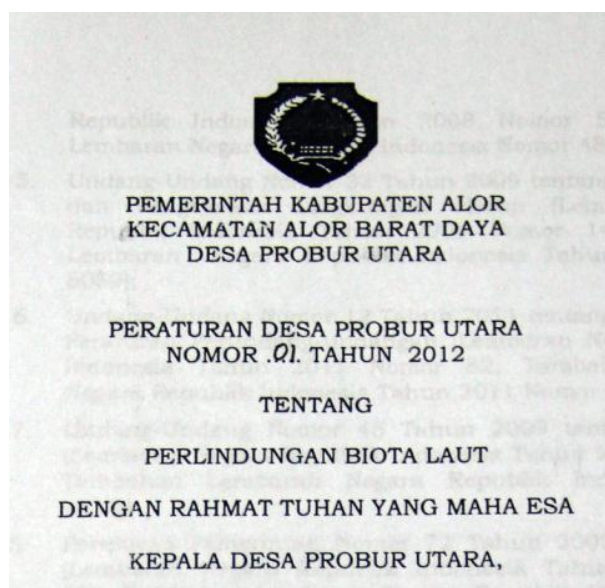
government would approve each plan making them official.

## Results and Impacts

Eight village regulations were developed and approved by district government for all the eight pilot villages, namely Kuanheun, Tesabela, Oeteta, Oesapa of Kupang district and North Probur, Kabola, Alor Besar, and Adang of Alor District. The content of each village regulation covered the following main topics:

- Protected marine biota;
- Fishing gears allowed;
- Marine zones (in line with the district level marine zoning plan);
- Prohibited activities;
- Illegal fishing gears; and,
- Sanctions (most of these were community-based sanctions based upon local traditions and agreements).

Members of community control groups were selected and approved by the village government in all eight villages. In Kuanheun village in particular, the community control group included members from the Baineo clan that has managed a specific marine area using a traditionally management system called *Lilifuk*.



*Village regulation cover for Probur Utara village, Alor district*

This integrates a traditional way villagers have of managing their marine resources with a more modern method namely the community control group and also involves a wider range of people regardless of their social status within the village. Some community control groups have also developed a work plan to guide them in implementing their activities.

Most of the pilot villages have since revised their village development plans and budget to incorporate development issues related to priority marine sector issues in their respective villages. The village governments have moved from producing a top-down village development plan without village member participation and which did not address the needs of the coastal villages and have produced relevant village development plans and budgets in a participatory and transparent planning process. For example, in Kuanheun village, before the RFLP intervention there was no section on marine and fishery issues in their plan, but they have since already included marine and fishery considerations in their 2013 village development plan. Funds have been allocated to procure seaweed seed, fishing gear, and to regulate activities in their coastal area. In the long run, this could potentially, increase the quality of co-operation between the village government and the villagers for the co-management of their marine protected area.

In Alor District, members of the community control groups are also representatives of existing fisher groups in the villages. The fisher groups were formed by the government and other NGOs that used to work there. This “no need to form new groups” policy was considered effective in ensuring the continuation of previous sound initiatives carried out in the villages and avoids confusion among the villagers.

Anchored fish aggregating devices called *Rumah Ikan* in Bahasa Indonesian have since been installed in Alor Besar village to deter illegal inshore trawling. Only hand line fishing is allowed in the area adjacent to the anchored fish aggregating devices and boats are not allowed to drop anchors there. This area is now patrolled by the community patrol group to ensure that only sustainable fishing is conducted and that living coral is not damaged by anchors.



*The community control group in Alor district assembles an anchored fish aggregating device*

The Savu Sea Task Force (P4KKP Team) has made a commitment to continue the work begun by RFLP in Tesabela and Kuanheun as the marine protected areas of the two villages are within the Savu Sea Marine National Park. In the near future, the team plans to demarcate the boundaries by installing markers for the marine protected area in Kuanheun village as this will support the work of the community control group (POKMASWAS) there. The National Marine Conservation Area Body (BKKPN) has also agreed to pay a special attention to Kuanheun village and to make it a show piece “window shop” for the Savu Sea Marine National Park.



Yayasan Lendola in Alor district has pledged to continue installing anchored fish aggregating devices or *rumah ikan* in the other three villages as this will increase the sense of responsibility and purpose of the community control group (POKMASWAS) by giving them something tangible to guard. Furthermore, Alor District Marine Affairs and Fisheries Agency, will work in collaboration with Yayasan Lendola to continue to mentor the community control group on monitoring control and surveillance, thereby reducing illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities and ensuring the sustainable management and use of coastal marine resources in their marine protected area, as specified in their village regulation.

Currently, World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) and the Government of Alor, are developing a Standard Operational Procedure for Marine and Coastal Resource Supervision and Yayasan Lendola is collaborating in the process. This activity will result in continued support for the four villages as the community control groups of these villages have also been invited to be involved in this process.

Bengkel Appek in Kupang district has agreed to allocate funds and resources to support the management of the marine protected area in Kuanheun and to continue the awareness raising campaign for the village regulations in all the four villages as a part of their support to the community control groups operating there.



*Community control group members carry out marine survey work using the "manta tow" method*

## Lessons-learned

- Involving the relevant district government agencies proved to be effective in guaranteeing continuous attention to villages where pilot development project activities have been conducted, even after the project period. District government offices are always keen to inform other related stakeholders about successful initiatives made in their area in order to leverage further complementary support and to promote future replication and expansion.
- Networking with other stakeholders like the Savu Sea Task Force Team and WWF opened up other possibilities for further synergistic and complementary support and raised the profile of the village regulation initiative.
- Improving the village planning and budgeting in a participatory way have proven to be effective in facilitating village government to give land-based and marine and coastal related development equal attention.
- The "newly born" community control groups or POKMASWAS will require continuous guidance and mentoring if they are to be fully functional. However the cost required for this should offset by the impact of sustainable co-management of natural marine resources in the concerned villages.



*An entire edition of the Bahasa language 'Lentera' magazine was dedicated to the process of developing the village regulations. It can be downloaded at [www.rflp.org/Indonesia](http://www.rflp.org/Indonesia)*

## Recommendations

- Other related stakeholders in the district, especially, the District Marine Affairs and Fishery Agency should provide continuous support to the pilot villages focusing on guiding the operationalization of the community control groups or POKMASWAS and particularly to promote monitoring, control and surveillance which is vital to protect marine and coastal resources from illegal non-sustainable activities.
- Networking between government agencies either through the Savu Sea Task Force Team or with WWF and/or other NGOs should be maintained to promote active cooperation between villagers and their governments to ensure improved co-management and sustainable use of natural marine resources within the marine protected areas.
- Continuous community education about the contents of the village regulation and the work and responsibilities of the community control group should be conducted for at least the next two years. This is vital to ensuring villager members really understand the concept and benefits of protecting the marine and coastal environment and how to responsibly and sustainably use natural resources.



*Public hearing in Probur Utara village*

This case study was written by Marvel Ledo, Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant, RFLP Indonesia with inputs from Don Griffiths, RFLP Chief Technical Adviser and Steve Needham, RFLP Information Officer, with editorial and layout support from Angela Lentisco, RFLP Case Study Developer.

### About RFLP

The Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme for South and Southeast Asia (RFLP) sets out to strengthen capacity among participating small-scale fishing communities and their supporting institutions in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam. The four-year (2009 – 2013) RFLP is funded by the Kingdom of Spain and implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) working in close collaboration with the national authorities responsible for fisheries in participating countries.

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