

NUSA TENGGARA ASSOCIATION, INC

Report on the Australian Monitoring Team's Visit to Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT), November/December 2012, and on Sponsored Activities in NTT in July-December 2012

Colin Barlow and Ria Gondowarsito of the Monitoring Team visited Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) from Sunday, November 4th to Thursday, December 6th. They spent two weeks in Flores and two and a half weeks in West Timor. They were accompanied by Ir. Don Bosco, NTA Technical Officer, and Ibu Ruth Radja, NTA Regional Director. They were joined on the West Timor mainland by Ir. Andreas Nuwa, the NTA Project Manager, who had been sick and could not go to Flores or Semau. They were also accompanied in West Timor by the library trainer, Pak Frans Wayan. They linked up in each location with responsible extension officers.

Sandy Sweeney, a teacher from St Peter's Anglican College at Broulee, NSW, joined the Team along with two students, Georgia and Holly, for the first week in Flores, meeting penpals from local primary schools and participating in the Schools Festival on November 7th. Sandy and the students are carrying their impressions to several Eurobodalla primary schools. Lesley Potter from ANU Canberra accompanied the Team for 2 weeks, concentrating on mapping target areas. Lesley's agreed to check cures for the fungus, *ais2*, which is decimating seaweed crops in Semau and the Timor mainland.

The NTA operates in NTT with three counterparts, the NTA Kupang (in all areas), the YPMF (in Flores) and the YPMPS (on the island of Semau off West Timor). NTA-paid staff presently comprise 23 extension officers and 5 specialist advisers, mostly living in or near the villages for which they are responsible. Ir. Don Bosco has recently joined us as NTA Technical Officer, and had had major positive impacts in his first few months.

This report deals with the Monitoring Team's visits to sponsored activities in the NTA's three spheres of **Education**, **Small Infrastructures**, and **Income-generation**, and with the progress of activities in July-December 2012. Activities were undertaken by 57 schools and 192 *kelompok* or cooperatives, with each of the latter involving 10-15 rural households. The schools and *kelompok* are located in the NTA's four target areas comprising the *kabupaten* (shire) of Sikka in Flores, the island of Semau in the Timor Sea, and the *kecamatan(s)* (counties) of West Kupang and Amanuban Selatan in West Timor (see map).

The Monitoring Team interacted closely with staff of cooperating government agencies, the *Balai Penelitian Teknologi Pertanian* (Research Institute for Agricultural Technologies), the *Badan Penyuluhan Pertanian* (the Body for Agricultural Extension) and the *Dinas PPO* (Education Department). It met too with the SPadu KTLP (Secretariat for Cooperation with International Institutions in Development), the organization monitoring foreign NGOs. Indicators of NTA performance in July-December 2012, as well as in July-December, are tabled below.

The weather in target areas in July-November was dry, but rainfall has commenced in the last few weeks. The plentiful rain early in the year often left groundwater which could be utilized for irrigating vegetables, however, and the latter generated supplementary income. The technologies of agricultural production remain primitive throughout NTT, with low yields and qualities. Most cocoa, coconut, cashew nut and other trees are old, needing replacement with younger more productive stock. Animal husbandry is usually crude, and requires more effective methods. Rural

incomes in target areas average one sixth of the overall Indonesian level, and are sometimes below this. The NTT is one of the poorest regions in the world.

A welcome development of the last few years has been increasing government support for development, notably through the PNPM scheme financed by the World Bank but also through several other channels. The goal of the NTA under these circumstances is to complement government efforts in spheres where they are weak, often working alongside government departments in jointly executed improvements.

The highlights of NTA-sponsored activity in July-December 2012 included the Cocoa Seminar and Field Day and School Festival in Sikka in November; the steady efforts in Sikka to improve Cocoa and related tree crops; the Teacher Training, Library Training and *Musyawah* in Kupang in December; and the Compost Training in Kupang, Semau and Amanuban Selatan in November. There was progress everywhere in establishing household water tanks, toilets, and other basic facilities, and in sponsoring small livestock improvements. The majority of activities were implemented from October onwards, owing to the delayed arrival of the AusAID grant.

Reports on most activities are available in Indonesian. Reports on the Monitoring Team's Final Meetings with counterpart NGOs in Flores and West Timor are also available in English. These reports can be accessed on request.

The Kabupaten of Sikka, Flores

The NTA works with the YPMF in Sikka in a target area stretching 60 kms from the local capital, Maumere (see map). It cooperates there with 25 mainly primary schools and 78 *kelompok*. The location is mountainous, with rich volcanic soils, and has good potentials for cocoa production at heights over 300 metres. The sponsored activities in Sikka cover 18 villages, each with 800-1,200 people.

The school infrastructure and services component of the **Education** program in Sikka continued in July-December, targeting the worst conditions and enhancing floors, roofs, and windows along with providing wells, toilets, and furniture. The Indonesian-Australian penpal program is thriving, with 5 schools being involved. Keen teams from 14 schools participated in the Schools Festival at Kewapante in November, which was watched by 1,300 people and judged by an authoritative panel. The Festival was also attended by the head of the local Parliament and several other senior politicians and government officials. Such artistic activity is shown by a recent World Bank study to have important positive spillovers into all areas of academic improvement. The library training and buildup of books continued, with general training in June being followed up by individual school visits and on-the-spot instruction. The Team and YPMF decided at their final meeting to start phasing out more advanced schools, allowing under-resourced institutions to be substituted.

The **Small Infrastructure** program outside schools also progressed strongly, with special emphasis on the popular 15,000 litre tanks and household toilets. These are making major contributions to health, while tanks are also refilled from travelling water tankers during the dry season.

The **Income-generating** program is proceeding slowly, and cocoa and related crop improvements are spreading from the 15 demonstration farms to surrounding blocks of *kelompok* members. Progress is slow, however, and the Team observed that people commonly cut down and replace the very small number of 20-30 old trees each season. This is a precautionary measure, minimizing possible catastrophe and permitting continuing income flows from remaining old trees.

The Team attended the Cocoa Seminar/Field Day at Kewapante, which was organized over 2 days and involved over 200 keen farmers. We were addressed on the first day by prominent speakers, dealing with cocoa and related crops cultivation. Then on the next day we were shown improved techniques. The latter was especially interactive, with hundreds of questions being asked by participants. Ir Henkie Luntungan, an international tree crops specialist from Bogor, took an active part in both the field day and monitoring trip and provided useful suggestions on crop improvements supported by the NTA and YPMF. Vegetable cultivation using water from the ferro-cement tanks was also promoted by our technical adviser, Pak Ujang, and the Team feels this will be a useful emphasis in 2013. The ladies' weaving cooperatives supported by the NTA and YPMF are doing well, and following training and support with sales are increasing their use of natural dyes.

The Island of Semau, Timor Sea, West Timor

The NTA works with the YPMPS throughout Semau island (see map), cooperating with 19 mainly primary schools and 87 *kelompok* in 15 villages. The area is level to undulating and moderately fertile, with good potentials for seaweed, vegetable and cattle. To many this island is a magical place, with numerous cultural attractions for outsiders.

The **Education** program on Semau is proceeding well, and involves physical improvements and training similar to that Sikka. The Team again discussed with the YPMPS phasing out more advanced schools, with attention turning to grossly under-resourced small new schools in remote areas. Parents have been concerned with the long walks of 10-20 kms being made each day by their children, and the new schools reduce this. The Team noted too that scholarships provided to poorer students in each primary school on Semau, as well as in West Kupang and Amanuban Se;atam, are much appreciated. These scholarships enable very poor students to buy books and essential clothing items, including shoes.

This last weekend there have been two days of teacher training at a hotel in Kupang, led by the local educationist, Bapak Pdt. Mes D. Beeh helped by Education Department staff and also including teachers from West Kupang. Many participants were *guru honor*, local people paid some \$20 a month and recruited as teachers to assist the professionals. These persons are high school graduates, but have no further qualifications and benefit greatly from formal training.

Decentralized library training is also being conducted at selected libraries on Semau, as well as in West Kupang and Amanuban Selatan. This training is being led by Bapak Frans Wayan, librarian of the Universitas Katolik in Kupang, who is assisted by Ibu Ruth. The sessions are going well, and the Team notes that such decentralization works better than previous central training in Kupang. The libraries sponsored by the NTA and YPMPS on Semau are improving, although the Team observed great variation.

The **Small Infrastructure** program for the wider community on Semau has again emphasized 15,000 litre ferro-cement water tanks and toilets, with the former being in drier areas of the island where the water table is too deep for wells. The construction of 'living fences', using barbed wire contributed by the NTA/YPMPS, is also continuing, and protects crop areas from wandering livestock. The Team observed that this is now leading to a big extension in tree and vegetable cultivation.

In the Income-generation sphere, the Team discussed potentials for enhanced vegetable cultivation with many farmers, where these especially involved the income earners red garlic, chillies and greens. Compost training has been given by Pak Don to farmers on Semau, as well as

in West Kupang and Amanuban Selatan, and the Team judges that training in new varieties along with pest and disease control methods and other improved techniques will be worth pursuing. The Team feels that we might start in 2013 with 6 demonstration farms – 2 on Semau, 2 in West Kupang and 2 in Amanuban Selatan, and this aspect will be discussed with the Operations Committee. It is thought there is more prospect of improvement here than with cattle and pigs, where our limited efforts to date have not been very successful.

Most income-generating enterprises supported by the NTA on Semau and elsewhere in West Timor entail 'rotating credit', which is prominent on the island with seaweed, garlic and fattening cattle. This credit is usually given for a year, as defined in an agreement, and is then returned by *kelompok* concerned to a special bank account in Kupang. It may then be re-issued the following year, given a sensible proposal. Handling such credit is an important discipline for those concerned, and an intermediate step *en route* to credit at interest. The current return rate for rotating credit on Semau is about 90%, which is substantially higher than previously. But the rate is lower elsewhere, and the Team believes there should be special efforts to improve current levels.

All activities on Semau and those in West Kupang are being discussed at a *musyawarah* taking place today in Kupang city. Representatives of assisted schools and *kelompok* are providing feedback on supported activities, and also putting forward ideas for initiatives in January-June, 2013. A report on this *musyawarah* will be circulated in due course.

The Kecamatan of West Kupang, West Timor

The NTA does not have a counterpart NGO in this area, which is a hilly region West of Kupang city, albeit with extensive flat areas close to the sea. It is largely populated by Rotinese migrants, who have cultivated the lands since the 1950s. The higher areas are suitable for cattle, but there is also scope for vegetable cultivation, given access to water. The NTA cooperates with 6 primary schools and 7 *kelompok* in 4 villages of this area. The people seem especially receptive to improvement, and there are good prospects of advance.

The **Education** program in West Kupang is proceeding along similar lines to those in Sikka and on Semau, with a similar challenge from new and under-resourced remote schools. Teacher and library training have also been undertaken, and appear to have been well received. The **Small Infrastructure** program in this area mainly involves peripheral fencing around vegetable crops, although there is scope in higher locations for ferro-cement tanks which the Team notes are attracting increasing interest. The Team judges that in **Income-generation** there are good potentials for helping vegetable cultivation, as discussed above. The NTA has also assisted one group of vegetable and *padi kelompok(s)* with a hand tractor, which has now been 50 per cent repaid. Other rotating credit extended in this area has been substantially returned.

The Kecamatan of Amanuban Selatan, West Timor

The NTA in Amanuban Selatan operates in the villages of Mio and Eno Neten, which in a lightly populated region extend over very large areas. The location of these villages, each with 800-1,000 inhabitants, is traditionally known as Besi Pa'e, and was the site of the Australian Livestock Project in the 1980s. The NTA works here with 6 primary schools, one high schools and 20 *kelompok*, encountering particularly inferior infrastructures and facilities despite improvements through the PNPM program. The area is mountainous and dry with limited good soils, and people are poor and isolated. They are not attuned to inputs from outside, and take far longer than communities in Sikka, Semau and West Kupang to make changes. One positive feature of Besi

Pa'e is the strong support by the village heads of Mio (a man) and Eno Neten (a lady), with NTA work being integrated into village development programs.

The **Education** program in this area is similar to that on Semau and in West Kupang, and local library training is being started later this week. One aspect strongly supported by the NTA are four kindergartens originally commenced in cooperation with a Jakarta NGO. The Team observed that these kindergartens, which each average thirty 4 and 5 year olds, are doing well. They were subject to a dispute with a local bureaucrat earlier in the year, but this has been resolved.

The **Small Infrastructure** program in Besi Pa'e entails a mix of wells and tanks, although the latter have been made of fiberglass due to shifting volcanic soils which crack ferro-cement. The Team during its visit identified an experienced field engineer who will build a special crack-resistant tank in 2013. The **Income-generation** program in Besi Pa'e mainly entails irrigated vegetable cultivation in the dry season and it is intended to press ahead with further support for this in 2013.

Final Remarks

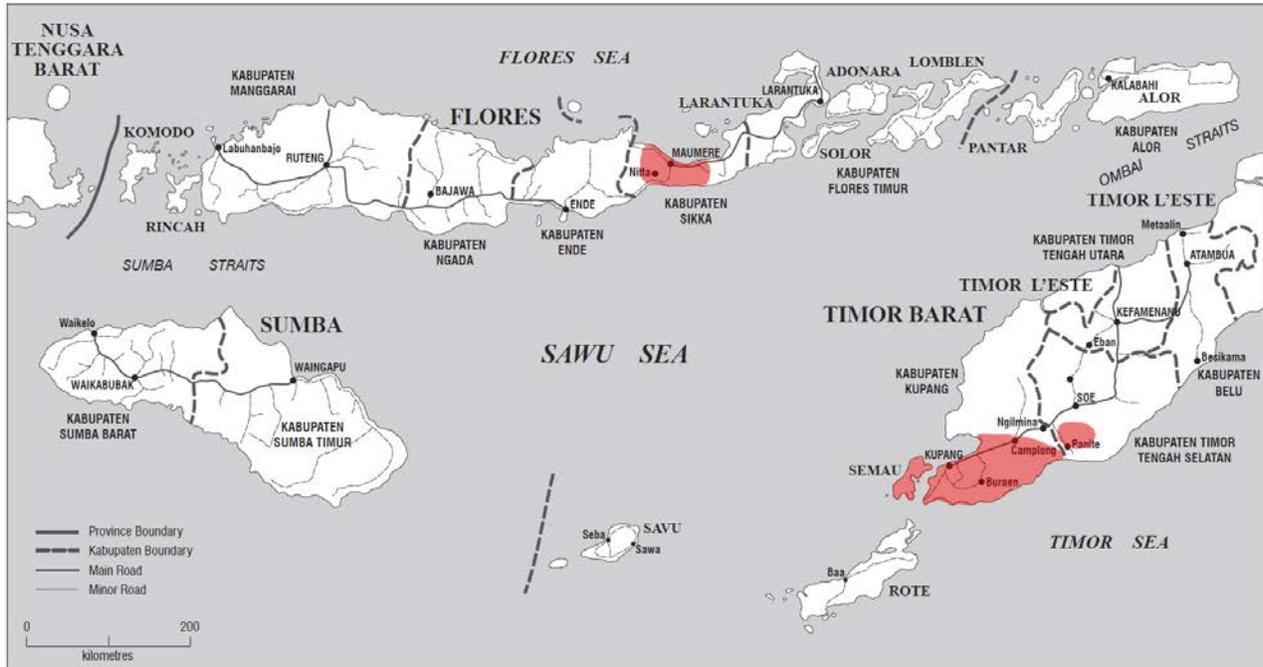
The Monitoring Team is especially pleased with community interactions during its recent visit, believing these will lead to improved understanding and better results. The Team also feels that despite ongoing problems the record of achievement remains excellent, as shown by the Indicators below. The NTA looks forward to a further year of progress in 2013, hoping there can be increasing Australian participation in efforts being made.

Canberra, Monday, 17th December, 2012.

Indicators of Achievement by NTA Australia in cooperation with NTA Kupang, the YPMF, & YPMPS, West Timor & Flores, Indonesia, 2012¹

Education activities	Jan-June, 2012	July-Dec, 2012	Total for 2012
Schools (mostly primary) with sponsored activities	59	57	59
School students connected to sponsored activities	6,490	6,270	6,490
Kindergartens with sponsored activities	16	16	16
Kindergarten children in sponsored activities	466	470	470
School library books distributed	1,680	1,600	3,280
Teachers trained in the KTSP curriculum & related matters	35	66	101
Teachers trained in library management (general training)	70	72	142
Scholarships provided to poor children	220	-	220
School and kindergarten buildings improved or erected, & school facilities provided (including new roofs, walls, & floors; new furniture; libraries; other equipment; & wells)	52 items	48 items	100 items
Number of <i>musyawarah</i> (including cocoa field day/village meeting and school festival), and grand total number of persons attending	2 with 250 participants	2 with 1,500 participants	4 with 1,750 participants
Small Infrastructure and Income-generating Activities			
<i>Kelompok</i> /small cooperatives with sponsored activities ²	185	118	198
<i>Kelompok</i> members involved with sponsored activities	2,220	1,770	2,970
Ferro-cement 15,000 litre water tanks	51	67	118
Household toilets	72	73	145
Seaweed farmers helped with equipment ³	120	150	150
Lady weavers helped with credit, equipment and training ³	303	302	303
Vegetable farmers helped with equipment ⁴	84	85	85
Cocoa & coconut demonstration farms, & cocoa & coconut farmers receiving monthly training	15 farms 502 farmers	15 farms 320 farmers	15 farms 502 farmers
Financial Summary			
Total improvement funds disbursed ⁵	\$67,669	\$95,313	162,982
Estimated value of counterpart services from communities	48,335	67,672	116,007
Estimated value of voluntary services by Australian monitoring team ⁶	80,526	113,422	193,948
Total estimated value of all services	196,530	276,407	472,937

1. Where the same persons/institutions took part in both 6-month periods, they are only included once in the annual total.
2. Each *kelompok* member had a family of 4-5 persons. Training is not included in these activities.
3. Rotating credit, repayable into an NTA special account after 6-12 months.
4. Mainly water pumps, piping and hand tractors.
5. These figures exclude staff salaries and allowances. The exchange rates \$1.00 = Rp9.000 and \$1.00 = Rp9.500 are used respectively for the January-June and July-December periods.
6. These are charged at 50 per cent of the commercial consultancy rates of those concerned.



MAP 2. Nusa Tenggara, Timor Province, INDONESIA