



PREPAREDNESS
EFFECTIVE RESPONSE

STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT PARTNERS ARE KEY IN EPIDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Indonesian Red Cross

Investing in disaster preparedness is worth it - both in terms of human lives saved and economic returns. In this story we learn how the Indonesian Red Cross / Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI) has become a well-known and trusted disaster risk management partner within various government sectors and civil society. Over the past years, the National Society has worked to strengthen its capacity to manage public health emergencies and is playing a key role in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Relying on community mobilization to prevent, detect, trace, and respond to COVID-19

In Indonesia, the Red Cross started working with communities on health emergency preparedness in the 1990s. The threat of the Avian influenza pandemic in the following decade led to the integration of epidemic control education into their preparedness activities. Since 2019, based on the premise that community members are usually the first to know when an unusual health event occurs, PMI has developed a community-based surveillance (CBS) system through the Community Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness Program¹, and with support from the Australian Red Cross. This CBS system feeds into existing animal and human health surveillance systems managed by the Government of Indonesia.



When the COVID-19 pandemic started, the National Society quickly adapted volunteer training packages, community messages and its community-based surveillance system to scale up its capacity and respond to the pandemic. Trained community volunteers advocate social distancing and hand washing, hand out face masks and support local authorities with early detection and contact tracing of COVID-19.

Trusted partners within civil society and government sectors

PMI's advocacy, collaboration, and widespread community presence has led it to play a big role in COVID-19 response, collaborating with the Indonesian Government's COVID-19 task forces at various levels.

Throughout the COVID-19 response, PMI has continued to strengthen its capacity to manage public health emergencies and is expected to continue playing an important role in the recovery phase, continuing to invest in increased community resilience and readiness for future epidemics and pandemics.



PREPAREDNESS AREA & COMPONENT RELATED

COORDINATION



Coordination with Authorities

KEY STATS



CBS for priority diseases established in **24 villages across 4 provinces**

COVID-19 early detection and response scaled up to **76 additional villages across 8 provinces** between June 2020 and August 2021



7,628,829 people reached by COVID-19 health promotion activities countrywide by 30 September 2021

¹ An initiative funded by the US Agency for International Development Bureau for Global Health, and implemented with the technical support of the IFRC



- **PMI fosters synergies** with all stakeholders from the local to the national level and trust within communities.
- An inclusive and collaborative effort **engaging communities and training community volunteers** in epidemic control to effectively prevent, detect, and respond to epidemics, which permitted scaling up existing approaches to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- PMI adopted a **One Health approach** in their community epidemic and pandemic preparedness activities, recognizing that animal health, human health and environmental health are intertwined and interdependent.



“PMI will have a bigger role in future pandemic preparedness, which will be beneficial to communities in Indonesia. The focus now should not merely be on current response activities, but also on the sustainability of the Community-Based Surveillance system and the work with volunteers to prepare for future pandemics and outbreaks”.

Dr. Fuadi Darwis MPH, Head of Advisory Group at the National Agency for Disaster Management in Indonesia or BNPB (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana)

Additional resources:

- Case study: Community-based surveillance in Indonesia, IFRC, April 2021: <https://www.ifrc.org/media/12738>

- ↙ **For more information:**
 - Indonesian Red Cross: <https://pmi.or.id/>
 - National Society Preparedness: www.ifrc.org/disaster-preparedness
 - Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness: www.ifrc.org/epidemic-and-pandemic-preparedness

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