



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



MADANI Partner Civil Society Boosts Women's Involvement in Village Development

Impact Story

USAID MADANI civil society partner PD Aisiyiah in Sumedang district (West Java) plays a major role in empowering women to participate in village development, including by encouraging more women to take an active role in the allocation and use of village budgets, and to apply gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process.

Aisiyiah is the women's association of Muhammadiyah, which is the second-largest Islamic organization in Indonesia. Aisiyiah Sumedang, which works to address women's and children's issues, saw firsthand the limits of how women were participating in village development. However, since early 2020, they have worked closely with the multi-stakeholder Learning Forum INSUN Madani on activities that push for more transparent use of village funds and engage women in Sumedang through the *Madrasah Anggaran* (Budget School) initiative. Sumedang's village budget

is large, around \$100,000 per year per village, but is mainly used for infrastructure such as roads or village administration rather than being allocated to improve basic services.

In October 2020, Aisiyiah Sumedang and INSUN Madani established the *Kader PINTAR* program (which stands for Kader Perempuan Inisiatif, Tangguh, dan Responsif or Active, Resilient, and Responsive Women Cadre) as a local solution to influence the use of the village budget. They started out by establishing groups of 10 women at MADANI's two pilot locations and trained group members on village governance, and how to optimize women's role for the benefit of the village, as well as on skills for conducting surveys and problem mapping.

Robi Iskandar from INSUN Madani hopes that the Kader PINTAR group members become pioneers in women's leadership in villages. "Our work is to prepare

the cadres so they can play a more direct role in the village budgetary process."

Members of the Kader PINTAR mapped out obstacles that women face in development and identified two main issues: the lack of confidence among participating women and how

Aisiyiah Sumedang and INSUN Madani established the Kader PINTAR program as a local solution to influence the use of the village budget.

village administrators conduct citizen forums during the evenings, which proved to be unfavorable for women, who in these relatively conservative communities often have homemaking duties and would face stigma being out at that time. These barriers exclude women

Members of Aisiyiah and multi-stakeholder Learning Forum INSUN Madani discuss their approach to encourage more women to take an active role in village development.



from contributing their ideas and leave men to make decisions for the village. To circumvent these shortcomings, Kader PINTAR proactively collected information on citizens' aspirations by reaching out to residents in their homes.

After collecting women's inputs on their needs and priorities, the Kader PINTAR members conveyed them to the village administrators through the Village Development Forums (*Musdes*). This approach has provided government decisionmakers and other local stakeholders a new understanding of the issues that residents of their areas are facing and how it is currently affecting women in addition to men.

A top priority conveyed during one of these development and planning forums was the need to address stunting. With the help of Aisiyah Sumedang, the Kader PINTAR in Kadakajaya Village, one of the pilot sites, advocated for a greater budget allocation on this issue. The government responded positively and inserted the issue into the Village Government Work Plan (*RKP Desa*), as well as allocated 24 percent of the village funds in the local budget (APBDes) for fiscal year 2023 to address stunting.

With their new knowledge on village governance and budgeting,



The District Village and Community Empowerment Agency (DPMD) socializes the process of developing the village-level government workplan (RKP).

the Kader PINTAR will continue to hold the village government more accountable and ensure it is responsive to community needs. Using a collaborative governance approach, they are coordinating with the Village Council, community elders, and religious leaders, to actively involve them in providing oversight on the effective use and management of village funds.

Meanwhile, the Sumedang government was so impressed with the outcome in the two pilot locations they have committed to replicate Aisiyah's innovative solution and bring the Kader PINTAR approach to neighboring villages

in 2024. Despite challenges such as limited government funding, the move had the support of the Sumedang Agency for Village Community and Empowerment.

"We look forward for more women willing take an active role. I believe their contribution will help village governments serve the community better through effective planning for a more sustainable development," said Ms. Lili Rahli, Secretary of the Sumedang Agency for Village Community and Empowerment.

Aisiyah Sumedang, for its part, has committed to train Kader PINTAR members in the new locations, in collaboration with the Learning Forum and the village governments.

The increase in women's participation under Aisiyah Sumedang's leadership in the planning and oversight of rural development is an important milestone for both pilot villages. Aisiyah Sumedang's collaborative governance approach has fostered trust among key stakeholders, paving the way for expanding their networks within the communities and with CSOs, local government, and the private sector, and will continue to promote better public services and improved welfare for poor households in the future.

Aisiyah Sumedang educates the public about women's empowerment, village funds, and women's and children's issues through talkshows in partnership with local radio stations.



Photo: Danumurthi Mahendran/USAID MADANI

July 2023

This impact story is made possible by the generous support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of FHI 360 and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

USAID Civil Society Support Initiative
(MADANI)

Setiabudi Atrium, 3rd Floor, Suit 301
Jalan H.R. Rasuna Said Kav.62
Jakarta Selatan 12920, Indonesia
Phone: +62 21 5210409/ 5210410
Email: info.madani@fhi360.org
Website: www.madani-indonesia.org