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Public Service Delivery in a Conflict and Natural Disaster Region

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Abstract. Public service quality is the reflection of the government performance, particularly in the disaster and conflict-affected regions. In the post-conflict area, the government has difficulty to increase government performance because conflict affect public service delivery. Moreover, the disaster-affected region needs a quick response to stabilize public service delivery. Aceh is one of conflict and natural disaster affected area in Indonesia which suffered in all aspect include in the public service delivery. In these circumstances, a reconstruction process to revitalize service delivery is an important aspect. Therefore, this review paper aims to analyze public service delivery during conflict and tsunami hit Aceh. The result found that the lack of public service capability triggered the conflict. During conflict period, the resentment toward government manifested in the destruction of the public buildings. Conflict period in Aceh made many public buildings were destroyed or inactive which eventually impede public service. The phenomenon of the tsunami, in one hand, ended the conflict, but on the other hand, increased the damage of the public service system in Aceh. Therefore, the reconstruction process in Aceh which comes from state and national or international non-state play crucial role to build public service delivery.

Keywords: public service, natural, disaster, conflict-affected region, state building

Abstrak. Kualitas pelayanan publik adalah refleksi dari kualitas pemerintahan khususnya di daerah terdampak bencana alam dan konflik. Di wilayah terdampak konflik, pemerintah memiliki kesulitan untuk meningkatkan performa pemerintah karena konflik mempengaruhi pelayanan publik. Kemudian, untuk wilayah terdampak bencana membutuhkan respon yang cepat untuk menstabilkan pelayanan publik. Aceh adalah salah satu daerah terdampak konflik dan bencana alam di Indonesia yang sangat mempengaruhi pelayanan publik disana. Dalam kondisi ini, proses rekonstruksi untuk merevitalisasi pelayanan publik menjadi aspek yang penting. Untuk itu, artikel review ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pelayanan publik selama konflik dan tsunami melanda Aceh. Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa kualitas pelayanan publik yang rendah menyebabkan konflik. Selama periode konflik, kekesalan terhadap pemerintah ditunjukkan dengan perusakan bangunan publik. Periode konflik di Aceh membuat banyak bangunan publik rusak atau tidak aktif yang pada akhirnya menghambat pelayanan publik. Fenomena tsunami, di satu sisi mengakhiri konflik, di sisi lain meningkatkan kerusakan sistem pelayanan publik di Aceh. Untuk itu, proses rekonstruksi di Aceh dari pemerintah dan lembaga non pemerintah di tingkat nasional maupun internasional memiliki peran krusial untuk membangun pelayanan publik.

Kata kunci: pelayanan publik, bencana alam, wilayah terdampak konflik, bangunan negara

INTRODUCTION

The quality of public service delivery as the center of government function become the primary concern of the government around the world. Indonesia also focus on improving public service performance which become one of trigger for bureaucratic reform. The spirit to increase public service performance have become the dominant issue of the elected official candidates in all level in Indonesia (Aspinal, 2014: 351). The public service discourses are also continuing because it is part of the government function (The World Bank, 2000).

The existence of qualified public service that increase public confidence is vital, particularly in the conflict-affected region. Public service and conflict have circular relationship because a lack of public service may cause conflict and conflict may also hinder public service. Several case studies proved that conflict hinder public service (Harmer et al, 2011, p. 205; Berry, 2009, p. 3). The reconstruction process also struggles to maintain the stability or

capability of the area to continue the development (Goetze & Guzina, 2008, p. 329; Whaites, 2008: p. 4; CDG, 2004). In these circumstances, service delivery is an important aspect because it is the reflection of the government.

Indonesia as a middle income country which have several conflict areas in the local level got higher pressure to the public service especially in Aceh Province as a conflict affected area for several decades because tsunami hit Aceh in 2004. Aceh Province, Indonesia, is one of the conflict area, which suffered after the war over 30 years and furthermore the massive disaster, Tsunami, hit on December 26th, 2004. After the independence of Indonesia, the conflict escalated again because of the disappointment of social and economic progress in Aceh and the disappointment which make them blamed Jakarta for this condition (Gaillard et al., 2008, p. 515). This lead Hasan Tiro, Acehese businessman, to struggle against The Republic of Indonesia and demand the independence of Aceh through armed struggle and called as Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM) or Free Aceh Movement in 1976

(Tornquist, 2011, p. 826). Meanwhile, a tsunami hit Aceh after a great earthquake which made most of the coastal area in Aceh were affected.

Both conflict and disaster disturb all aspects of the public service delivery in Aceh including education, health, and administrative. Conflicts between GAM and The Republic of Indonesia result in significant problems such as death, displacement, and public service failure. Moreover, massive disaster in 2004 made public service delivery worsen because there were many infrastructures broken and public service officials have died. The public service delivery institution is available; however, it is not functioning. The public service delivery cannot be fully able to provide citizen needs. Peace talk and disaster open international aids and donors enter Aceh and also invite national action to lead the state-building process.

Therefore, this study aims to discuss service delivery provision in Aceh as a conflict and disaster-affected region. The discussion will develop the understanding of public service delivery while this region in conflict status and also the impact of state building on public service. This paper investigates the forms of public service during conflict and tsunami hit Aceh and elaborates triggers and impacts of conflict to the public service, the damage of public service after the tsunami, and the reconstruction process to strengthen public service. The public service in this study will elaborate the education, health, and sanitation based on the minimum standard of living which underline the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and the right to education (The Republic of Indonesia in Human Rights Law No 39 the Year 1999).

DISCUSSION

The development of conflict in Aceh since the 1970's showed the rise and fall of conflict tensions that ultimately also hampered public service and public confidence. Under the leadership of Hasan Tiro, GAM struggled against the government with the support from a large part of the rural population in 1976. The struggle continued in 1989 because the recent struggle was not effective due to lack of weapons. Suharto, the former President of the Republic of Indonesia, always dictated military expansion to solve the separatist movement in Aceh (Schwarz, 1999). The massive scale of Indonesian army focused in Aceh against GAM movement until 1998. The conflicts from 1989 to 1998 resulted high rate of human rights violations such as murders, kidnappings, beatings, arbitrary detentions, tortures, and rapes, which were conducted by Indonesian army and also GAM combatants (Al Chaidar, 1999; Amnesty International, 1998, Budiarmo, 2000, Sulistiyanto, 2001, Gaillard, et.al, 2008).

In addition, the weak public trust toward public service becomes one of the triggers of the conflict itself. The people in Aceh did not trust public service because the public service delivery tended to reflect Jakarta power. From 1971 until 1981, the political circumstances dominated by Golkar party. This party supports Suharto in the election. In this timeframe, there were many transmigrations from Java to Aceh. The change of leaders in all Aceh power seats that came from Golkar party and also domination of transmigration caused domination of the traditional

nobilities and religious leaders in Aceh decreased. As a result, the people perceived public service through the bureaucracy as serving Jakarta interest. These background result to the increase of people resentment toward the government of Indonesia increase (Sulistiyanto, 2001, p. 441).

Some studies agree that the leadership shifted in 1998, from Suharto dictatorship through massive people power, was an entry point to new kinds of political peace talk's effort (Gaillard, et al., 2008). In 1998, the political system shifted to decentralization, which resulted a transition from higher authority to the local government to maintain its resources. The president B.J Habibie officially apologized to the people of Aceh for violence perpetrated by Indonesian army forces and lifted the regional military status (Tornquist, 2011, p. 828).

The leadership was shifting after people power in 1998, Indonesia tended to decentralize the development than to centralize the power. Under Local Government Law No 22 of the Year 1999, the central government delegated some authorities to the local governments. Also, in the Habibie presidency, the massive flow of information and civil society urged the attention towards human rights in Aceh. This condition supported governmental decision to withdraw troops from Aceh. Wiranto, Military General, lead the withdrawal of troops in Aceh on 7th August 1998, but the withdrawal troops did not happen because Wiranto ordered the troops to remain in Aceh until the situation improved (Sulistiyanto, 2001, p. 444). This lead to the anger of Acehnese people because they felt the government was not serious to provide justice in Aceh. Therefore, there was an increasing number of attack on the government's properties.

Under Abdurrahman Wahid presidency, Acehnese people distrusted the leadership. Therefore, the central government passed some decisions to prove the goodwill through agreements of more power to the local government and the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh. Moreover, Jakarta agreed to provide a more significant share of revenue. This decision could not overcome the struggle of Aceh conflict. On 8th November 1999, Acehnese people gathered to ask for a referendum as East Timor (Sulistiyanto, 2001, p. 449). Abdurrahman Wahid responded to this demand through the establishment of the ministry of human rights and withdrawal of troops. Furthermore, the government of Indonesia and GAM held formal peace negotiation in 2000 facilitated by Geneva-based Henry Dunant Centre. There was an agreement, but the number of murder was still growing and the conflict rising again under Megawati Presidency.

The tension of conflict escalated in the reign of Megawati. The president increased the military status to Aceh and sent troops to solve the conflict that led to the increase of the conflict and human right violation. Meanwhile, the general election in 2004 shifted the attention from Aceh to the first general election, which President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono elected as President and Jusuf Kalla as Vice President. Under President Yudhoyono, the government of Indonesia tried to establish peace through the rule of law and business opportunities (Tornquist, 2011, p. 826). The role of Yudhoyono was crucial for the negotiation (Ahtisaari,

2008, p. 10). When the tsunami hit Aceh, mutual amnesty declared in January 2005. This leadership changed the peace talk model and increased the negotiation until the big disaster hit Aceh and resulted in thousands of people died and massive damage to the infrastructures which ended the conflict.

Several discussions and negotiations were held to bridge GAM and The Republic of Indonesia under former Finland President, Marti Ahtisaari. The discussion was held neither under United Nation mediation nor United States (Ahtisaari, 2008). These negotiations resulted in an agreed memorandum of understanding between GAM and the Republic of Indonesia in 15th August 2005, called as Helsinki Agreement. This agreement signed the beginning of an agreed reconstruction of post-conflict and post-disaster in Aceh included the reconstruction of the public service delivery.

During the up and down of the conflict until the condition reached peace agreement showed that the public service were in very bad condition. The prolonged conflict in Aceh resulted in massive unstable public service delivery include in the education and health sectors. The province was the poorest part of Indonesia in most indicators. Compared to other provinces in Indonesia, Aceh performed higher corruption level and lowered general public confidence towards the government (Burke, 2008, p. 51). Also, state infrastructures were damaged because it became the target operation from the rebels, such as health posts and schools (Burke, 2008, p. 51).

The decentralization of power which enables the local government to maintain the public service seems not practical to drive the trust to the government. This condition is caused by the troop's escalation in Aceh still lead the GAM cleaning operation. The high degree of human

rights seems to be the reason behind the resentment of the people to the public service infrastructure and delivery. Moreover, there was massive destruction of public service infrastructure because it seemed to be an illustration of resentment towards the government. The difficult access to land and resources, poverty, and food insecurity were the problems arose after the protracted conflict in Aceh (Gaillard et al., 2008, p. 516).

Furthermore, a significant historical tsunami in Aceh caused more problems in the public service delivery. There were many damages to the schools that hindered public service delivery of the education. Residential infrastructures such as water, sanitation, roads, electricity, and so on also need substantial investment (Steinber, 2007, p. 151). Almost all tsunami-affected districts lost all of their infrastructures for public service not only for the education sector but also for the health sector and many other sectors.

In the education sector, the tsunami swept many schools and killed many teachers and students. A diary of a researcher who came to Aceh after tsunami noted that there was an Islamic school where all of the teachers and three to quarters of the students were killed (Kenny, 2007: 2006). The death of the majority of students inlines that the youngest has a higher risk of death caused by the tsunami (Rofi, et.el, 2006). Several studies showed that the percentage of expected survivors would have been less than 100% and the number of women killed four times higher than men (Oxfam, 2005; Iemura, H, et al., 2006). A focus group discussion after the tsunami hit found that local women expressed concern over the importance of initiating schooling besides poor quality of water, high incidence of diarrhea among children, and the psychological needs of orphans (Brennan et al., 2005: 346).

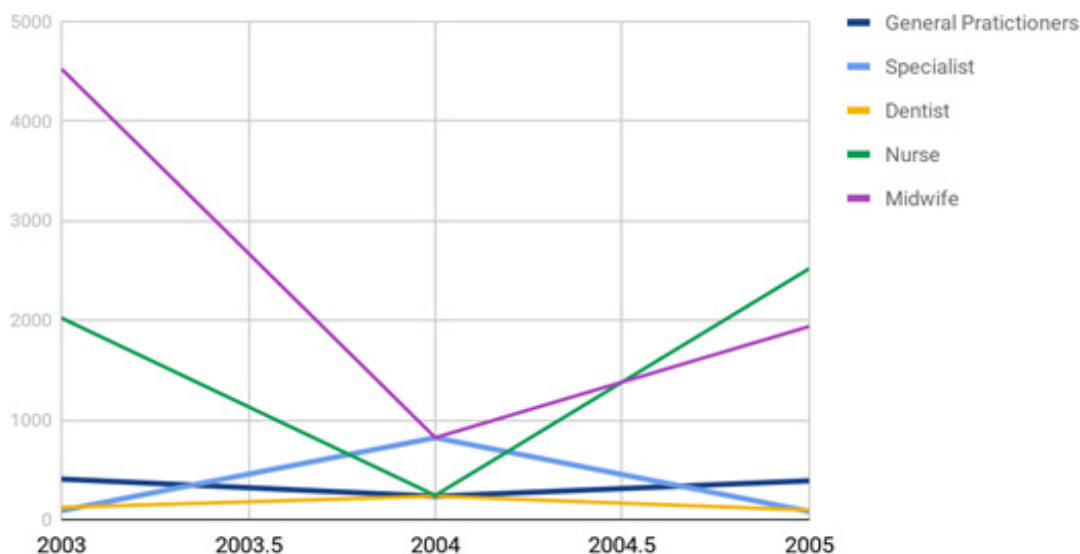


Figure 1. The Amount of Health Practitioners in Aceh 2003-2005
 Source: Bureau of Statistic, Republic of Indonesia, 2015

The tsunami in Aceh also hit the health sector. As mentioned in the last paragraph, that the direct impact of the tsunami decreased the quality of population's health. For example, after the tsunami hit, based on a survey 85% of children under five years had experience diarrhea (Brennan et al., 2005: 345). Besides, there was

an influence of the tsunami on the health services. The amount of several health practitioners include general practitioners, dentist, nurse, and midwife were decline in 2004. The amount of health practitioners indicates that midwife became the most affected. A survey in Aceh Jaya District also found that ten medical doctors, who

were working there, were reportedly killed by the tsunami (Brennan et al., 2005: 346). The destruction of infrastructures in the majority of the area also decreased the amount of the health facilities in Aceh. The impact of the tsunami on health and education become a crucial challenge for the reconstruction process. Therefore, the state building process to strengthen public service played vital role to revitalize health and education sectors.

The post-disaster and post-conflict situation in Aceh results in a challenging reconstruction because the public service is not functional. After the announcement of international donors and aids called by the Republic of Indonesia, the countries that provided international donors and aids came to Aceh. International communities engaged in the post-tsunami reconstruction (Tornquist, 2011, p. 827). World Bank coordinated with Multi-Donor Fund working in cooperation with the Indonesian Aceh Nias Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency (BRR) were the primary institutions supporting reconstruction post-tsunami in Aceh (Tornquist, 2011, p. 833). This disaster turned Aceh as an international spotlight as causing unprecedented loss of life. (Burke, 2008, p. 48).

The government, United Nation, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and many donor countries sent emergency assistance. Coordinated by Indonesian army and donor agencies, the emergency assistance such as food, water, sanitation, shelter tents, medication, hospital camp, and forensic measures were built on a massive scale. The communities were challenging to reconstruct because they tended to depend on the basic aids and temporary accommodation. Therefore, National Development Planning Agency, in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Works, which was handed over to BRR, realized that there was the need to reconstruct the people housing. Housing assessment after six weeks disaster found significant damaged. There were thousands of houses needed to be replaced or rehabilitated (Steinber, 2007, p. 151).

In the implementation housing reconstruction found several barriers. The conflict resulted in the absence of land tenure and ownership. This condition influenced the reconstruction process because people did not have legal data to prove the ownership and people came to claim the land. This problem was more complicated by increasing escalation and material cost as well as insufficient village planning. Until mid-2006, house reconstruction was in progress. The difficulty of reconstruction also found in the other public service sectors.

Furthermore, all the post-disaster response was under the central government and Indonesian army coordination. This condition was caused by the weak position of local and province level because of the post-conflict situation, the death of thousands of public officers, and damage to operational facilities. On the other hand, international donors and aids were the primary drivers in the reconstruction process because the lack of capacity of the central government in the operational level to support reconstruction (Steinber, 2007, p. 156). International bodies supported brokering talks, monitoring progress and providing development aids (Burke, 2008, p. 47). Therefore, many international agencies decided to shift the commitment from emergency aids to reconstruction.

Some studies in the post-disaster condition found that

the international aids had difficulty to take part in the peacebuilding process than become aid provider. In the field, NGOs had insufficient knowledge in the politic, society or conflict in Aceh. NGOs tended to fear about the ability to spend the aids than the effect towards dynamic of conflict (Burke, 2008, p. 54). Moreover, the Indonesian government also managed the international assistance out of the conflict area.

This condition has not been easy as the earthquake and tsunami had destroyed not only people, homes, and infrastructures, but also community structures, and killed countless religious and community leaders, social workers, teachers, and civil society representatives (Steinber, 2007, p. 163; Tholens, 2012, p. 302). Therefore, the international aids and NGOs are the main supporter to the reconstruction and reintegration process in Aceh. The political transition under international monitoring involves many stakeholder's intervention such as international donors, NGOs, and local governmental capacity.

On the other hand, Helsinki Agreement in August 2005 resulted in higher stable condition for the reconstruction process in Aceh. Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) was established to monitor the transition of the peace negotiation and reconstruction after conflict and disaster. AMM consisted of EU Members (Norway, Switzerland) and five ASEAN countries (Thailand, Philippines, Brunei, Singapore, and Malaysia). On the side of international agencies, larger agencies were able to link reconstruction and conflict issue. Therefore, the implementation in the field became down to earth – for example, funding support for civil society which promoting peace, assistance for conflict and affected displaced people.

In late 2006, ex-combatants and activist won Gubernatorial, Irwandi Yusuf (Tornquist, 2011, p. 827). This political shift influenced political movement in Aceh included the demand of Aceh to use local flag and local anthem. Some argued that the Acehnese demand may reduce state-building process. On the other hand, in Yusuf era, the policy decision and budget allocation were difficult to be implemented because the government had no experience of producing policy documents and the absence of infrastructures are lessen the impact of spending (Hillman, 2011). Therefore, the government provided the scholarship to study abroad to the Acehnese although there is an unclear plan for this program.

Meanwhile, reconstruction and reintegration are different baselines. Therefore, there are many reconstruction efforts which are not improving the reintegration process in Aceh. In the implementation, there is higher aids flow to the tsunami-affected areas than to the conflict-affected areas (Waizenegger & Hyndman, 2010). The high commander from GAM will receive high compensation from the government and aids. Meanwhile, the ex-combatants are still poor and isolated from the public service delivery. Therefore, there is the need of the conflict-affected people as well as disaster-affected people to get proper public service.

Several studies mention the lack of BRR's performance also causes the lower performance of public service provision. BRR seems poor in performance and lacks direction and also expert in the reintegration process (Waizenegger & Hyndman, 2010, p. 796). There is also human resource

capacity challenge, but momentum for civil service reform support the public sector to change gradually (Hillman, 2012). Based on the interview with local public official, there is minimal public service standard, as part of central government policy for all part in Indonesia, but there is a barrier in the implementation because of limited public service accountability, transparency, and accessibility.

The Aceh performance in public service after the disaster and long-run conflict still need high attention. In fact, violence, exploitation, and oppression still existed although peace negotiation such as Helsinki Agreement established (Tornquist, 2011, p. 827). The tension of internal GAM, the anger of ex-combatants to high commander GAM as the disparity of the compensation after the conflict, becomes the third effect to the society such as increasing crime rate as an illegal way to provide life needs (Waizenegger & Hyndman, 2010, p. 799). In 2007, there are also incidents where people destroyed office and government project because they were disappointed with the public service (World Bank, 2007, p.5). In addition, Aceh is in low level of public service performance in Indonesia compared with the other provinces (Menpan, 2011).

Especially in the education sectors, many national and international aids increase the functionality of the education. UNICEF reported that they built 345 schools in the disaster-affected region. The UNICEF contribution in the reconstruction process includes the recruitment of 1100 temporary teachers for 13 regions, built more than 1000 school tents, and also provided 230.000 school modules and 6.940 schools in a box for more than half million children (UNICEF, 2018). The contribution was not only come from the international organization but also came from Achenesse NGO that also build school tent and crowdfunding to distribute school's materials and books (Kenny, 2007: 206-207).

Based on the discussion, the functional public service delivery is part of challenging steps in the reconstruction and reintegration process in Aceh. The tension in the society makes the public service delivery challenging to gain public trust. International donors help to maintain the reconstruction process. Meanwhile, the reintegration as part of the state-building process in Aceh is still needed attention. The low performance of Aceh after eight years reconstruction and reintegration from disaster and conflict may result in the decreasing of public trust.

On the other hand, the conflict escalation and social disorder in the society reflect the peace is a spectrum (Doyle & Sambanis, 1999:1; Brinkerhoff, 2005: p. 4). The conflict in Aceh is only lesser than before the agreement and disaster. The conflict is recurring in different forms and tensions. Regarding this point of view, the performance of service delivery urgently needs improvement to maintain the state building process. The quality of performance will help the government regain the public trust. In this condition, the government is not only Jakarta but also Aceh as the local government with the ex-commander leader as the Governor.

CONCLUSION

Conflict and natural disaster affect public service

delivery in Aceh. During conflict period, public service also become the target of operation and center of the conflict. This condition destroys health and education infrastructures which hamper the education and health services. The phenomenon of tsunami ended the conflict period; however, it created an additional burden to the health and education sectors as many people involved in these services were killed, and more infrastructures were destroyed. Therefore, the reconstruction period is one of the state building processes that play an important role to revitalize the health and education services. The result of the study indicates that there is an urgency to conduct follow up research related to current situation of the public service after a decade of reconstruction process and also comparison with the other conflict and natural disaster affected area.

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