

## Migration Policy in Indonesian Villages and Non-Governmental Organization (Ngo) Role

<sup>1</sup>Wita Ramadhanti, <sup>2</sup>Tyas Retno Wulan, <sup>3</sup>Sri Wijayanti and <sup>2</sup>Dalhar Shodiq

<sup>1</sup>Accounting Department, Faculty of Economics and Business,  
Jenderal Soedirman University, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Sociology Department, Faculty of Social & Political Science,  
Jenderal Soedirman University, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>International Relation Department, Faculty of Social & Political Science,  
Jenderal Soedirman University, Indonesia

---

**Abstract:** Indonesian migrant workers problems sometimes started in the villages. They often marginalized by government. It is important to know the effective program of NGO in mediating this problems. This is an interpretive research, taken place in 3 villages in Indonesia that already have village regulation in migrant workers' protection that the process was funded by NGOs. The data were taken using literature Review and Focus Group Discussion during 2017. The result shows that NGO effectively can help to mediate the immigration problem between village government and its citizen. Hence the further studies are still needed to check the long-term impact especially when the project funding from the donors is over.

**Key words:** Migrant workers • Village government • NGO

---

### INTRODUCTION

International migration problems have been growing since globalization era. Accounting is largely absent in research about migrant workers [1]. Public policy accountability related to its immigration policy should check whether there is no alienation due to power [2].

There are many accountability problems in handling immigration policy. First slavery and human trafficking in emerging countries [2]. Second, the bad conditions of immigrant community [3]. Third, migrant absent from official population data, even though they actively participate in economic aspects [1].

Indonesia is one of emerging country that has complicated conditions within rapid growing economic development but many its citizen still difficult to reach access to basic service of government [4]. As the results, many citizens try to find a new life as migrant workers abroad.

Due to low education and lack of government protection, many Indonesian migrant workers experience problems abroad. First, they promoted by agents as labor

that can be paid below minimum wage in Hong kong [5]. Second, Indonesian migrant workers having the social exclusions in South Korea [6]. Third, Indonesians experience discrimination in sexual and reproductive health in Malaysia [7].

The problem is because there is lack of political power for these migrant to ask for their right to their government back home. They are parts of a marginalized group or kind of poor group. In many cases, there are NGO that could bring over the voice of this group to force government makes the better policy for them.

Many studies state that NGO is effective in bringing the voices of the migrant and the poor such as in previous research [8, 9, 10, 13]. Contrary other research [4] states that international donor agents failed to reduce poverty in emerging countries because of the complicated economic conditions that different between this country and donor countries.

This research differences with other research because of mostly other research study NGOs role at the level of central government. This research will analyze the role of NGO in the level of village government in Indonesia.

A village is the smallest forms of the formal government office in Indonesia. According to *Undang-undang Republic Indonesia* Number 6 the year 2014 (Indonesian Constitution No. 6/2014), the village government has enough budget and role in managing its citizen. This is including migrant workers protection policy.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is using a qualitative approach. The locations are 3 village governments in Central Java-Indonesia that already have regulation on migrant workers' protection. First, Tanggulangin Village, Klirong District, Kebumen Regency. Second, Krandegan Village, Puring District, Kebumen Regency. Third, Bojongsari Village, Kedungreja District, Cilacap Regency. The informants are village government officer, migrant workers association and Jenderal Soedirman University students that doing live in community service subject in the village. Data are gathered through literature review and focus group discussion during 2017. The Data then analyzed using the interpretative method.

**Migrant Workers Problems in the Villages:** Many Krandegan, Tanggulangin and Bojongsari are becoming migrant workers. The work in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Arab Emirates Union, Singapore, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan and Brunei Darussalam. The massive proportion of migrant workers in the population described by the head of the Krandegan Village as:

“Among 900 family in Krandegan 600 of them have a family member that still or had been experiencing going abroad as a migrant worker.”

Krandegan Village has 135 active migrant workers, 54% are junior high school graduated and 68% of them are women. Bojongsari Village has 94 active migrant workers, 84% are women, 74%. Works in domestic sector as maid Klirong Village have 105 active migrant workers, 73% are women, 55% works in domestic sector as a maid. Based on these data mostly migrant workers are women and works in domestic sector as a maid.

Many problems in experiences by migrant workers started in the village. Village government has right in issues initial permit to go abroad. But due to lack of information on the procedures, many problems arise. First, the villagers have to be “reluctant” to use a fake identity, such as informant Mr. Kom an ex-migrant worker stated:

“There are some of us using fake identity as my name and also others using fake address....ha ha ha (laugh)”

Those fakes identity are already a common sense. They even accept it as a joke.

Second, in the extreme cases, another ex-migrant worker states how she was gone without village consent. This is such as Mrs. Ir comment:

“I just fulfill all the requirement (to go abroad) directly (and completely) from my sponsor (Indonesian employment agent).”

In summary, many Indonesian migrant workers are having problems since their departure process in the village. All process make them unregistered in the citizen document in their origin village. They mostly blame the government bad bureaucracy as a barrier to going abroad if they really have to register their departure.

### **The Ngo Impact on Village Government Accountability:**

3 village governments in Central Java-Indonesia that already have regulation on migrant workers' protection. First, Tanggulangin Village, Klirong District, Kebumen Regency. Second, Krandegan Village, Puring District, Kebumen Regency. Third, Bojongsari Village, Kedungreja District, Cilacap Regency. Here are the roles of NGO in migrant workers related policy.

Each village in this research has their own local regulation called as *Peraturan Desa*. Tanggulangin Village has *Peraturan Desa* Tanggulangin Number 7/2015 about The Protection of Migrant Workers Candidates and Its Family in Tanggulangin since November 18, 2015. Bojongsari Village has *Peraturan Desa* Bojongsari Number 5/2015 about The Protection of Migrant Workers (Candidates) and Its Family since December 14, 2015. Krandegan Village has *Peraturan Desa* Krandegan Number 1/2016 about The Protection of Migrant Workers (Candidates) and Its Family since January 16, 2016.

These regulation are developed with the help and funding of 3 Non-Government Organization, that is MAMPU, Migrant Care and Australian Aid. This donors name is written in the Village regulations. Since the regulation does not the only initiative of locals but also induced by the external parties, it can be embedded and implemented fully within village organization.

This NGO is mixed between locals and international donors. Australian Aid, the Australian Donors creates MAMPU in Indonesia. Then MAMPU gives a program to be held by Migrant Care, a local Indonesian NGO.

How effective this regulation in protecting migrant workers can be portrayed in two terms, short term and long term. This perspective will help us analyzed how accountable the village's government. Accountability here defined as rights of stakeholders within society (in this case migrant workers and their families) in the relation with village governments as accountable organization [12].

**Short-Term Accountability:** In those three village regulations, all stated that village government having a responsibility to make the database of migrant workers or migrant workers candidates. All of three regulation put in chapter VI:

“1) Registration of Indonesian Migrant Workers from Tanggulangin/Bojongsari/Krandegan Village will be held by Village Government. 2) For registration purposes, migrant workers fromTanggulangin/ Bojongsari/ Krandegan Village should bring the copy of personal identification card, the host employer data, Indonesia Employer Company and also foreign employer agent.”

Migrant workers community and family when asked whether they feel village officer special services related to migrant workers Mr. Mar, a husband of a migrant worker, said:

“It just now after *Desbumi* (the name of the program on safe migration villages), but it was not before (the programs).

A villager stated that now her village has better data and bureaucracy related to international employment and migration. Mrs. Nga, an ex-migrant worker, stated:

“Now easier (looking for village permission to become migrant workers and now the village have the complete data about the citizen that working abroad.”

Another villager can describe more detail about how the regulation having an impact on their societies. As Mrs. Ari stated:

“Now that village is stricter in issued migrant workers' exit permit. The employment company should go to the village government office to ask permission directly for one or some workers and the government will check whether this company is legal or not before giving permission.”

Villager government usually just giving working permit as “rituals”, they do not care whether these people are using legal or illegal employment chains. This is because they are seen these group unimportant in the economic value [3].

If the village governments could make social audit about the migrant documents, the employment companies law status and register their migrant worker's citizen properly, it means that they already accountable in one of the most important aspect. Making temporary migrant workers that give significant impact to the villages by sending remittance back home unregistered is a big problem in accountability<sup>1</sup>. This is because of unregistered means that the migrants' contribution to the villages is hidden.

**Long-Term Accountability:** This research team observed the facilities for migrant workers service in each village. One of a good indicator that a village was ready to give special service related to migrant workers' problem is a special room for this service. One out of three villages ever has this room. This village officer stated the reason was:

“It is just rarely people come to consult about migrant workers problems. It is much more efficient to joint this service with another's citizen service”

This is means that migrant workers problems still not unveil yet. The reports to the village officers is just a matter of rituals, rather comprehend ones.

Another problem is the NGO helping village to initiate the regulation and funding.

The funding is indeed made that village faster in making regulation. During 1 year implementation of the village law, they already have the migrant worker's protection regulation. The funding also makes the villages migrant workers association active in empowering themselves.

This can be seen as accountability and performance effect of the grant. NGO's agents want to have good performance reports by successful in by the donor. The government and the migrant workers association also want to be accountable and hoping to sustain further funding.

The problem is what happens when the funding is finished? The regulation we have to study again whether the regulation still works or not. Whether the migrant workers need help from the government in safe migration or actual needs more real program in reducing poverty? Is this government really things that migrant workers worth to be “care” political and economically?

One year is a relatively short-term in analyzing the impact of policies. It needs more than a decade to see the long-term effect of a policy. Especially due to Indonesian migrant workers problems is already abandoned by their government for decades.

Among two villages that have a special room for migrant workers services, one of them already inactive at the end of 2017. This means that although migrant workers are dominating, hence it is not a priority to deal with this issue. Based on this reality, even though in the short term NGO succeed in initiates the regulation, in the long term still can be questioned whether this project will be implemented very well.

**Ngo Role in Empowering Migrant Communities:** Migrant care has national as well as local staff from each village. Besides monetary funding, they have three important roles in enhancing the political power of migrant workers group by organizing the association, put them in villages' regulation and empower them by many activities.

**Creating Local Migrant Workers Association:** Migrant care successfully organized a local community to form migrant workers association. These association elements are ex-migrant workers and the family of active migrant workers. This NGO creates "Kabumi" in Bojongsari and "Serbumi" in Tanggulangin. Migrant care also reformed "IBMK" in Krandegan that originally built by other NGO.

Creating local community association migrant workers is an effective way to protecting migrant workers right from grassroots. A research example how effective this kind of community organization 11.

**Emancipates this Migrant Community as Formal Organization in Village Regulation:** Migrant care with funding from Mampu project not only creating local migrant workers association but having political influence by putting them formally in the village regulation. All of three village regulations Chapter VII stated that this regulation will be run by team "PPT Desbumi" (*Pusat Pelayanan Terpadu Desa Peduli Buruh Migran/ Center of Comprehensive Service for Village Care on Migrant Workers*). The team consists of:

"...village government officers, village house of representatives, village community institution, village's midwives and Migrant Workers Association"

Having solid community makes a group politically have "voices" to their government. As Lehman *et al.*, (2016) stated that migrant workers are marginalized. This

is the effective way to show that these migrant workers community is big and therefore have right to be "heard" by the government.

**Empowering Migrant Workers Community:** These NGO not only politically empowered the migrant worker's community but also help with other issues. The main things are economic issues, as the entrepreneurship training as Ir an ex-migrant workers and local migrant workers association activist stated:

"We have already followed entrepreneurship training..."

Another migrant worker stated that they are helped by the NGO related to the advocacy cases as Mr. Mak stated:

"We always asked to join the advocacy process if there is problem with one of migrant worker having problems abroad"

## CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

The NGOs had effectively mediated the village government and its migrant worker citizen. It makes government more accountable to a group that marginalized but having a big informal economic impact for their region. First, it helped several villages to create regulation in migrant workers protections. Second, it helps empower ex-migrant workers and migrant workers family. Hence the long-term sustainability of the policy still needs to be studied further.

## REFERENCES

1. Harney, Nicholas De Maria, 2011. Accounting for African Migrant in Naples, Italy. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting* 22 (2011), pp. 644-653.
2. Tinker, Tony and Rob Gray, 2003. Beyond a critique of pure reason: from policy to politics to praxis in environmental and social research. *Accounting, auditing & accountability Journal*, 16(5): 727-761.
3. Lehman, Cheryl, Marcia Annisette and Gloria Agyemang, 2016. Immigration and neoliberalism: three cases and counter accounts. *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*.
4. Helden, Jan Van and Shahzad Uddin, 2016. Public sector management accounting in emerging economies: a literature review. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2016.01.001>.

5. Palmer, Wayne, 2013. Public-private partnership in the administration and control of Indonesian temporary migrant labour in hong kong. *Political Geography*, 34: 1-9.
6. Chung, Younshik, Keechoo Choi and Jungsik Park, 2014. Social Exclusion and transportation services: A case study of unskilled migrant workers in South Korea. *Habitat International*, 44: 482-490.
7. Lasimbang, H.B., *et al.*, 2015. Migrant Workers in Sabah, East Malaysia: The Importance of legislation and Policy to upheld equity on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).
8. Servalli, 2013, Servalli, Stefania. 2013. The interface of power and charity in the government of poor, a case from Italian context in the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries.
9. Agyemang, Gloria and Cheryl R. Lehman, 2013. Adding critical accounting voices to migration studies. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 24: 261-272.
10. Danedo, *et al.*, 2017. Denedo, Merci; ian Thomson, Akira Yonekura. 2017. International Advocacy NGO's, Counter Accounting, Accountability and Engangement Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal.
11. Dewi, Elisabeth and Sylvia Yazid, 2017. Protecting Indonesia's Women Migrant Workers from the Grassroots: A Story of Paguyuban Seruni. *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, 13(1): 76-91.
12. Gray, Rob, Jan Bebbington, David Collision, 2006. NGOs, Civil Society and Accountability: Making the People Accountable to Capital. *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, 19(3): 319-348.
13. Agyemang, Gloria; Brendan O'Dwyer, Jeffrey Unerman, mariama Awumbila 2017. Seeking conversation for accountability: mediating the impact of non-governmental organization (NGO) upward accountability processes. *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, 30(5). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/AAAJ-02-2015-1969>.