



THE PEACE VILLAGE INITIATIVE: WOMEN LEADING PEACE IN INDONESIA

Photo: UN Women/Eric Gourlan

"Women are the key to sustainable peace, from family, to country, to the world. Peace cannot be forced, but cultivated. I congratulate this partnership with UN Women and Wahid Foundation, "Empowered Women, Peaceful Communities", which will build peaceful societies. Let's build and spread the value of peace to the country and to the world." - Joko Widodo, President of Indonesia, on the International Day of Peace commemoration 2017

The Peace Village Initiative is a women-led initiative to promote peaceful and resilient communities.

The idea of Peace Villages was conceived by UN Women and the Indonesian NGO Wahid Foundation, and implemented under UN Women's regional programme "Empowered Women, Peaceful Communities", funded by the government of Japan. In order to become a Peace Village, community members commit to protecting and fostering tolerance and peace within their communities, starting with making peace within the family. They then agree on guidelines for the community. These can include calling for neighbours to jointly clean and fix common buildings; for people of different faiths to set community policies; and for women to be involved in the local economy and decision-making processes.

Presented with the idea, women from each local community lobbied with their village heads and won the support of other community members to implement the Peace Village model.

The first Peace Village held a declaration on 1 November 2017. Since then, nine more villages have declared themselves as Peace Villages (for a total of 10), and the idea has continued to spread.

In fall 2017, Indonesian President Joko Widodo expressed strong support for the Empowered Women, Peaceful Communities programme. The national counterterrorism body, BNPT, stated that they consider the Peace Villages model a concrete programme for implementing the National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE), in particular in the Prevention Pillar. Moreover, the Minister of Villages, Mr Eko Putro Sandjojo, asserted that the Peace Village model has the key ingredients to accelerate sustained and equitable development needed to cultivate a culture of tolerance.

At this point, six additional villages across Java are preparing to follow this path.



From
the People of Japan



What is a Peace Village?

In order to become a Peace Village, community members commit to protecting and fostering tolerance and peace within their communities, starting with making peace within the family. The following are agreed “indicators” that Peace Villages must implement:

- Regulations which are set and respected by residents to ensure all can live securely and safely in their village.
- Education and the promotion of universal values including peace, gender equality, tolerance and justice in a multi-cultural society, beginning at the household level.
- Residents understand and practice values of solidarity and tolerance.
- Art and cultural-based community activities reflect and promote cooperation.
- Existence of an early warning system to prevent violence, radicalism, terrorism and social conflict.
- Existence of a system or mechanism to ensure recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of violence.
- Active participation of women in all sectors including village administration, village security, the economy and education.
- Availability of accountability mechanisms to report

and document progress towards implementation of the “indicators”.

- Availability of means and infrastructure for a village to conduct its activities collectively e.g. a hall or appropriate public space for communal meetings.

The launch of the Peace Village Standard Operating Procedures in March 2019 marked a cornerstone of this initiative. The guidelines were developed in close partnership with the communities and are now used as a tool to translate the commitment to build and maintain tolerant and peaceful communities into action. This includes the development of community-specific early warning/ early response mechanisms with the full participation of women. It also outlines how to enhance social justice, advance the economy, conduct inter-faith events and have ongoing communications. It stresses the importance of raising the next generation based on respect, human rights and tolerance.

To support and monitor the implementation of the Peace Village values and commitment, all ten communities formed specific working groups (Pokjas). Through the membership in the Pokjas, women’s groups, youth groups, local level government, community members, and religious leaders combine their efforts to create and sustain peaceful communities. The total membership of the Pokjas is 217 people, with 88 positions held by women.



The Candirenggo community library, established as part of their Peace Village initiative. Photo: UN Women/Eric Gourlan

Current and proposed Peace Villages

Current declared Peace Villages:

West Java

- Sawangan
- TajurHalang

Central Java

- Nglingi
- Gemblegan
- Jetis

East Java

- Candirenggo
- Batu
- Payudandundang
- Prancak
- Guluk-Guluk



The Sidomulyo community garden, established as part of the community's Peace Village initiative. Photo: UN Women/Eric Gourlan

Future potential Peace Villages:

- Curug Village, Bogor (West Java)
- Jetis Village, Klaten (Central Java)
- Kelurahan Tipes, Solo (Central Java)
- Lawang Village, Malang (East Java)
- Bima Regency (West Nusa Tenggara)
- Dompu Regency (West Nusa Tenggara)
- East Lombok Regency (Lombok)



Women in Payudan Dundang bring their children to the women's group meetings. Photo: UN Women/Eric Gourlan



Community members from Guluck Guluck. Photo: UN Women/Eric Gourlan

The way forward



Community members from Prancak, East Java. Photo: UN Women/Eric Gourlan

The Peace Village communities stand ready to localise the National Action Plan on P/CVE once endorsed. The Wahid Foundation and the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection also formulated an agreement to synergize the Peace Village programme with the current National Action Plan for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Children during Social Conflicts (RAN P3AKS).

The Peace Village initiative commenced under the framework of Women, Peace and Security and provided grassroots women with the opportunity to participate and lead in activities aimed to sustain peaceful communities. A quota of 30% of women's participation in all Peace Village working groups is captured in the Standard Operation Procedures. Some villages took an additional step and reinforced the quota in their Peace Village regulation. As of August 2019, the rate of women's participation in the Peace Village working groups is 40%.

The aim of the Peace Villages is now to establish a comprehensive framework for positive peace that includes but also goes beyond the prevention of violent extremism. The conflict resolution mechanism that was established in the villages, which is based on traditional structures but now includes women's participation, will address among other things community conflicts about environmental issues and land rights, child protection, social injustice and will support economic opportunities

for men and women. The village leadership is committed to promote an education system that teaches tolerance and compassion and to strengthen access to justice for all community members.

The Peace Village approach has been successful and received positive feedback so far in Java. UN Women and the Wahid Foundation plan to continue their support to the established villages and to monitor successes and setbacks closely to strengthen the model. Acknowledging that Indonesia is a very diverse country and that a specific approach must be adapted to different regional contexts, the Wahid Foundation aims to introduce the Peace Village approach to other villages including Papua and Aceh.

The Wahid Foundation, in partnership with the Indonesian Ministry of Women, conducted a workshop with the Provincial Government of Nusa Tenggara Barat in August of 2019. The provincial government requested support from the Wahid Foundation to develop their own 24 Peace Village indicators in order to become a Peace Region. This is the first concrete step to implement the Peace Village concept outside of Java.

As the approach continues to prove successful and sustainable, UN Women and the Wahid Foundation hope to expand the model across Indonesia.