

Data to Improve Village Services

“Data is the basis of development planning, as well as the proof of development,” explains Hengky Veky Tewu, who is an assistant regional secretary of South Manokwari district, Papua Barat. Unfortunately, according to Hengky, good data is a luxury for many areas of Papua and Papua Barat. One of the main challenges to having a comprehensive database in Papua Barat is the challenging geographical characteristics and the poor availability of human resources, leading people to miss out on the benefits of development.

“In the past, we used to build schools without having accurate data about the number of school-age children. As a result, the schools were empty and neglected because there were so few students, and the money was wasted,” he explains.

Hengky's experience is poignant now that the Village Administration and Information System (SAIK) and the District Administration and Information System (SAID) have been introduced through the KOMPAK-LANDASAN II program. SAIK is a web-based system that contains population, social and economic data on each village. One of the strengths of this system is that it can operate offline and can therefore be used in remote areas that do not have any telecommunications infrastructure.

“SAIK and SAID are the right solutions because the system is simple and empowers local resources,” says Hengky.

This is acknowledged by Sonya Ainusi, a Waren village cadre from Momiwaren sub-district, South Manokwari district, Papua Barat. “We received basic training in computers before being introduced to SAIK,” she explains. According to Sonya Ainusi, who also serves as the village secretary in Waren, SAIK is so easy to use that the villagers' data can be entered into the system by the village cadres themselves.

The strength of SAIK and SAID is inseparable from the role of cadres in each village. So far, the KOMPAK-LANDASAN II program has trained 443 cadres, 112 of whom are women, spread across 225 villages in Papua and Papua Barat. SAIK cadres are trained not only to be proficient at inputting data, but also in using those data to improve the quality of people's lives.

Sonya Ainusi has seen how health data, such as blood type, can help to save lives. “As a woman, you think about these issues more, because sometimes when mothers give birth there is no blood for transfusions,” she says. In view of this, the village government, the Waren Community Health Center (Puskesmas), together with mobile cadres, collected data on the community's blood type. This data eventually led to the setting up of the Living Blood Bank, which can be accessed by village cadres and puskesmas if people are in urgent need of blood transfusions, such as during childbirth.

The village and district information systems are the link between sectors and services. They contain population, social and economic data on residents, as well as the coverage of elementary schools and health facilities. This data is then used to strengthen planning and budgeting at the district and village levels to better target priority areas – ultimately leading better basic health, education and other civil services.