

Rural Indonesian Insight on Mass Media Role in Reducing Climate Change Risk

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This paper investigates rural Indonesian insight on mass media's role in building up public perceptions of risk associated with disaster risk reduction (DRR) particularly climate change. A massive flood crippled Wasior District, West Papua in 2010 and a deadly flood paralyzed Jakarta in early 2013. These are two major extreme weather events in Indonesia in the last 5 years associated with Climate Change. Television and social media sites quickly overflowed with the large traffic of users trying to confirm the degree of any damages. In such critical situations, mass media have played a critical role in delivering information.

However rural thinking is that they are less informed and that they could experience higher levels of extreme weather impact in the future. Thus, there are questions that need to be answered: a) has the current type of information provided helped the rural population to be ready and aware of the risk? b) what kind of new messages need to be crafted by mass media to lessen the information gap?

This paper employs two types of analysis, media content analysis and secondary data analysis in order to gain results. Media content analysis was applied to two major national TV channels (TVRI and RCTI) at two year points 2010 and 2015 with the aim of understanding media's efforts at communicating climate change risk. The two TV channels represent the state and private TV channel in Indonesia. Following that process, a secondary data analysis was made of Indonesia Climate Asia's 2550 rural household survey. This study provided an insight on attitudes to the mass media and Disaster Risk Reduction communicators right from the heart of rural Indonesia. The findings of these studies will help improve the framing of disaster messages during extreme weather events.

Drawing on the findings, it is apparent that media and communication can enable and encourage action in response to changes in climate at different levels of society. There is a need for mass media content that reaches a rural Indonesian audience, most likely through television. In addition, the programming should be supplemented with more locally appropriate content delivered to communities through local leaders and opinion-formers, as well as face-to-face communication from organisations active in this field. Insights from this research can be utilized to increase the effectiveness of the work undertaken by these organisations, which are already helping rural Indonesia to respond to Climate Change.