

FORTASBI Members Provide IDR 2,5 Billion for Ramadan Social Activities



In March and April, Muslim communities in Indonesia were having fasting, including sustainable palm oil smallholders. However, fasting is not just about enduring hunger and thirst, but also a moment to give thanks and share with those who need it more. One of them has been done by **KUD Mekarsari** in Musi Rawas, South Sumatra. They have a long

list of social activities to celebrate the holy month of Ramadan this year, such as giving appreciation to the cleaning staff of Mekarsari Village Cemetery; financial aid for the Death Charitable Committee; distribution of 154 basic food packages containing of 5 kg rice, 1 kg flour, 1 kg sugar, 1 liter vegetable oil, and bread, for underprivileged residents; distribution of canned drinks to RSPO-certified members, with a total of 1 crate per garden; and the provision of hadroh musical instruments (one set of tambourines) to the Mosque Youth Association (IRMAS) of Mekarsari Village. Prihati, the treasurer of KUD Mekarsari who is also a FORTASBI local trainer hopes that the assistance provided, **can be a benefit** to the recipients, "hopefully the assistance and appreciation we provide can give benefit to those who receive it, especially for IRMAS. I hope the Hadroh Group of Mekarsari Village will continue to grow".

Not only in Sumatra, the food distribution was also carried out by smallholder group in West Kotawaringin, Central Kalimantan, **BUMDES Karya Mandala Makmur**, which provided 357 packages

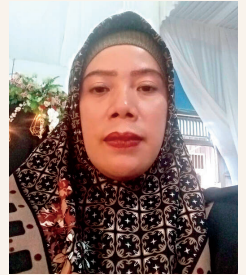


worth IDR 350,000 each. BUMDES has budgeted funds up to **IDR 124,950,000** for food packages containing household needs, such as rice, sugar, cooking oil, biscuits, soft drinks, coffee, and syrup. Sartono, BUMDES Karya Mandala Makmur Group Manager directly monitored the packaging process until late night. He had one simple hope, "hopefully it will be useful for the recipients".

The provision of basic food is not only carried out by these two smallholder groups, but also by other groups as one of their action towards social aspect, which we often refer as **Smallholder Social Responsibility** (SSR/find out more about SSR, click [here](#)). Some groups put aside their own funds for this social support, and others using incentives from the RSPO's credit sales funds. Based on data received by FORTASBI Secretariat (by 2 May 2023), more than 5% of 2022 incentive funds received by the smallholders, or more than **IDR 2.5 billion** were used by them to distribute Ramadan packages for the recipients.

Kartini Today

April is known as a month to commemorate the struggle of Indonesian female hero, R.A Kartini, in her role to promote the emancipation of women life. In this month newsletter edition, FORTASBI



conducted a social media campaign featuring great women in oil palm industry, and how they modelling Kartini's story.

One of them is Uum. She is **#PetaniKartini** (smallholder) who is also listed as one of workers who pick up fruits (brondolan) from **Koperasi Perkebunan Sawit Marga Indah**. As an Indonesian woman, she imitates Kartini's enthusiasm to continue learning, "a high learning spirit. Learning doesn't have to only come from school, we can learn many things from anywhere, especially nowadays we can easily get access of learning. By knowing a lot of things, our minds will open, and move forward", she said.

Her desire to increase knowledge and capacity has made this woman who was born in Bogor, May 7, 1973, always take the time to attend a sustainable oil palm field school organized by ICS team of Koperasi Perkebunan Sawit Marga Indah, in East Kutai, East Kalimantan. "Women have equal opportunities to obtain education, social justice, and optimally contribute their potential for sustainable palm oil," she concluded firmly.

Upcoming Events

**Training and Workshops:
Capacity Strengthening of Regional
Support Systems to Support Certification
of Independent Oil Palm Smallholders in:**

SUBULUSSALAM, ACEH | 10-12 MAY 2023

Bio-urine for Better Environment and Increasing Income



Asosiasi Petani Berkah Mandah Lestari (APBML) smallholder, Indra Gunawan, has his own way to save expenses in protecting the environment, "for the past 2 years, I have been using **goat bio-urine** as oil palm land fertilizer". Indra lives in Pelabuhan Dagang, Tanjung Jabung Barat, Jambi has 8 goats which he keeps behind his house. To make bio-urine, he only needs 4 ingredients: goat urine, water, brown sugar (as a food for bacteria in the fermentation process), and liquid that contains

lots of bacteria. However, he added that patience is needed in applying bio-urine, because it takes energy to make it, and it takes time to see the results, "be patient, the process is different with chemical fertilizers. When we are using chemical fertilizer, the results are instant, you will see the changes in 6 months, but if using bio-urine fertilizer, the results can be seen for up to 1 year". Check out the full article [here](#) and watch the video of bio-urine making [here](#).