

Voices of Community

What's happening in East Java and NTB?

UNICEF Surabaya Newsletter

is prepared monthly in order to share views / concerns of beneficiaries with partners and to develop common understanding of how UNICEF-assisted projects bring about positive changes in day to day life of community.

UNICEF Surabaya Newsletter 8.02 (February 2008)

Keeping children at Taman Posyandu (ECD Group): Awareness of parents and dedication of cadre?

On 9 December 2007 UNICEF and District Government of Probolinggo launched 15 Taman Posyandus (ECD groups) in Tongas sub-district. This is the second sub-district in Probolinggo in which UNICEF supported piloting Taman Posyandu.



How happy they are

Mrs. Suprihatiningsih is one of Taman Posyandu cadre in Tongas who shared her experience in introducing Taman Posyandu in this area. Her husband is ex Village Secretary or Carik of Tongas Kulon. However community still calls her as "Bu Carik". She explained how did she involve with this activity and problems in

recruiting cadres and "students": *"The first time I heard Taman Posyandu was when Mrs. Iskandar from District Education Office explained it in the meeting at Sub-district office. My tears dropped when I heard situation of children and their challenges. There are so many children neglected and abused. They also do not grow and develop as well. Some of them are surround of my life. Then I met several women in my hamlet. Most of them said that it is better to work in factory than being a cadre. Several days after the meeting at Sub-district, several officers from government and UNICEF accompanied by District PKK came to my hamlet to observe locations for conducting Taman Posyandu at Tongas Kulon hamlet. It aroused my spirit to run Taman Posyandu. However, when I asked some parents to bring their children to Taman Posyandu, they said that they will wait until their children reach 5 years of age to be sent to Kindergarten.*

So, at the beginning of Taman Posyandu at Tongas Kulon, I started with 8 children. Then number of children who participated in Taman Posyandu increased to 20, then 38 and now I have 40 children at my Taman Posyandu. My Taman Posyandu was named Taman Posyandu Manggis Ceria and opens every Monday and Wednesday. The activities are conducted in the terrace of my house. There are 6 women -- called Bunda -- facilitate Taman Posyandu Manggis Ceria".

Bu Carik's dropped out from the second grade of Senior High School. Besides as Bunda of Taman Posyandu Manggis Ceria, she is also the Chairperson of PKK of Krajan village. It is because her husband has been appointed as Acting Village Head of Krajan.

She is still actively asking parents to send their children to Taman Posyandu. She works around the village and meet parents and informal leaders. Besides positive response, she also got rejection from several parents: *"One day I met a mother with 3 underfive children. When I asked her to send her children to Taman Posyandu, she said that she did not have money to pay. I explained that if you cannot pay, we do not ask you to pay. Then she sent her children to Taman Posyandu. But, now they dropped from Taman Posyandu. So, it is not about money, it is about awareness of parents".* In order to

promote Taman Posyandu, One of Mrs. Suprihatiningsih's way to get "students" was through using fund that was collected from parents to fried noodle that can be brought home by children. Students said to children who did not enter Taman Posyandu that if they want to get this kind of fried noodle, they should join with Taman Posyandu. Then several children entered Taman Posyandu.

What is her concern? *"I want children to be ready to enter Elementary School and parents are also ready to send their children to school. We are happy that UNICEF supports us. If UNICEF assistance completed, we will use PKK fund to continue this services":* she said. Conversation with Mrs. Suprihatiningsih ended by observing a yard in the left side of her house. She asked her husband to find somebody who can provide a tent for Taman Posyandu activities.



Mrs. Suprihatiningsih (yellow blouse) and her colleague in front of school board

VoC reporter interviewed a child and a mother. Anugerah, one of students in Taman Posyandu Manggis Ceria said: *"I enjoy at Taman Posyandu. I like Bu Carik. She allows me to play football, guitar and other toys at Taman Posyandu. After gymnastics, she is playing with us or telling us a story".* While a mother from different sub-district who send her child to this Taman Posyandu explained her reason: *"Because Bu Carik teaches in this Taman Posyandu. I believe that my son get good lessons from her."* Mr. Rochim, Supervisor for Non Formal Education who is responsible to supervise ECD in Tongas sub-district said: *"In several villages, ECD*

groups were established by the community and supported by government. However, after UNICEF has piloted 15 Taman Posyandu, we have learnt a lot on how a good ECD groups should be conducted. Taman Posyandu Manggis can be used as referral ECD group for other ECD groups to improve their performance".

It seems that Mrs. Suprihatiningsih becomes a key factor in succeeding Taman Posyandu Manggis Ceria. Her dedication to serve children in her hamlet is the key words.*****



dancingdancingsinging singing
and no crying

UNICEF Surabaya
Jl. Kalibokor Selatan 160
Surabaya 60284
(031)-5048270
E-Mail :
surabaya@unicef.or.id