

The Importance of Faith-Based Organization in Shaping Natural Disaster: Case Study of Muhammadiyah

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Abstract

Recent natural disaster does not only attract the attention of government but also religious organization in Indonesia. This paper attempts to look at how the faith-based organization plays significant role in responding disaster preparedness programs. By considering local people around the area of disaster as religious adherents, it is important to consider religious values as appropriate strategy for addressing social risk and environmental damage. In order to achieve the aims of study, this paper utilizes qualitative method which concerns on how the faith-based organization programs engage in local people's perspectives and attitudes. The study reveals that the Muhammadiyah organization have been actively engaging in a disaster risk reduction programs by formulating new theology of environment and acting to shape extreme event practically. Based on their religious vision as *Penolong Kesengsaraan Oemoem (PKO)*, this faith-based organization has Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center (MDMC) to realize social services for weak people or *mustad'afin*.

Keywords

natural disaster, Muhammadiyah, disaster victims

Abstrak

Bencana alam baru-baru ini tidak hanya menarik perhatian pemerintah tetapi juga organisasi keagamaan di Indonesia. Tulisan ini mencoba melihat bagaimana organisasi berbasis agama memainkan peran penting dalam merespon program kesiapan bencana. Dengan mempertimbangkan orang lokal di sekitar wilayah bencana sebagai penganut agama, penting untuk mempertimbangkan nilai-nilai agama sebagai strategi yang tepat untuk mengatasi risiko sosial dan kerusakan lingkungan. Dalam rangka mencapai tujuan penelitian, makalah ini menggunakan metode kualitatif yang menyangkut tentang bagaimana iman berbasis program organisasi terlibat dalam perspektif masyarakat lokal dan sikap. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa organisasi Muhammadiyah telah aktif terlibat dalam program pengurangan risiko bencana dengan merumuskan teologi baru lingkungan dan bertindak untuk membentuk peristiwa ekstrim praktis. Berdasarkan visi agama mereka sebagai *Penolong Kesengsaraan Oemoem (PKO)*, organisasi berbasis agama memiliki Muhammadiyah *Disaster Management Center (MDMC)* untuk mewujudkan pelayanan sosial bagi orang-orang yang lemah atau *mustad'afin*.

Kata Kunci

bencana alam, Muhammadiyah, korban bencana

Introduction

Most of natural disaster studies in the discussion of climate change issues have focused on physical effects. The studies are mostly addressed to material relief supplies such as food, shelter, medical aid, rebuilding of houses and economic recovery. Public attention tends to put natural disaster as originally physical phenomena. This perspective deals with government's need to handle tangible fatal effects of society. Then, the intention of natural disaster response emphasizes material facets in overcoming risks and hazards. Consequently, the attention to the intangible aspects such as cultural adaptations, indigenous perceptions and attitudes, and religious communities' responses toward the extreme phenomena has abandoned. Whereas, the adaptation to the risk of disaster extremely influenced by local people's perception and responses.

In the context of natural disaster in Indonesia, disaster victims are closely attached in local culture. Here, I take the example of mount Merapi eruption in Yogyakarta as not only natural but also cultural phenomena. Several studies on Yogyakarta's people perspective to Merapi eruption have shown the connection between local interpretation and state intervention toward hazards and risks perception. There were differences between government and local perspectives to the eruption. The government attempts to evacuate victims into outside region (even outside Java or transmigration) as disaster response while most of people rejected. Local people assumed that transmigration more dangerous than Merapi eruption because they frightened to live in different culture (Laksono, 1985). Besides, they have cultural belief that their villages were safe through the protection of supernatural creature as well as reluctance to abandon their livestock (Donovan, 2010; Casimir, 2008). These researches emphasize that cultural understanding has significant issue to deal with disaster response program.

By considering culture as an important part of disaster response, religious aspects become essential issue in understanding victims' perspectives and behaviors. Religion encourages local people to interpret such phenomena as Merapi eruption through influencing their specific world-views. According to statistic data, majority of Yogyakarta people, particularly in Cangkringan sub-district, are belief in Islam (BPS, 2007). They practice Islamic ritual in everyday life. Therefore, their perspectives on the eruption have not separated from Islamic world-views. However, Islamic teaching in Yogyakarta is not only one. There were two biggest Islamic organizations namely traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and the modernist Muhammadiyah. According to Schlehe, the first organization tends to propagate religious syncretism in one hand, and the second persevere to insist the mixing Islamic teaching and beliefs in local spirits in other hand. Natural disaster was viewed by Muhammadiyah originally was born in Yogyakarta, as a sign or an ordeal (*ujian*) from Allah and *had nothing to do with Ratu Kidul* (Schlehe, 2010).

The statement of Muhammadiyah becomes interesting because this organization fight superstition while local people are closed to mystical tradition. Since it was established by Ahmad Dahlan in 1912, Muhammadiyah focused on social dimension of Islamic teaching in the region which had been realized by Islamic educational institution. The region had been extremely influenced by local mysticism and superstition at the time. Dealing with social condition of poor people, Muhammadiyah widened its movement to not only insist superstition and provide education but also strengthen economic empowerment and health services for public. This movement has influenced people's perspectives in shaping such phenomena as believe in doctor than magical spokesman (*dukun*). Yet, Islamic practices, include Muhammadiyah expressions, are always embedded in local cultural context. Schlehe observed that both Hindu and Islamic spiritualities under the threat of mount Merapi are interacted (Schlehe, 1996). In addition, their interpretations of vol-

canic eruption are interconnected with their understanding of tradition and modernity (Schlehe, 2010). In shaping 2010 Merapi eruption, as an example, several members of Muhammadiyah in Cakran hamlet, sub-district of Cangkringan, firstly followed spiritual guardian (*juru kunci*) of mbah Marijan instruction not to government instruction. The commandment of *mbah* Marijan tends to be mystical instruction, while government tends to be scientific instruction. It means that Muhammadiyah members are always interrelated with local context. This organization inconsistently against superstition and heresy and always negotiates between Islamic teaching and everyday life practices.

As a community, Muhammadiyah has a group mind which governs their Islamic teachings and practices. The congregants or *jamaah* make up a group mind which shares a subset of the group mind. It is this group mind that causes them to have a common line of beliefs which govern their attitudes toward natural disaster phenomena. Muhammadiyah as Islamic organization influences behavior of society as well as influences interpretations and responses to the Merapi eruption.

In the anthropological perspective, Muhammadiyah's response of disaster can be categorized as a behavioral response. Dealing with anthropology, Oliver-Smith (1996) describes major trends in anthropological research on hazard and disaster. There are three perspectives of disaster that have developed: a behavioral and organizational response approach, a social change approach, and a political economic approach (Smith, 1996). This research explores Muhammadiyah's response to Merapi eruption as an organizational response approach. This approach is to study how individuals and group interact before, during, and after disaster in order to maintain social cohesion. My paper uses this approach to study how Muhammadiyah respond to the victims of 2010 Merapi eruption in Yogyakarta.

Religious group such as Muhammadiyah has the opportunity to play an important role in assisting disaster victims and reducing the risk of disasters because it closes to disaster-stricken population. The example of Muhammadiyah as faith-based organization (Vita and Kramer, 2008) is usually well integrated within local people or disaster victims and thus often able to respond to disaster in very short time span. Besides, this group often acquire of trust among disaster sufferers because of its encountering with local people. Wisner argued that faith-based group such as religious non-governmental organizations (NGOs) become important element in reducing disaster risk. He provides example of several local and international Muslim and Christian NGOs becoming leader in community-based disaster risk reduction programs with considerable results (Wisner, Blake, Cannon & Davis, 2004). The example of Muslim organization spontaneous response in Aceh tsunami was played by Muhammadiyah organization. This organization uses its network with approximately 30 members all over Indonesia for relief efforts (Benthal, 2008). Hence, local faith-based organization is among the first responder and provider of immediate both material and immaterial aid.

In the following discussion, this paper attempts to look at how the local faith-based organization of Muhammadiyah plays significant role in responding 2010 Merapi's aftermath through an ethnographic approach. This study is based on fieldwork in Wukirsari village, Cangkringan sub-district, Yogyakarta where local Muhammadiyah members shaped 2010 mount Merapi eruption and its disaster threats in the future. Wukirsari has twenty-four hamlets and approximately 9.654 Muslims from 9.817 inhabitants. There are 26 mosques, 14 mushollas, and one local government clinic (*puskesmas*) in this village (BPS, 2007). This village is in the area of vulnerable to potential lava flood or around 11 kilometers from mount Merapi. Based on members of Muhammadiyah network, my research sites only focused on Cakran hamlets. My research assistant and I interviewed

lay people who lived in the hamlet as well as Muhammadiyah leaders both in hamlets and city of Yogyakarta, particularly leaders of Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center (MDMC). My research assistant's familiarity with the villagers facilitated access to conduct this project. In this paper, I have masked the identity of the informants and all personal names as ethical standards. In collecting data, I applied several techniques such as participant observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and life stories. It also contains informal talks with informants and Muhammadiyah leaders. Besides, I collected news articles, journal articles, event reports, pictures, and MDMC reports relating to Muhammadiyah's response to the eruption.

Perspectives on the Eruption

Perspectives on the catastrophe events in anthropological studies are always relate to cultural meanings and world views. Disaster meanings are construction of people thoughts that enacted and concretized by affected people. The responses of disaster victims, according to Oliever-Smith (1996), customarily engage *the ethical core of the belief system ... into concept of both social and cosmic justice, sin and retribution, causality, the relationship of the secular to the sacred, and the existence and nature of the divine*. In order to understand faith-based organization member meanings, the relationship between local community practices and perceptions were described here.

Members of Muhammadiyah in the research site as both victims and volunteers have different views on 2010 mount Merapi eruption. Immediate aftermath of the eruption has affected their memory and personal perception to disaster. Most of members refer to Quran when I asked their ideas about the eruption. One informant believed that the eruption is a representation of Allah's existence. He personally emphasizes the eruption as positive event to show the existence of Allah. Most informants argued the eruption as a test (*ujian*) from Allah, while another assumed it as natural phenomena. These views are not separated from their world views which believe Allah's intervene in everything, especially in the extreme catastrophic events.

A few articles on Southeast Asian Muslim understanding to natural disaster have showed religious explanation on certain events. On the Merapi eruption in 1994, Putra (2000) discussed contestation of the disaster's interpretation between Sultan, local government, and spiritual leader. He explained that spiritual leader such as *ulama* interpreted disaster as warning from Allah (Putra, 2000). In the context of natural disaster in Third-World country, Bangladesh, Schmuck (2000) found that the affected people thought hazards as an act of Allah (Schmuck, 2000). Likewise, Rokib (2012) conducted a similar study, but focused on *santri* (Islamic boarding student) respond to flood disaster in east Java (Rokib, 2012). Relate to the 2004 tsunami, there is an extensive literature relating losses to suppose divine action (Merli, 2010; Sugirtharajah, 2006; Rig, Law, Mullins & Warr, 2005; Fountain, Kindon & Nurray, 2004). A few religious adherents explained fatalistic interpretation which assumed extreme events as *azab* (punishment) because of sinful society such as Noah case in the holy Quran. It means that disaster is Allah's wrath and no one able to restrain from its occurrences. All of my informants sensitively rejected this fatalistic interpretation and clarified that Noah's ark case is precisely good example of how to be safe in shaping disaster because God instructed Noah to build the ark in order to be safe in disastrous typhoon and storm (Interview with Raji (fictitious name), 25 August 2012). The informant supposed to believe that Allah's will (*taqdir and sunnatullah*) is based on human deeds and behavior. Without constant belief, hard work, good deed, and struggle, one can not expect to attain perfection and earn Gods good will (Interview with Abdul Halim (fictitious name), 15 August 2012).

Basically, Muhammadiyah's members viewed the eruption in frame of Islamic teaching as *ujian* and Allah's will (*sunnatullah*). They relied on hazard as a test, not punishment, because majority of victims are Muslims. An informant argued that the term of *ujian* (test) refers to people who believe in Islamic religion. All people are life for a short time and are being tested. Those who will pass this test they will find an eternal world that is perfect and permanent. Otherwise, those who will fail this test they shall see the evil consequences of their sins and corruption. As a test, Muslim believers should be acquiring a great result because it shows his/her faith. All Muslims have faced tests from Allah in order to enhance their higher level of faith (Interview with Hermawan (fictitious name), 25 September 2012).

A few days after Merapi eruption, a Muhammadiyah leader explained in the sermon of Ied Adha that the catastrophe was Allah's mercy (*rahmatullah*). He implicitly emphasized disaster-stricken people to strengthen faith through good deed practices in everyday life. In the end of sermon, he explicitly concluded that the eruption was not punishment or *azab*.

Kita berdoa dan berharap, bahwa bencana dan musibah ini bukan sebagai azab atau hukuman bagi kita. Semoga masih sudi menerima kita sebagai hamba-hamba-Nya yang mukmin, muslim, muhsin dan muttaqin. Kita jelas-jelas masih diberi kesempatan hidup, memiliki akal dan hati untuk berpikir, merenung dan introspeksi. Mungkin memang telah banyak dosa dan maksiat yang telah kita lakukan, baik kepada diri sendiri, keluarga, rekan-rekan dan handai taulan, serta dalam menjalankan tugas dan peran kita di masyarakat, kita (Hidayat, <http://www.tablighpp>).

[We pray and hope that this is not a punishment or *azab*. Hopefully Allah will accept us as a believers, Muslims, *muttaqin*, and *muhsin*. We obviously still given the chance to life, and have the intelligence and the heart to think, reflect and introspect. Perhaps it has a lot of sin and immorality that we have done either to ourself, family, colleagues or friends].

In the shelter of Glagaharjo in Cangkringan sub-district, most of refugees followed several religious rituals to achieve better psychological condition after disaster. According to informant when she told her experiences, she doesn't know what she must do. She hopes to become good believers in the presence of Allah (.Interview with Sutini (fictitious name), female, on 20 September 2012). In her consciousness, she felt guilty but it doesn't relate to *azab*. Therefore, her efforts were prayer and provided assistance to other people in order to reduce suffering.

On the other hand, several members emphasized calamity as natural phenomena that created by God. Natural phenomena mean that the eruption was separated with sinful society. Generally, sinful people incorporated with unbelievers and religious disobedience. Here, the eruption was interpreted as purely natural event. One informant elucidated disaster as Allah's desire in automatic process. Automatic means that the eruption is a part of a result of the movement of tectonic plates. According to him, Allah did not make this world a permanent but a temporary world and every thing has a time limit. Besides, he also emphasizes some natural disasters may occur with Allah's control but not inevitably reflecting God's anger. In the text of holy Quran, it does not declare that all disasters are a result of Allah's anger (Interview with Raji (fictitious name), 24 September 2012).

In line with above statement, the other informant believed that Allah has placed physical laws in this earth. He allows suffering to happen when one or more of these laws are broken. The physical laws are based on cause and effect. By giving examples, he supposed illness comes if some laws of health are not observed or violated. Some accidents occur when traffic laws are violated or the traffic laws are not right, or the roads are not made and kept in right shape. "... even here (in the

world) all of humankind should keep in mind that Allah always saves us and he does not cause us to suffer for every single negligence on our part.” (Interview Bibit (fictitious name), 20 September 2012). This opinion espouses to put the eruption on natural perspective thought.

In connection with cause and effect, one considers the eruption as natural phenomenon which is under Allah’s control. Certain Disaster may took place when wrong prevails in some areas and these communities don’t even have to be believers. And, people who are afflicted with calamities may be forgiven due to the punishment they suffered in this world, in such case punishment compensates for their sins. If their sins are greater than the punishment they got, they will continue being punished in the hereafter. However, in all aspects of life, Allah has given human beings free will and the right to choose punishment or reward. He has also given people options about what to do and how to avoid determinism and being forced to do things. It concludes taking the path of safety is a human choice and requires appropriate actions (Interview with Hermawan (fictitious name), 25 September 2012).

In Muhammadiyah’s view, perspective on Merapi eruption as natural event is in accordance with Quranic explanation. A disaster management division of Muhammadiyah central board enlightens to its members on the plurality of Islamic interpretations on disaster. In the official book entitled “*Jamaah Tangguh Bencana*”, this division emphasizes disaster occurs due to human activity (ash-Shura [42]: 30; al-Nisa [4]: 79), event which will inevitably happen in the future (al-Mulk [67]: 1-2), and it can happen to anyone, whether believers or unbelievers (al-Anfal [8]: 25) (MDMC, 2008). This statement brings to mind what Muhammadiyah recognizes Merapi eruption as natural event under the automatic creation of Allah.

Perspectives on Victims

Immediate responses of faith-based organization to disaster impact attached to the meaning of victims. The understanding of certain organization toward victim position is usually affected their practical actions. Smith (1996: 306) stated that good responses to disasters should be based on great local understanding of social and physical environment. Great local understanding encourages organization to know victim’s culture and its milieu. Besides, internal perception of organization toward victims is also significant in efficiency of aid’s action. As an example, when a faith-based organization looks at disaster event as punishment from God and victims as sinful people, this organization is usually reluctant to provide relief efforts. Conversely, if certain group puts disaster as natural event or test of God and victims as weak people, this group will be give great support for reduction of both short and long term losses.

As victims and volunteers, Muhammadiyah members in Cakran unconsciously defined their self as weak (*dhaif*) and poor people (*fakir*), not as infidel (*kufur*). All of informants explicitly rejected assumption of victims as infidel or even sinner. One informant told me his experience that most of Cakran inhabitants are religious person. They practice Islamic teachings in everyday life as they believed. The Islamic obligation such as five times prayer a day or daily prayer, ramadhan fasting, thanks giving, recitation of holy Quran, routine *pengajian* and other rituals practiced by them. The tragedy of mount Merapi eruption in 2010 that destroyed almost all people’s house and other buildings encouraged them to work hard in shaping future life. In so doing, people should be fight pessimism such as infidel perception and shifted into optimistic perception. This personal experience implies further positive response toward extreme hazard. Even they were victims at the time,

they involve in disaster response program organized by Muhammadiyah branch of Cangkringan in collaboration with Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center (MDMC) and its networks (e.g. Aisyiyah, IPM, IMM, PM, Nasyi'ah, HW, TS, and KOKAM). MDMC is the official center of Muhammadiyah response to certain disasters.

Relate to 2004 Aceh tsunami phenomena, MDMC was established as the recommendation of the 45th *Muktamar* in Malang . This center was dedicated to help disaster victims and enhance its capacity in shaping extreme natural phenomena. The focus of this center is on disaster effects handling including preparedness, recovery, mitigation, and reconstruction. Furthermore, MDMC becomes crucial center in all Muhammadiyah members from upper (central board) to lower level (*ranting*/grassroots) of organization. One of the purpose of this center is provide assistance as quick as possible. Grassroots level becomes key element of disaster response. In the case of Merapi's aftermath, this center cooperated with grassroots level of Muhammadiyah members such as Cakran members. The establishment of this center was inspired by human aspect of disaster, not to natural aspect, particularly to the victims as affected people. Victims' perspectives as human being encourage members to respond disaster event.

Following central board of Muhammadiyah perspective on disaster, one member categorized victims as weak or poor people. The reason of its categorization relied on Muhammadiyah's mission to realize social services. It is inspired by Quranic verse of surah al-Ma'un (acts of kindness). This surah consists of deep understanding toward social imbalances between poor and rich people in a society. It criticizes Muslim believers who irresponsible to poor people and orphan. Muhammadiyah organization endeavors to realize social balance in a society through social practices such as providing public hospitals and schools for poor people. Members of Muhammadiyah in Cakran usually incorporate with other members in Cangkringan district or central board of Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta city to realize their social movement. Merapi's calamity case encourages them to involve in disaster response activities organized by MDMC. They choose to engage in the activities because of victim's condition motivation.

What an interested meaning of disaster victims in this organization is their interpretation of poor people (*miskin*). Commonly, poor people mean people who have economic difficulties, powerless, and in the edge of society. This term applied in the context of normal condition. However, Merapi's aftermath created chaotic society and made massif destruction of people's goods and properties. It inevitably changes social and cultural construction of society in the area of disaster. People lost their belongings and psychologically depressed. This happened to some informants. Essentially, this condition is worst than economically poor people in normal situation. Then, the informant believed that poor people in surah al-Maun can be interpreted as risk society. The obvious example of poor people in the risk society is disaster victims. My informant explained:

... bukan masalah ekonomi saja. Sebetulnya korban bencana lebih miskin karena menanggung beban tidak hanya fisik tapi juga batin. Kami malahan kehilangan semuanya. Lha kalau yang disebut dalam surat al-Maun itu miskin, sebetulnya ya termasuk semua orang seperti kami yang jadi korban amukan wedhus gembel. Malah sebelumnya, secara ekonomi warga sini juga tidak mampu. Jadi ya malah bertambah miskin. Di sini peran Muhammadiyah. Seperti semangat sejak dulu, orang Muhammadiyah kan berusaha menolong orang miskin yang tergolong mustad'afin itu, atau orang yang lemah itu. (Interview with Hermawan (fictitious name), young leader of Cakran who graduates from al-Azhar University in Egypt).

[... not only economic problems. Victims is the poorest because he/she has physical and spiritual burden of life. Even we lost everything we have. If surah al-Maun describes about poor people, actually we are the example of it because we are being victims of *wedus gembel* (volcano dust). Previously, all residents here are poor. Then, currently get poorer. This is the challenge of Muhammadiyah. As its mission, Muhammadiyah actually struggle to help the poor who belongs to *mustad'afin*, or the weak people.]

My informant described disaster victims in accordance with poor people as mentioned in the surah al-Maun. Furthermore, the explanation of poor people linked in the term *mustad'afin* as above citation. According to my informant, *mustad'afin* is a central idea of Muhammadiyah movement in realizing its vision and mission. This term belongs to weak people such as poor and orphan. In Muhammadiyah's perspective, the essence of Islamic teaching as explained surah al-Maun is how to solve *mustad'afin* problems. Based on this perspective, Muhammadiyah places disaster victims as part of *mustad'afin*. Hence, the central focus of this organization in shaping Merapi's aftermath is helping and assisting victims.

Interviews with central board of Muhammadiyah's representative showed similar perspective on disaster victims. If Muhammadiyah members of Cakran interpreted disaster victims as poor people in surah al-Maun under the concept of *mustad'afin*, leader of MDMC argued victims as vulnerable society. She emphasizes vulnerable people as poor people based on their difficulties to access primary life's needs. Vulnerable people can be understood from economic, social, minority, political and environmental aspect. When disaster occurs, vulnerable people are usually being the first victims.

Orang yang harus ditolong itu kan banyak termasuk mereka yang rentan. ... Vulnerable itu bisa dari aspek ekonomi, dari aspek minoritas, dan biasanya orang yang rentan secara ekonomi, sosial, politik dan budaya itu yang biasanya paling rentan terhadap budaya. Karena mereka tak punya pilihan. Dan ketika bencana terjadi mereka gak punya apa-apa, jadi korban pertama ... Ya mereka pasrah karena mungkin tak punya pilihan. Orang yang miskin secara ekonomi, sosial, politik, itu rentan terhadap bencana. Dan Indonesia adalah negara yang rawan bencana (Interview with Central Board of MDMC leader, female, on 11 August 2012).

[People who should be helped are a lot, including those who are vulnerable.... vulnerable could be from the economic, minority. And it is usually the most vulnerable to the cultural change (such as Merapi's aftermath) because they have no choice. When disaster strikes they do not have anything, so they became first victim.... they resigned because may not have a choice. People who are poor economically, socially, politically are prone to disasters. And, Indonesia is a disaster-prone country.]

In response to the misery of disaster victims and its mission to cope with *mustad'afin*, Muhammadiyah through MDMC realizes and develops the vision of *Penolong Kesengsaraan Oemoem* [helper of public misery] (PKO). This vision aims to increase the quality and progress of life which be aware and prepared to disaster. Such empirical phenomena as witnessed by MDMC volunteers deepened their understanding on social reality of disaster effects in one side, and strengthened their belief and social action to provide disaster preparedness program in other side. In addition, this vision is also close to the Muhammadiyah's movement theology: *mustad'afin*. This theology was formulated to fight both designed and undersigned oppression of weak people like poor, orphan, disaster victims, et cetera. As a theology, this idea not only made social consciousness but also practical action in everyday life.

In the beginning of Muhammadiyah movement, respond to imbalance social reality was realized by providing schools and health clinic or PKU. The idea, so and so, was inspired by massage of al-Ma'un verse or *mustad'afin* theology. Current phenomena of natural disaster as Aceh tsunami, Yogyakarta earthquake, and Merapi's aftermath formulated idea to establish MDMC. This center becomes evidence of the new formulated theology of environment that presented by Muhammadiyah organization.

Disaster Response and Recovery

As mentioned earlier that this paper addresses local Muhammadiyah respond to Merapi's aftermath, I believe that physical/practical response is encouraged by the ideas or perspectives. Muhammadiyah members of Cakran showed their perspectives on Merapi's aftermath based on their Islamic teaching knowledge. However, individual perspectives are usually difficult to realize massif practical action. I witnessed massif disaster response action compatibles with organizational commands. Therefore, Muhammadiyah members of Cakran did not engage in disaster response individually. In time of eruption, they involved in/become local MDMC members or its networks volunteering activities because of lack capacities in handling victims. They have also joined with other Muhammadiyah members in Cangkringan branch until central board of Muhammadiyah and its networks as well as other volunteer groups such as government and non-government.

The practical engagement of this members resulted new insights in handling disaster victims. What they focused on disaster recovery services are getting new knowledge and practicing it in their community. Two months after 2010 Merapi's aftermath, ex-volunteers of Muhammadiyah member in Cakran are able to assist their families, neighbors, and friends. Due to local knowledge of resources of people in the neighborhood, following Patterson, Weil and Patel (2010), faith-based organization such as Muhammadiyah (local MDMC) in Cakran could have an important impact on preparedness (Patterson, Weil & Patel, 2010). Moreover, they were known the way to provide aid to Cakran inhabitants because they intensively know each others. The quality of interaction between Muhammadiyah members as volunteers and victims has supported recovery process. When the other aid personnel could not reach dangerous area near Cakran, local MDMC were there to assessing need (Hesse, 2012; Tausch, et.al., 2011; Alawiyah, 2011, Chaves & Tsitsos, 2001). It supported by several factors such as knowledge of location and field.

From the informants' explanation on their experiences, there are two general practical actions of Muhammadiyah members in responding Merapi's aftermath. First action is physical responses. This response based on material needs of victims particularly within the time of disaster. The responses included management of donate resource, food distribution, and volunteer coordination. Second action is spiritual responses. These responses based on psychological and spiritual needs of disaster. This action aims to recover human affected include disaster response education, Islamic ritual, recovery services through *pengajian*, and spiritual care. The second action is long process recovery that challenge Muhammadiyah member of Cakran to escape it.

Firstly, physical responses addressed to provide aid in the time of calamity. The responses directed to material needs of affected people. An informant remembered with his drudge work to distribute food, water, and blankets in the shelter. He said that "... It was difficult to other volunteers from outside region for helping hundreds of people in the shelter. Everyone needs helping. Even I often joined with volunteers group in the bigger shelter in stadium. I almost had no time

to take rest” (Interview with Hermawan (fictitious name), 28 September 2012). In addition, the volunteer was also obligated to distribute food proportionally everyday. Sometimes, there were people who took more of allocated food. It was happened everyday. The difficult thing was how to give all victims food because “a victim often took their neighbor proportion. Fortunately, I understood their habits and it was excusable” (Interview with Hermawan (fictitious name), 25 September 2012). Then, the volunteers should distribute it carefully in miserably time.

The pivotal action in providing assistance in shelter is how to obtain and manage donations directly to the victims. Several problems occurred in time of both obtaining and delivering donations. The volunteers used MDMC networks for getting donation. Its networks include members of Muhammadiyah in every region in Indonesia through the chairman’s instruction. My informant claimed that “we have millions members of Muhammadiyah in Indonesia. This resource helps us to get donation. In my experience when Aceh tsunami occurred, we collected donations through Friday prayer sermon. It was effective to collect donations” (Interview with Hermawan (fictitious name), 28 September 2012). Besides, local mosque in the area of disaster had money savings. This money could assist immediate needs of survivors. The informant explained that working together with other mosque could prove to be beneficial in the future and reduce expenditure. In order to distribute donation directly, my informant told the good way in managing clothing, furniture, appliances, building supplies, and money donation. All of victims divided into several group based on their RT (neighborhood) in certain hamlets. Then, the leader of each RT assisted to distribute donation to their members.

Second action is spiritual response and recovery. This action is long process response in order to recover psychological trauma and depressions. Even, according to Cakran Muhammadiyah members, the traumatic effect of Merapi’s aftermath still remained today. The destruction of house buildings, live stocks, and families lost and injured created deep shock almost for all Cakran inhabitants. The outside psychologist volunteers of Merapi’s aftermath did not available right now. They helped temporarily in time of disaster. My informant said that the religious leader is truly psychologist for recovering trauma. It was approximately two months or less, there were no outside psychologist volunteers. Muhammadiyah leaders such as teacher or ustadz, khotib (preacher), and *imam* (prayer leader) played pivotal role in recovery process. They deliver spiritual motivation for survivors to continue life and do a kindness. They do spiritual recovery every day, especially in time of prayer.

There are several ways for Muhammadiyah member to recover survivors in Cakran. The recovery process usually integrates in several daily or routine religious activities such as religious education, sermons (*pengajian*), and daily ritual (prayer and holy Quran recitation). All Muhammadiyah members, particularly children and adolescences, followed what they called “*ngaji*” or reading Qur’an education. This education held six days in a week in the early evening and/or afternoon. The students or participants of this education are not only young people but also adult. The primary lesson is Qur’anic reading. However, teachers also teach other Islamic teachings such as ideal Muslim morality, badness and goodness in Islam, prophet stories, and history of prophet Muhammad.

In strengthening survivors’ spirit, intensive relief held by Muhammadiyah members through several sermons (*pengajian*). In time of disaster, disaster victims intensively followed sermons from Muhammadiyah preacher leader as coping strategy. The sermons was delivered by preacher after *maghrib* prayer (at 6 pm) or *isya’* prayer (at 7 pm). This strategy, according to Koenig (2006),

is meaningful as a coping strategy during major crises (Koenig, 2006). Religious background of Cakran inhabitants strengthen the effective way to recover trauma through Islamic ritual like listening sermon for their spiritual needs. Likewise, daily prayer (Mitchell, 2003) has also become effective strategy in reducing psychological depression because it encourages survivors to have future expectation.

Conclusion

It is obvious that Muhammadiyah members of Cakran influences some facets of disaster response in coping with 2010 Merapi's aftermath. This faith-based organization endeavored to negotiate between cultural-theological and humanity perspectives on Merapi eruption. The perspective of humanity was influenced by their understanding on victims. This understanding linked to their belief on *mustad'afin* theology which attempt to escape social phenomena such as disaster effects. Here, disaster victims were interpreted by this organization as weak people or *mustad'afin*. Consequently, as Muslim believers, they were obligated and encouraged to provide disaster assistance actions.

This organization in Cakran plays pivotal role because the members not only strive for aid in time of calamity but also fight to recover survivors for long term period. In the time of disaster, they helped to address social needs such as distributing food, getting donation, and managing it proportionally. Likewise, they engage in long process spiritual responses in reducing trauma and depression. This action includes disaster response education, Islamic ritual, recovery services through *pengajian*, and spiritual care. The involvement of this grassroots faith-based organization shows the significant role in disaster risk reduction programs. In addition, they potentially become key resource and first responder for disaster victims especially in the remote areas.

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Interview

Interview with Sutini, female, on 20 September 2012.

Interview with Raji, 24 September 2012.

Interview Bibit, 20 September 2012.

Interview with Hermawan, 25 September 2012.

Interview with Hermawan, 28 September 2012.

Interview with Raji, 25 August 2012.

Interview with Abdul Halim, 15 August 2012.

Interview with Central Board of MDMC leader, female, 11 August 2012.