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Community engagement in the early warning system (EWS) to improve disaster preparedness in Aceh province, Indonesia**Sofyan Sufri, Shannon Rutherford, Tri Dung Phung and Febi Dwirahmadi**

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Disasters are important global challenges due to their serious impacts on populations, economies and the environment. Global research indicates that, disasters and their associated impacts will increase due to climate change. Therefore, disaster preparedness is essential to anticipate, reduce and prepare for these disaster impacts. Within disaster preparedness, Early Warning Systems are regarded as crucial to save lives, reduce injuries, and environmental damage as they provide timely and effective information to people at risk so that appropriate responses can be taken. Many EWS heavily focus on technology and infrastructure, however disaster management research suggests that EWS need strengthened community engagement (CE) in order to enhance the effectiveness of their operation. Such research argues that ineffective responses to disaster events will continue if community engagement in EWS does not improve. Aceh, is one province in Indonesia that is vulnerable to multiple disasters. The province has achieved much progress in disaster preparedness in terms of infrastructure and capacity building for various stakeholders. However, past experience illustrates that many people engage in inappropriate actions during disaster events as they are not actively engaged with the design and operation of EWS. This has resulted in people being killed, injured or losing their property. Literature analysis points to inadequate research on enhancing community engagement especially in EWS in Aceh province. This PhD research study aims to analyse the challenges and opportunities for enhancing community engagement in Early Warning System to improve disaster preparedness in Aceh Province. The study will explore experiences, perspectives and needs of stakeholders to enhance CE in EWS in Aceh province. The research will provide strategies and recommendations for Aceh governments especially Aceh Agency for Disaster Management at provincial and District levels (BPBA and BPBD) and provide important insights into different levels of community engagement across the elements of EWS.

Biography

Sofyan Sufri is a PhD student at Griffith School of Medicine, Centre for Environment and Population Health, Griffith University, Queensland Australia and also serving as University Lecturer. She completed her Bachelor of Applied Science in Nursing Study Program, Health Polytechnics Ministry of Health, Banda Aceh, Indonesia. She is also a Researcher, Tsunami & Disaster Mitigation Research Center (TDMRC), Syiah Kuala University, Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

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