**Model Name: Post-Conflict Reintegration in Aceh: BRA & BRA-KDP**

**Region: Aceh, Indonesia**

**Time Period: 2005 to Present**

**Introduction**

**Insurgency Description: Free Aceh Movement (GAM)**

Struggles for Aceh autonomy and independence predate the establishment of an Indonesian state. The most recent and organized form of Acehnese insurgency, GAM, was formed in 1976 by Hasan di Tiro with the objective of implementing sharia law. Since 1976, GAM-related violence and corresponding violence by the Indonesian military has come in waves. In 1989, following the return of approximately 1,000 GAM fighters from military training in Libya, violence surged. The decade-long military campaign launched in response killed thousands and resulted in massive human rights violations. Relative peace returned in 1998 when Suharto was deposed, but returned in 1999 after more military abuses and calls for self-determination. With continued escalation of violence and a failed peace talk, the Indonesian government declared martial law in Aceh in 2003, spurring a new wave of violence, abuses, and casualties. Following the 2004 hurricane that killed 167,000 in Aceh, the GAM and Government of Indonesia (GoI) reached a peace agreement that was signed in 2005.[[1]](#footnote-0)

**Causal Elements: Autonomy, Economics, Abuses**

For the Acehnese people, the desire for autonomy and multiple iterations of failed moves for independence stands at the heart of the conflict. For the GAM specifically, grievances included economic marginalization, especially with consideration of Aceh’s oil and gas resources, lack of cultural and political autonomy, especially with consideration of the practice of a more conservative Islam in Aceh, and human rights abuses by the Indonesian military.[[2]](#footnote-1) These expressed grievances are reflected in the Acehnese people’s perceptions of the most important causes of conflict in a survey conducted by the Asian Foundation.[[3]](#footnote-2)

**Civilian Agency Involvement: Yes**

In accordance with the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding’s agreements on reintegration, the Aceh Reintegration Agency (BRA) was formed under the Governor of Aceh for coordination.[[4]](#footnote-3) Since 2005, the BRA itself has seen variation in structure, form and activities.[[5]](#footnote-4) EXPAND?

**Military Involvement: No**

From my preliminary research, little to none.

**International Agency/Expert Involvement: Yes**

As a result of the destructive December 26th, 2004 hurricane and the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding that followed, international agency support and funding flooded Aceh in 2005.[[6]](#footnote-5) The international agencies involved in Aceh reintegration included the International Organization of Migration (IOM), European Union (EU), World Bank, and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Foreign agencies involved included the Dutch Agency for International Development (GIZ), Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).[[7]](#footnote-6)

The participation of these organizations in reintegration efforts varied from funding to monitoring to technical assistance to establishing and running programs. IOM was invited by the Government of Indonesia (GoI) to oversee the release of political prisoners and provide for the reintegration of former combatants. IOM provided critical coordination for these procedures, and facilitated public information sharing by printing and distributing copies of the Helsinki MoU to the public. IOM also managed the Village Prosperity Through Peace Program (*Makmu Gampong Kareuna Damē)* for quick-impact projects and traditional reconciliation activities for communities.[[8]](#footnote-7)

The World Bank began the Kecamatan Development Project in October 2006, which was transformed into the Kecamatan-Based Reconstruction and Reintegration Program (KDP) in order to aid BRA with their economic empowerment efforts.[[9]](#footnote-8) These coordinated efforts led to the transformation of BRA to BRA-KDP.

The UNDP’s Strengthening Sustainable Peace and Development in Aceh (SSDPA) Program provided technical assistance to BRA, as well as programs for livelihood improvement of ex-combatants and victims of conflict.[[10]](#footnote-9) The UNDP, in conjunction with the EU, also created the Strengthening Access to Justice for Peace and Development project, which aimed to clarify legal framework for customary law, support transitional justice, and increase awareness and access to legal counsel.[[11]](#footnote-10)

These are just a few of the many ways in which international agencies were involved in Aceh reintegration and development efforts.

**NGO Involvement: Yes**

Civil society representatives were given initial seats at the BRA table, although their roles in civil society and continued representation remain unclear.[[12]](#footnote-11) It was noted that international aid organizations often funded civil society organizations to provide services, such as the UNDP’s Gender-Responsive Approach for Reintegration and Peace Stabilization, which provided civil society organizations with funds to support the reintegration of female ex-combatants and vulnerable women left out of the official DDR process.[[13]](#footnote-12)

**Impetus for Reintegration: Peace Accord & Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding**

**Criteria for Reintegration:**

The three populations for reintegration identified in the MoU were former combatants, political prisoners, and affected civilians.[[14]](#footnote-13) Due to political bargaining and negotiation, the BRA’s Economic Empowerment program also came to include GAM non-combatants and Pembela Tanah Air (PETA) pro-Indonesian militants.[[15]](#footnote-14) Beyond individual programs, a trend towards community and village-based programs broadened the addressed populations.

In terms of combatants, it was BRA’s expectation that GAM would provide a list of 3,000 identified combatants to be served by BRA’s ex-combatant reintegration efforts. The creation of such a list, however, did not occur because the number of BRA combatants was far greater than 3,000, fear that the peace process would collapse and former combatants would be arrested or punished, and BRA’s desire for control over the reintegration process. Instead, the allowances provided to GAM from the BRA were spread more widely among its network.[[16]](#footnote-15)

In terms of victims, the GAM, BRA, and Acehnese civil society agreed on a ten point criteria for “affected civilians.” The criteria include: 1) a person killed due to conflict, 2) a person widowed/orphaned due to conflict, 3) a person missing due to conflict, 4) a person whose house was damaged due to conflict, 5) a person who lost wealth due to conflict, 6) a person displaced due to conflict, 7) a person disabled due to conflict, 8) a person mentally ill due to conflict, 9) a person physically ill due to conflict, 10) a person who lost employment due to conflict.[[17]](#footnote-16) Unfortunately, these criteria had little effect on the actual distribution of assistance.[[18]](#footnote-17)

BRA solicited applications for victims seeking cash allocations and reintegration, and was inundated with over 50,000 applications cover 600,000 individuals.[[19]](#footnote-18) As a result, BRA turned to the World Bank-funded KDP (?) project to facilitate victim assistance. KDP provided community-based assistance to villages, using facilitators to help identify conflict victims and their needs. Villages were required to hold four community meetings in order to identify, propose, and address their needs with a project. These meetings were meant to emphasize community ownership and the last meeting was devoted to accountability reports on the funds spent after project completion. Allocation size was based on a village’s level of conflict, history of successful KDP grants, exposure to violence, village size, and conflict victims’ needs. Following the first round of village funding, KDP reverted their program to targeted allocations to conflict victims.[[20]](#footnote-19)

**Prosecution/Punitive Component: No (Not yet)**

Notably, during the conflict in 2000, the Indonesian justice system convicted and jailed 24 soldiers for committing a massacre at an Islamic school in Aceh.[[21]](#footnote-20) While the trial was seen as a test of the Indonesian government’s commitment to human rights and willingness to bring justice to abuses in Aceh, human rights abuses and gross violence continued after 2000 until 2005.

In accordance with the Helsinki MoU, GAM combatants were given amnesty and political prisoners were released, with the exception of “disputed cases” and GAM combatants who continued with violence after the signing of the MoU. Article 2.2 and 2.3 of the MoU mandated the creation of a human rights court as well as a truth and reconciliation commission (TRC) to determine reconciliation measures. Article 1.4.5 held that military personnel who had committed civilian crimes would be tried in Aceh civilian court.[[22]](#footnote-21)

While the granting of amnesty was implemented within a few years of the signing of the MoU, the implementation of the human rights court and truth and reconciliation commission outlined in the MoU stalled. For ten years, victims and activists sought the creation of these institutions for justice, in addition to the public release of official government reports on human rights abuses, primarily by security forces.[[23]](#footnote-22) In November 2015, the Aceh provincial parliament announced the selection of a team for the TRC to operate between 2016 and 2021.[[24]](#footnote-23)

**Community Engagement**

The level of community engagement concerning the reintegration of former combatants is unclear. The concept of reintegration may have simply not been viewed as problematic or controversial, and thus not an issue to engage the community on. The community acceptance level of former combatants was approximately 90 percent.[[25]](#footnote-24)

For the KDP aspect of BRA-KDP, these community-based projects required ------------

**Reconciliation, Social & Political Elements**

Traditional reconciliation ceremonies were conducted in some Aceh communities, although the extent and effect of such ceremonies is unclear. As described above, IOM’s Village Prosperity Project included funds for reconciliation activities.[[26]](#footnote-25) Official BRA funds focused on economic development and did not include allocations for traditional ceremonies.[[27]](#footnote-26)

The dissemination of public information was also integral to efforts to facilitate social reintegration. Creating public awareness for the peace resolution, reintegration efforts, programs, and goals was addressed early on by IOM as an important aspect of the peace process.

**Psychological Elements**

The

**Education, skills, and job training**

The BRA provided economic assistance and capital to former combatants, political prisoners, and affected civilians without much training for the use of such capital. Given this criticism, in 2009, the BRA began providing limited vocational training in certain districts. Aside from BRA, IOM has provided vocational assistance to amnestied former prisoners and combatants.[[28]](#footnote-27)

**Incentives**

The allocation of cash to former combatants, political prisoners, and affected civilians provided great incentive for participation. BRA’s initial attempt to provide targeted allocations failed. In 2006, the BRA invited individuals to apply for economic empowerment assistance (cash and land allocations) and was inundated with an unprecedented 50,000 applications covering 600,000 people.[[29]](#footnote-28) Seeking assistance, BRA turned to the World Bank and adopted their KDP community-based approach as BRA’s economic empowerment program.[[30]](#footnote-29)

**Follow-up**

The broad, community-based level on which reintegration and development efforts occurred is not conducive to a targeted approach for individual follow-up. Broad metrics and trends for Acehnese attitudes and Aceh’s economic development have been recorded.

**Cost Estimate**

Cost numbers vary widely, based on program, agency, and timeframe inclusion. A table in The Asia Foundation’s report suggested $60 million in program costs.[[31]](#footnote-30) BRA-KDP alone allocated $21.7 million to communities in Aceh.[[32]](#footnote-31) Another report from the Asia Foundation estimated that $365 million was spent between 2005 and 2009 by the government and international donors on “peacebuilding.”[[33]](#footnote-32)

**Financing**

Funding from the Indonesian government, foreign governments, and international organizations.

**Results/Metrics**

* HH perceptions surveys: Asia Foundation (2012); ARLS(2008); GAM assessment (2006)
* Qualitative data: Asia Foundation Locality Case Studies (LCS)
* National Social Economic Survey (GoI)
* Indonesia National Violence Monitoring System (NVMS) (World Bank-supported)[[34]](#footnote-33)
  + Online database of violent events from local newspapers
  + 1998-present[[35]](#footnote-34)

**Lessons Learned**

*Challenges*

**Defining the Target Population:** The Helsinki MoU was unique in its acknowledgement of victims as a target population for reintegration. Between former combatants, political prisoners, and “affected civlians,” however, the lines between the target population and the theoretical community to be reintegrated into were blurred and even nonexistent. The reality is that the thirty-year conflict in Aceh affected most people and communities in the region; war, especially insurgent war, is not known to be particularly indiscriminate, and thus attempts to isolate those “affected” found an entire region for reintegration and not much left to reintegrate them into.

In terms of pure damages, approximately 15,000 individuals lost their lives in the conflict between the GAM and GoI and the conflict damages exceeded $10.7 trillion in monetary value.[[36]](#footnote-35) Beyond physical destruction, the conflict had widespread psychological effects. A Harvard University medical team, in conjunction with IOM, found that about 33 percent of survey respondents suffered from depression, 48 percent from anxiety, and 19 percent from post-traumatic stress disorder.[[37]](#footnote-36) Forty-nine percent of the Acehnese population considers themselves to be a victim of the conflict.[[38]](#footnote-37)

**Individual Allocations vs. Community-Based Projects**: The situation described above justifies the use of community-based development projects as a form of “reintegration.”

**Holding Government Forces Accountable for Human Rights Abuses:**

**Corruption:**

*Successes*

*Why did it work?*

**Comparison to the Case of Boko Haram in Nigeria:**

*Similarities*

**Religion**

The religious aspects of GAM and Boko Haram can be seen as both a similarity and a difference.

**Oil & Economic Inequality**

**Military Atrocities**

*Differences*

**Community Attitudes**

**Hurricane**

BRA aside, international aid and their corresponding programs, provided a lot of supplemental support to the post-conflict reintegration process. While BRA focused on financial allocations and economic development for the target populations outlined in the Helsinki MoU, international programs extended aid to psychological elements, traditional reconciliation ceremonies, skills training, and victim populations unacknowledged by the MoU.

1. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/indonesia-declares-martial-law-in-aceh-1.392836>. All the rest from Asia Foundation, 1, 10-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. ECP, 1; Asia Foundation, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. Asia Foundation, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. Asia Foundation, 69; CMI, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. CMI, 4-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. Using CDD for Post-conflict reintegration: Lessons from the impact evaluation of the BRA-KDP Program in Aceh PPT, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
7. Asia Foundation, 48-52. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
8. Asia Foundation, 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
9. <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P100766/id-kdp-nias?lang=en&tab=overview>; CMI, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
10. Asia Foundation, 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
11. Asia Foundation, 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
12. CMI, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
13. Asia Foundation, 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
14. Helsinki MoU. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
15. CMI, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
16. Asia Foundation, 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
17. Leena Avonius, 238. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
18. CMI, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
19. The price of peace – inside Indonesia [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
20. WB, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
21. http://www.thehindu.com/2000/05/18/stories/0318000a.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
22. Helsinki MoU, 2-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
23. http://www.amnestyusa.org/research/reports/indonesia-time-to-face-the-past-justice-for-past-abuses-in-indonesia-s-aceh-province. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
24. https://www.amnesty.nl/nieuwsportaal/pers/indonesia-appointment-aceh-truth-commission-selection-team-step-closer-truth-and-. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
25. ECP, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
26. Asia Foundation, 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
27. Lina Frodin, “The challenges of reintegration in Aceh,” *Accord* 20, PDF, 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
28. CMI, 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
29. The price of peace – inside Indonesia [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
30. CMI, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
31. Asian Foundation, 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
32. World Bank, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
33. http://asiafoundation.org/2013/06/12/lessons-from-aceh-early-focus-on-institutions-critical-to-cementing-peace/ [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
34. Asia Foundation, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
35. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2015/08/17/indonesias-national-violence-monitoring-system>; for the above bullet pt. as well [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
36. Asia Foundation, 1 and 15; [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
37. Leena Avonius, 227. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
38. Patrick Barron, Macartan Humphreys, Laura Paler, and Jeremy Weinstein, “Community-Based Reintegration in Aceh: Assessing the Impacts of BRA-KDP,” The World Bank, December 2009, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)