

# MOBILE RAPID ASSESSMENT, Connecting the communities at risks



## Background

Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world with over 240 million inhabitants. It consists of more than 17,500 islands, about one third of which are inhabited. Disasters are never far from the people of Indonesia. Its geographical and tectonic positioning on the "Pacific Ring of Fire" makes the country particularly vulnerable. Volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunamis and the consequences of intense tropical storms and cyclones, such as flooding and landslides, threaten the lives and livelihoods of thousands of Indonesians, and cause numerous deaths each year. These disasters are a major cause for internal displacement. Cumulatively, between 1989 and 2010, while more than 186,000 people were killed and more than 14.5 million were affected by hazards and natural disasters, of that number, over 1.5 million lost their homes.

Throughout the years, the Indonesian Red Cross gained considerable experience dealing with the challenges of disaster-induced displacement - one of the milestones being, of course, the devastating tsunami in 2004.

The Indonesian Red Cross - Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI) - has subsequently developed 5 applications that are used on Android and iOS for disaster risk reduction activities targeting communities.

Based on Data, Indonesian has 110 million internet users (2011) around 40% female and 60% male. 65% users access the internet at internet café, 48% through mobile, 19% at home. More than 5 million are militant bloggers, 2,6 million become

Kaskus (internet forum) member, 4th largest Facebook users (> 47.3 million, below India), 5th largest Twitter (> 29.4 million, below UK). These figures are strong modalities to connecting the peoples.

Mobile applications were chosen because of their effectiveness and efficiency in reaching communities given the wide spread use of mobile phones in Indonesia, and the wide geographical coverage required across the country.

In emergency situations, communities at risk have always been as the first responders.

Communities at risk are the best source of information. The information they convey is showing needs. Their voices are very important for the action of what we should do. Our duty is to listen to their voices, verify and provide assistance as soon as possible.

## What is the benefit ?

The objective of MRA is to give the public channel to report and react appropriately with the right information on emergencies. It allows the public to report emergencies directly from the site. And it thus allows PMI to respond faster to any emergency situation, while simultaneously verifying that the information is reliable and correct. This information is then available for all other partners working on disaster risk reduction and disaster management including the national authorities. MRA can give us many benefits. It is not only a tool of Rapid Assessment, but it can be a benefit for tool of Beneficiaries Communications as well.

as Community based Early Warning System.



4. **Light application**

5. **Partnership** - the MRA is an excellent tool, which ensures that PMI partners effectively with communities, taking the information they provide, verifying it and ensuring that wider partners and other communities have the right information for their safety.

**What is the impact of MRA ?**

Indonesia has about 61.2 million smartphone users (statista.com). Most of Indonesian areas are vulnerable to various disasters including flood, fire, landslide, typhoon, vulcano, earthquake and other local cases such fire. With this tool, people can directly inform among them including Red Cross about hazard of disaster that happening in their neighbourhood. It will give benefit for Red Cross to map the situation but also to the community to receive assistance faster than before.

**Who is the target user ?**

Anyone who cares to inform and respond to emergency events, including the communities members, private sector, Government, and PMI volunteers. The target audience is the public and local communities. PMI choose Android as the platform of this application because in Indonesia, Android is the biggest OS that used. PMI believes that communities need to be empowered with the right information to self-monitor for disasters, but also work with PMI to serve as a reliable source of information. By empowering communities with the MRA, they can monitor the disaster situation, they can protect themselves and their community members.

**Why we use MRA ?**

1. **MRA is user friendly and simple.**

It is accessible to local community populations who are on the front-line of disasters and who need to be empowered with the right tools and information to ensure their safety and protection.

2. **Offline Mode**

This application can be used in remote areas with no signal, due to use offline mode. PMI Staff/volunteers can input data, and the data will be uploaded automatically when they have to get a signal.

3. **Works on almost all android phones** (minimum 2.2. android froyo) making it a very accessible tool.



This application has also been used by SIBAT (Community Based disaster Action Team) members and also communities to informing flood situation. SIBAT and community who are living in upstream areas can upload their area situation and inform the SIBAT members / communities along the river in the midstream and down stream. This information is very important to do the initial response and the development of river water level and flood conditions. By using this application, the flow of flood and the others disaster early warning can be managed, and preparation of response can be done timely and effectively.