

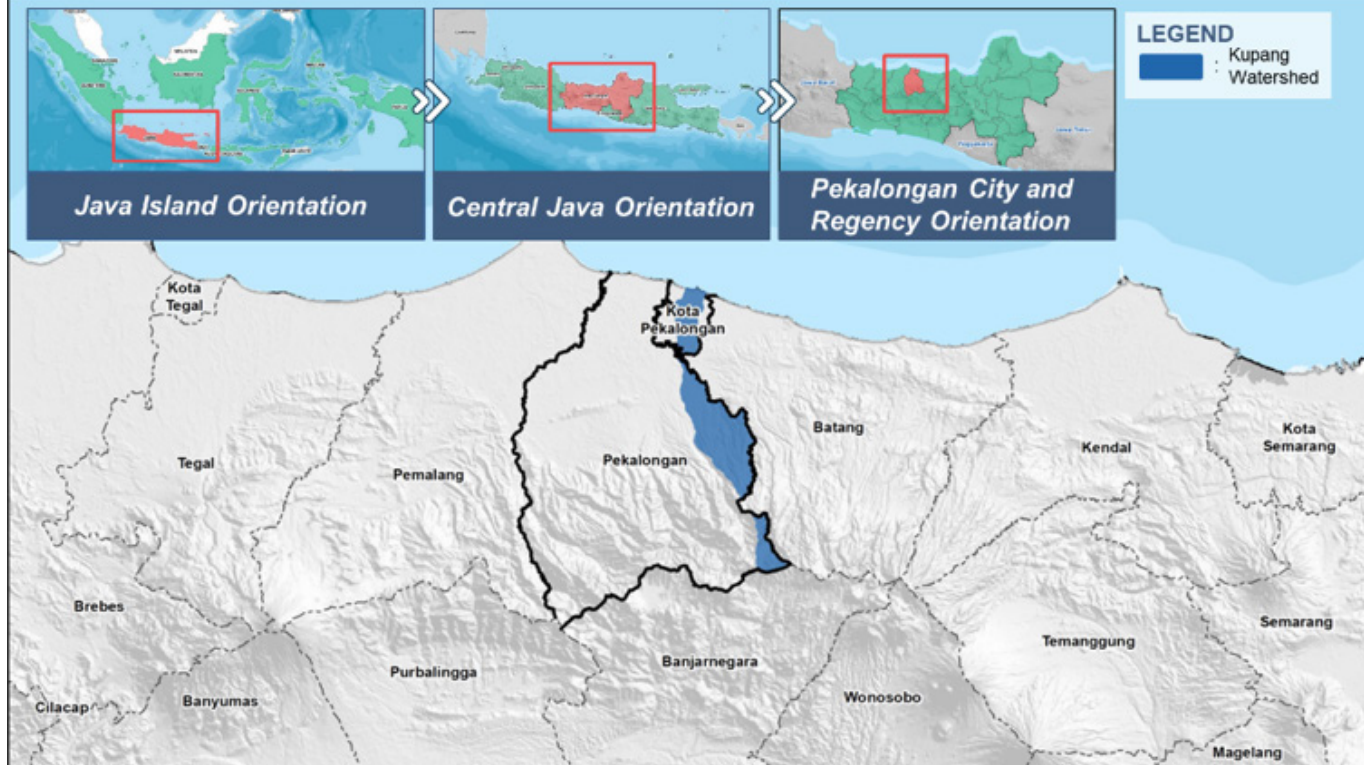


# **ZURICH FLOOD RESILIENCE ALLIANCE**

## **IMPACT BRIEF – MERCY CORPS IN INDONESIA (2020–2023)**

**Mercy Corps Indonesia**





Indonesia is among the world's most disaster-prone countries. Over 80% of the 17,000 disasters recorded in the country between 2016 and 2020 were climate-related events, like floods and landslides. Central Java Province sits at the epicentre of this crisis: over the past five years it has recorded the highest number of floods in Indonesia, at 941 incidents, impacting 1.4 million people. Flooding in Indonesia is driven by both flash floods and coastal flooding and inundation, which often coincide in low-lying areas. where 22 per cent of the population of coastal communities rely on the fishery sector for their livelihood, which is very prove to the flood risk. Without adaptation, over 4.2 million people are likely to be exposed to permanent flooding by 2070– 2100.

This brief summarises Mercy Corps' work and impact in Indonesia as part of the Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance, during the period 2020–2023. During this period, the Mercy Corps programme in Indonesia aimed to enhance effective climate change adaptation policies across government levels by advocating for science- based, landscape-focused, and transboundary governance approaches while leveraging on-the-ground evidence and resilient practices to strengthen community resilience in the country.

## 2020–2023 snapshot

**360 government officials** trained in climate risk analysis and flood resilience

**1,080 people** from 272 households, across four villages, gained climate risk knowledge, adopted adaptive livelihoods, and received market support

**Carrot yields** increased by **50–200%** due to the implementation of adaptive and sustainable farming

**Milkfish yields tripled** due to the use of floating net cages instead of conventional stake nets

**2,678 people** received flood response support during peak flooding

**1.3 million people** in Kupang Watershed and Pekalongan are expected to benefit from climate-informed policies

# IMPACT OF OUR WORK

Highlights of our work and its impact from 2020 to 2023 include the following:

- » We launched the **first climate agriculture and aquaculture field schools in Pekalongan**, strengthening the capacity of farmers and fish farmers to adapt to climate risks. We implemented a community-led pilot on the use of **floating net cages for milkfish nurseries**. This has since been **integrated into Jeruksari's village development plan**. To boost livelihoods, we supported a local women's group to process milkfish into Bandeng Presto, a pressure-cooked milkfish product. This created added value and increased their income. In the upstream area, we promoted **conservation-based agriculture practices** that not only contribute to soil and water management but also increase farm yields.

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» *“Previously, I worked as a seamstress, where I had to work full time and was given targets, taking up a lot of time. I did not have time to take care of my family. But by earning a living here, I can manage my time better. I can also engage in other activities,” said Mrs. Hayati, a member of the women's group responsible for the Bandeng Presto scheme.*

» *“New ideas, concepts, and strategies are needed in dealing with tidal floods from upstream to down-stream,” Yulian Akbar, the Local Secretary of Pekalongan Regency.*

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- » Through our advocacy, the Pekalongan Regency Government **adopted our resilient livelihood approach to tackling extreme poverty**. Seen as a crucial “gap filler” for flood resilience, the approach not only protects livelihoods but also strengthens local ecosystems and addresses key socio-economic challenges.
- » We provided key evidence that led the Pekalongan City and Regency governments to **adopt our Climate Risk and Impact Assessment** as a foundation for the new local development plans. This includes our recommended spatial adaptation strategies and water resource management approaches.
- » By playing a key role in shaping the national policy discussions, our recommended bottom-up and top-down approach was integrated into **Indonesia's Climate-Resilient Development Policy**, ensuring stronger alignment between national policies and local needs.
- » Our influencing efforts led to **permanent coastal inundation** being recognised as **a critical issue in the national climate policy agenda**. This contributed to it being included as a slow-onset loss and damage case in discussions on **Indonesia's Second Nationally Determined Contributions (SNDGs)** and **Biennial Transparency Report**.
- » We elevated **Indonesia's loss and damage agenda** at the UNFCCC negotiations. Our Programme Lead supported the Indonesian Government in **shaping official positions, submissions and statements on loss and damage, adaptation and climate finance**.



## Toni's story: Building resilience in coastal, flood-prone Pekalongan

*Toni, a 56-year-old milkfish farmer from Jeruksari village in Pekalongan, faced repeated losses as rising coastal floods rendered his fishpond unusable. His traditional stake net system could not withstand tidal surges, and flooding seriously affected his ability to purchase fingerlings (juvenile fish) from outside the region. With no stable income, his family faced increasing financial uncertainty.*

*To address these challenges, which were faced both by Toni and many other fish farmer households in the area, Mercy Corps Indonesia, through the Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance programme, introduced flood-resilient fish farming solutions. These efforts focused on strengthening the milkfish value chain, including fostering locally sourced fingerlings, introducing innovative floating net cages, and launching the value-adding initiative of producing the Bandeng Presto product.*

*Toni was among the first farmers to pilot the floating net cage method, which makes it possible to secure milkfish even when tides and sea levels rise. He also gained access to locally grown fingerlings from a newly piloted Biofloc facility introduced by Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance, reducing transportation costs and ensuring a stable supply, which is especially crucial during peak flooding seasons. Thanks to these innovations, Toni's yield improved significantly, and this inspired other farmers to adopt similar practices. Additionally, the introduction of the milkfish processing initiative has created new income opportunities for women in the village. With more flexible working hours, they can now engage in economic activities, while balancing their household responsibilities.*

*Recognising the success of the pilot, the Jeruksari village government has incorporated floating net cages into its development plan, to promote wider adoption of this approach.*

*By strengthening the entire value chain, all of these efforts are helping Pekalongan coastal communities to build their resilience against climate risks and to secure their livelihoods for the future.*



## FROM STRATEGY TO SUCCESS: ENSURING IMPACT AND EFFECTIVENESS

Addressing long-standing flooding in Greater Pekalongan is a complex task, with unpredictable risks and diverse stakeholder dynamics across government levels. We achieved impact by focusing on the following key strategic approaches, thereby ensuring effective interventions and policy engagement:



## Community-driven approach to resilient livelihoods

We engaged both upstream and downstream communities in participatory land use planning to better understand vulnerabilities, risks and impacts. By integrating local perspectives, including the voices, concerns and knowledge of women, marginalised groups and other vulnerable community members, we co-developed resilient livelihood models that address the economic challenges caused by flooding, while ensuring long-term sustainability. This inclusive approach fostered local ownership, drawing strong community interest in, and commitment to, implementing solutions.

## Leveraging scientific data for policy influence

We prioritised science-driven advocacy to influence effective flood resilience policies. We used scientific research to uncover the root causes of flooding and to link watershed and coastal dynamics. Our Climate Risk and Impact Assessment informed local and sub-national development and spatial plans. At the national level, we used empirical evidence, such as on the sinking of the Simonet hamlet in Pekalongan, alongside loss and damage governance analysis, to elevate permanent coastal inundation as a critical issue. This resulted in the recognition of slow-onset permanent coastal inundation as a case of loss and damage in the SNDCs discussions, paving the way for the inclusion of this issue in future policy frameworks.

## Collaborating to increase influence

We worked with communities, governments at all levels, and other key stakeholders (including universities, research centres, professional associations, technical experts, and non-government/civil society organisations) to build trust, foster consensus and create enabling policies through dialogues, capacity building and evidence-based advocacy. This collaboration strengthened our efforts to promote transboundary governance approaches. We engaged with stakeholders across all government levels, integrating their concerns and inputs into our advocacy. We also promoted knowledge-sharing and fostered alliances with like-minded organisations through regular policy discussions; this helped to solidify commitment and to push forward the advocacy agenda collectively.

## Ensuring policy cohesion from local actions to global advocacy

Effective flood management requires coordination across government levels. We combined local solutions with national and international advocacy, ensuring policy cohesion across all levels. At the local level, we supported village governments to embed risk-informed land use planning into development plans. Nationally, we aligned community-led flood resilience efforts with Indonesia's climate adaptation priorities. Globally, we amplified grassroots experiences in discussions on loss and damage and climate finance, calling for greater support for vulnerable coastal communities.







## OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2024–2027

In January 2024 our programme entered a transformative **new phase** that will run from 2024 to 2027 and that will set the foundation for the Alliance’s **12-year vision (2024-2035)**. This ambitious twelve-year vision in Indonesia, focuses on building climate resilience in 28 vulnerable upstream and downstream communities across Central Java, addressing growing risks of permanent coastal inundation and coastal flooding.

Our strategy for the first four-year phase centres on four key priorities:

1. Strengthening national and global policies on coastal flooding and permanent coastal inundation, with a particular focus on governance for slow-onset events, using permanent coastal inundation as a case study.
2. Advocating for a landscape-based, risk-informed approach to climate resilience and promoting a climate-resilient integrated coastal zone management model for Central Java’s north coast. This innovative model integrates climatology, coastal dynamics, tenure systems, and social, environmental, and gender dimensions, to inform and promote more holistic and effective policymaking.
3. Supporting flood-affected communities in North Central Java to adopt resilient livelihood business models that are rooted in conservation and climate adaptation principles and practices, and that involve stronger linkages to markets and financial services.
4. Promoting gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) to ensure marginalised groups actively participate and benefit from resilience-building initiatives.







## ABOUT THE ALLIANCE

The Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance is now the [Zurich Climate Resilience Alliance](#) (the Alliance). The Alliance is a multi-sectoral partnership, powered by the Z Zurich Foundation, that focuses on enhancing resilience to climate hazards in both rural and urban communities. By implementing solutions, promoting good practices, influencing policy and facilitating systemic change, we aim to ensure that all communities facing climate hazards are able to thrive.

Members of the Zurich Climate Resilience Alliance are funded by the Z Zurich Foundation, with the exception of Zurich Insurance Group. However, the views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the official position of either the Foundation or the company.



### About Mercy Corps Indonesia

Mercy Corps Indonesia is a local organization that empowers Indonesian society to develop healthy, productive, and resilient communities. We help communities to recover from the crises they experienced and turn it into an opportunity to upgrade their life quality. Developed based on local needs, our program helps communities across Indonesia with the instruments and supports they really need.

In Indonesia, Mercy Corps has assisted more than 1 million people spread across various regions since 1999. Established as a local foundation in 2012, Mercy Corps Indonesia leveraged all expertises passed down by Mercy Corps to help poor and vulnerable communities in urban and rural areas. Mercy Corps Indonesia provides emergency aid and long-term programs to rebuild better by improving community governance, economic resilience and opportunity in various challenging and difficult regions across the country.

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