

Aceh Conflict Monitoring Update

1st – 30th April 2006

World Bank/DSF



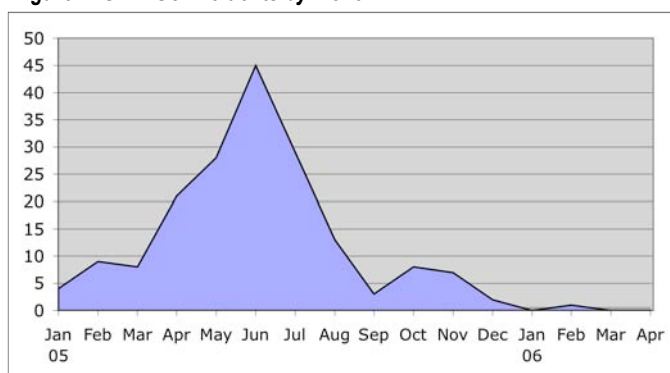
As part of an analytical support program to the peace process, the Conflict and Community Development Program, within the World Bank Office Indonesia, is using a newspaper conflict mapping methodology to record and categorize all incidents of conflict in Aceh as reported in two provincial newspapers (Serambi and Aceh Kita). The Program publishes monthly updates and analysis of the data, complemented by fieldwork where possible, in both English and Indonesian.¹

No GAM-GoI-related incidents were reported in our two newspaper sources. There were, however, two separate incidents involving extortion and *pungli* (illegal payments) by both police and former GAM in Aceh Timur, one of which ended in violence. The police in Aceh Utara announced the findings of their investigation into the Cot Girek “kidnapping” incident. GAM was acquitted of any involvement. The successful resolution of this case was partly facilitated by the local AMM office’s “Mini DiCoSA” initiative. These *kecamatan*-level forums bring local government, GAM and community leaders together as a way of building local trust, relations and co-operation. Such local forums could potentially be used for conflict prevention pre- and post-elections, for socialization and for handling of complaints. Local level conflict remained high with 80 incidents reported this month, eight of which were violent. Although only two incidents concerned the provision of post-conflict assistance, fieldwork conducted by the Conflict and Community Development team in April indicated there is significant confusion and increasing frustration with regard to the provision of reintegration assistance to GAM returnees and conflict victims. Finally, the Update notes that political conflict remained steady at 12 reported incidents.

No GAM-GoI-related conflict incidents reported in April

Again, no GAM-GoI were reported in our two newspaper sources, Aceh Kita and Serambi.

Figure 1: GAM-GoI incidents by month



Source: Newspaper Dataset

¹ There are limitations to using newspapers to map conflict: newspapers, particularly those published at the provincial level, do not pick-up all incidents, and there may be bias in reporting certain incidents. For more information see: Patrick Barron and Joanne Sharpe (2005). “Counting Conflict: Using Newspaper Reports to Understand Violence in Indonesia”, *Indonesian Social Development Paper* No. 7. Jakarta: World Bank. This report, as well as the monthly monitoring updates, are available online at: www.conflictanddevelopment.org. The dataset is available for those interested. Please contact Samuel Clark at: sclark@wboj.or.id

Two serious incidents of extortion, one resulting in violence, were reported in Aceh Timur

Aceh Kita and Serambi in Indra Makmur, Aceh Utara, reported two separate incidents of extortion-related conflict.

- On 15th April a group of approximately 500 villagers descended on the Polsek (Sub-district Police Station) protesting the non-fatal shooting of a local villager. Reports state that the incident began when a local police officer requested Rp. 50,000 from a passing villager carrying *getah* (tree sap) on his motorbike. The villager, having insufficient money with him, was unable to pay which infuriated the policeman who reportedly threatened and subsequently shot the victim in the foot. Later in the evening, once news had spread amongst the villagers, a mob descended on the local police station and upon finding it empty, ransacked and set it alight. Some five hours later, Aceh Kita reports that local police while hunting the culprits destroyed a *pos kamling* (security post), a motor bike and beat approximately 17 villagers. Two days later AMM visited the burnt out police station with the Aceh *Kapolda* (Provincial Police Head). The *Kapolda* reminded his forces that they must follow procedures and that violations would be criminally prosecuted.
- In what appears to be a separate incident in the same sub-district, Serambi reported that on the 19th April police made two arrests and destroyed a post where illegal fees (*pungli*) have been collected from passing trucks. The police stated those arrested are former GAM members. At the time of the arrest, the culprits were reportedly demanding Rp. 500,000 from a truck carrying five tons of tree sap. Trucks bringing goods from Julok-Alue Ie Mirah road were being charged between Rp. 50,000 and Rp. 1,000,000 depending on their load.

Both these incidents indicate the seriousness and negative impact of continuing extortion in Aceh. They highlight the importance of institutions such as the police, military, GAM, and other government agencies such as BRR, taking a strong stand against extortion of villagers and illegal payments.

Successful resolution of Cot Girek “kidnapping” incident facilitated by “Mini DiCoSA” initiative

Back in February this Update reported on an apparent kidnapping case in *Kecamatan* Cot Girek, Aceh Utara. This incident caused local tensions between GAM and the police, as the district Polres (District Police Station) accused former TNA members of the kidnapping. However, a thorough investigation undertaken by the police concluded that the missing village official had in fact run away to Java to avoid repaying debts.

The successful resolution of this case was partly facilitated by the existence of the “Mini DiCoSA” forum at the *kecamatan* level. These forums are an initiative of the Aceh Utara AMM office and were established to resolve smaller disputes and misunderstandings at the local level and to help build trust, relations and co-operation amongst local government officials, GAM and community leaders. They are chaired by the *Camat* (Sub-district Head) and include the *Kapolsek* (Sub-district Police Head), *Koramil* (Sub-district Military Commander), two or three local GAM representatives, *Mukims* (traditional leaders), and one or two local *Ulama* (religious leaders). Since their formation late last year, 51 “Mini DiCoSA” have been held in Aceh Utara. In some *kecamatan* only one or two have been held with the purpose of building trust and exchanging phone numbers; in those *kecamatan* where some tensions remain, Mini DiCoSA have been held more regularly to discuss specific incidents.

In Cot Girek, Mini DiCoSA have been held three times; the first primarily to establish relationships and two subsequent meetings in response to the kidnapping incident. With regard to the kidnapping, the forum was used for parties to respond jointly to the incident, after some earlier miscommunication, and to build relationships between the different parties. Immediately following the incident, and before a Mini DiCoSA was held, the police went to the media and accused GAM

of kidnapping the missing man. At the Mini DiCoSA, GAM denied the charge and the parties agreed that the police would carry out a thorough investigation. On the 26th April 2006 a third Mini DiCoSA was held in Cot Girek primarily for the police to announce the results of their investigation, clearing GAM of involvement. The Mini DiCoSA then went on to address other local issues including commitments to not extort, GAM and community complaints regarding the local monopolization of *sawit* (palm oil) trading, and accusations of illegal logging.

As highlighted in the Cot Girek incident, local level forums such as these can play an important role in building relations, trust and co-operation at the local level. Such forums can potentially be involved in managing conflict in the lead up to the local elections, participating in socialization activities, and help to resolve complaints regarding reintegration policy and assistance.

Local level conflict seems to be stabilizing at high levels

There was a slight increase in local level conflicts to 80 incidents in April (see Figure 2). The number of local level conflicts being reported has stabilised between 70-80 incidents per month over the last three months. This level of local conflict however remains significantly higher than the number of conflicts being reported through 2005. The number of violent incidents remained low with eight incidents reported (see Figure 3).

More positively, tsunami-related incidents declined in April to 12; this is the lowest number of reported incidents since October 2005. This month one third of tsunami-related incidents involved resources and two-thirds the administration of aid. Four separate incidents involving conflict over private land currently used for IDP barracks or by IDPs themselves were reported. This is an issue that seems to be increasingly becoming an issue.

Figure 2: GAM-Gol and Local level conflict by month

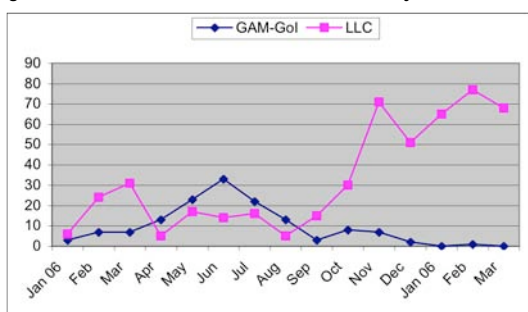
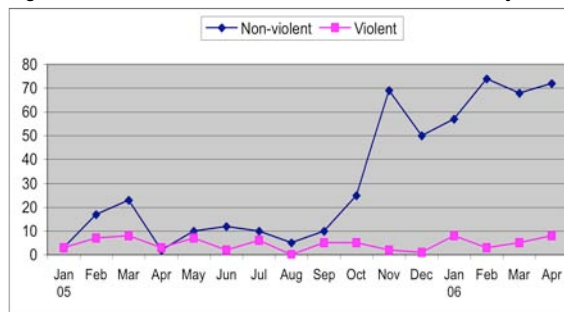


Figure 3: Violent and non-violent local level conflict by month



Confusion over reintegration assistance likely to increase local level conflict if not clarified

Although only two specific incidents relating to the provision of assistance to conflict-affected communities and individuals were reported, there is increasing confusion and frustration surrounding reintegration and post-conflict assistance. On 19th April hundreds of members of the anti-separatist front Pembela Tanah Air (Defenders of the Homeland) descended upon the DPRD in Aceh Tengah and Bener Meriah and demanded equal rights to assistance as former TNA (combatants GAM) and other conflict victims. Similarly on 14th April, 23 former TNA who surrendered prior to the MoU came to their respective Bupati's offices to dispute current reintegration support. They claimed they are being discriminated against and that they had seen none of the Rp. 500,000/month for six months *jadup* (social security payment) that they claimed to have been promised.

In April there were also a number of complaints regarding the provision of reintegration assistance. While these were not fully-blown conflicts, and were thus not included in our dataset, they do show serious underlying issues that will need to be addressd. For example, Aceh Kita reported that conflict IDPs in Bener Meriah and conflict victims in Aceh Utara are still waiting on promises for housing and *jadup* assistance. Similar concerns were highlighted during field visits conducted by

the Conflict and Community Development team in April. The following quotes attest to the current confusion and frustration regarding BRA's (Badan Reintegrasi Aceh – Aceh Reintegration Agency) announcement that they were receiving proposals for livelihood assistance:

"I've got all these proposals from the community but I've got no idea what to do with them. I tell that to everyone, but they just say 'see you what you can do'. It's inappropriate that a *Camat* doesn't get an explanation [from BRA]. What can I tell the community?"

Camat, Cot Girek, Aceh Utara

Similarly, dissatisfaction seems to be growing amongst former combatants and other GAM returnees. Approximately 75 percent of GAM returnees are currently unemployed and almost none have received substantial reintegration assistance.² For a while they were prepared to wait, but this honeymoon period may soon be over.

"We've already submitted a number of proposals to BRA but they've just been rejected. It's unclear why they're being rejected. We do have the guidelines but that's all and they're not very clear. We have a half a room full of proposals, a mix from GAM members and from the community."

"If there is definitely going to be assistance, then please explain that assistance!"

GAM, Aceh Utara

"I've heard BRA will provide assistance but I don't know how to get it. Two times I have given proposals to the local KPA, but they refuse it. And I'm not sure who to talk to at the district level."

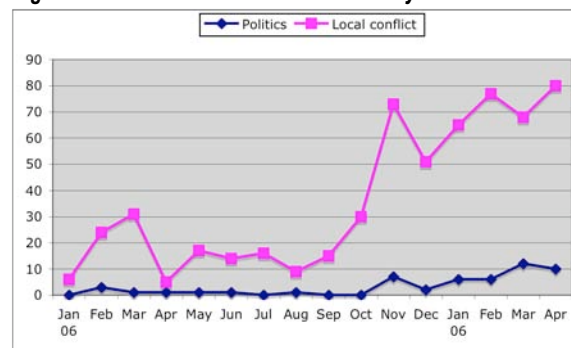
Village-level GAM, Pidie

The BRA is currently working on redesigning the mechanism to provide assistance to conflict-affected persons, and is finalizing the 2006 budget for allocations. It is extremely important that information on eligibility and the process for accessing funds is clear and transparent. This will necessitate an effective multi-medium communications strategy. Developing and advertising a thorough complaints system is also important. Clarifying the system should be an important priority for BRA during May.

Resource and political conflict steady

The number of resource and political conflicts seemed to have evened off after three months of gradual increases (see Figure 4). There was a slight rise in incidents, but the number of violent incidents fell marginally. Like last month, a number of demonstrations – in both Aceh and Jakarta – were held to push the national government to ratify the law to govern Aceh. To date this law is yet to be approved and is still being debated in the national parliament.

Figure 4: Resource and Political conflict by month



² See World Bank (2006), *GAM Reintegration Needs Assessment: Enhancing Peace through Community-level Development Programming*, World Bank: Jakarta. Available online at www.conflictanddevelopment.org.