

## Pioneering the Creation of the Schools' Movement for Change in Asmat District, Papua

Syuru is a village located on the southern edge of the town of Agats, the capital of Asmat district in Papua. Just a 10-minute walk from the centre of Agats. Syuru is similar to other areas in Asmat district, built on a swamp, muddy and affected by tides. Most of the villagers earn their living as fishermen and farmers.

In Syuru village is the Syuru Inpres Elementary School (SD), or Syuru Elementary School, founded in 1982. Most of the students come from the villages of Syuru, Asuwets and Kaye. Conditions at Syuru Elementary School are similar to other schools in Agats: the number of students is not proportional to the number of classes available; teaching and learning facilities are poorly maintained; dusty books fill the library; and school management is poor. Abraham Yakairem, the headmaster, and the teachers have tried to improve conditions at the school, but their efforts have been stymied by the lack of support they have received .

The dream of realizing better quality schools in Papua first began to take form when the KOMPAK-LANDASAN II Program arrived in Asmat district. In May 2017, the Syuru Elementary School principal, Abraham Yakairem, along with two senior teachers, Susilo and Amaranta Letsoin, attended the minimum service standards training (SPM), school-based management (SBM) training, and preparations for school accreditation. This training helped Syuru Elementary School to make the necessary improvements in governance and teaching quality to achieve accreditation.

Syuru Elementary School was quick to implement the results of the training, establishing an Accreditation Team to prepare for school accreditation. To fulfil the accreditation requirements, schools must be able to demonstrate they have made the required improvements. School management must be based on the eight National Education Standards. Schools also need to provide School Planning Documents, School Work Plans (RKS), School Work Plans and Budgets (RKAS), School Financial Reports, Learning Implementation Plans (RPP), and School Self Evaluation Documents, amongst others.

The community is closely involved in the schools' movement for change program. In the case of Syuru Elementary School, the chairperson of the school committee and the village head were both present at the school-based management training. After the training, the school committee held several meetings and provided input on the teaching-training process and school construction. Syuru, Asuwets and Kaye villages allocated IDR 100 million in village funds (*Dana Desa*) for schools. These resources have been used to help improve school infrastructure. The village head is also committed to encouraging parents to keep sending their children to school and discouraging their children from working.

The schools' movement for change program helped Syuru Elementary School to achieve an 'A' accreditation in October 2017. "This change is inseparable from the assistance provided by the KOMPAK-LANDASAN II Program," says Amaranta, an English teacher at the school. Another positive impact has been an increase in student achievement. In November 2017, Syuru Elementary School was overall champion at the Sports and Arts Week (Porseni) for elementary schools in Asmat district.

Currently, Syuru Elementary School is still improving to become an Elementary School for Activists in Asmat district. In February 2018, Syuru Elementary School, together with SD YPPK Santo Don Bosco Ewer, compiled the school vision and main school documents, and shared knowledge and experience of the accreditation process with other schools. Syuru Elementary School, together with SD Darussalam, SD YPPK and SD YPPGI, is actively encouraging and mobilising other schools in Asmat district to improve school governance and provide higher quality education services.