

Measuring the Commitment of Pekanbaru City's Budget for Haze, Forest and Land Fire Management

Introduction

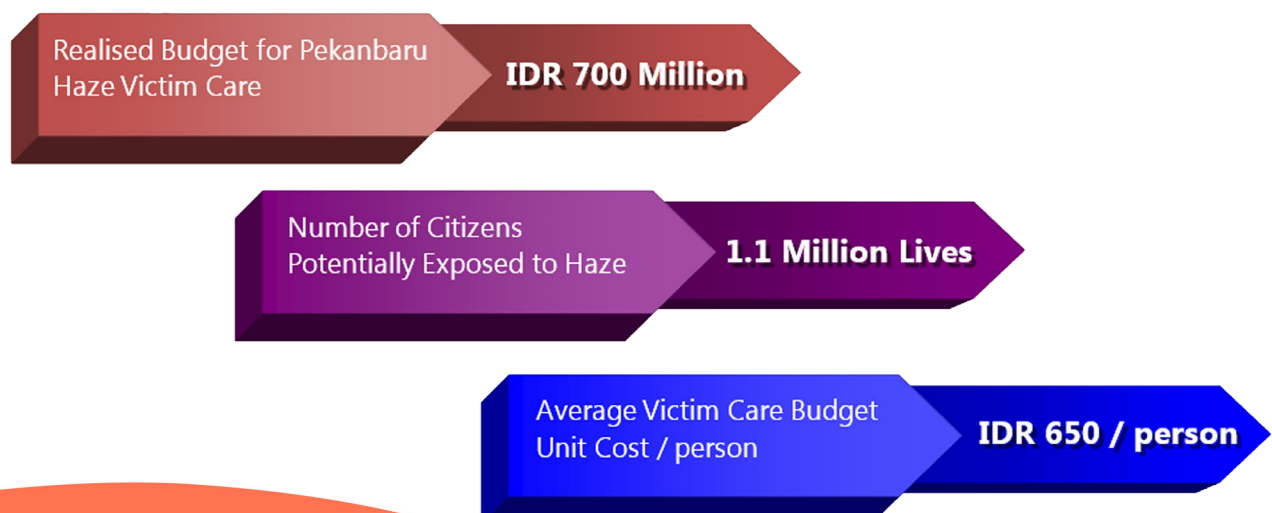
Since 1997, the haze caused by forest and land fires has been an annual disaster in Riau Province. The worst case occurred in 2015, when the haze lasted for an extended period of time from June until October. Although it is not the source of the forest and land fires, Pekanbaru City is one of the cities most badly affected by the haze.

The disaster, which occurs almost annually due to the massive forest and land fires, has yet to be responded with an adequate policy framework by the government, both at the national and regional levels, on the aspects of preven-

Disaster mitigation budget is sourced from the Contingency Budget Post, to be spent during a State of Emergency

tion, control, and response of disasters. The lack of action from the government, especially the local government, in the face of these disasters can be observed from the inadequate budget policy in accommodating the victims' needs in such incidents.

Source: Processed from Pekanbaru City's Budget



Major Impact, Minimum Response

In 2015, when the worst haze in the last 18 years happened, Pekanbaru City only spent a budget of IDR 700 million¹ for disaster relief efforts. The budget was used to carry out activities such as the establishment of evacuation posts for babies and young children in the city hall of the Pekanbaru City, and the provision of supporting equipments such as masks and other items. The budget was spent following a newly-issued regulation, the Mayor of Pekanbaru City's Decision on the state of emergency, which functioned as the legal ground for the expenditure.

Minimum Focus on Vulnerable Groups

From the aspect of health impacts caused by the haze, the most vulnerable groups identified are women, pregnant mothers, and toddlers. However, due to Pekanbaru City Government's lack of preparation, their risk management has yet to be aimed at all vulnerable groups. One such example is the lack of adequate budget allocation.

The budget of IDR 700 million from the contingency budget post was only used to build one post in a single location (the Pekanbaru Mayor's office lot) to cater to 1.1 million lives in

12 sub-districts. The budget was also focused solely on children under 5 years, whereas pregnant women were not provided with a special post. Moreover, even their health checkup had to be done in the general health facilities (Puskemas or the community health centre).² This condition demonstrates how the regional government, particularly the Pekanbaru City Government, still overlooks the groups particularly vulnerable to the haze.

No Specific Budget Allocation for Emergency Responses To Haze

Based on a review on the regional budget document³, the budget allocation for disaster mitigation, especially victim handling, is still majorly lacking. The seven local work units that may potentially be responsible to carry out disaster management actions —namely the Education Unit, Health Unit, Disaster Management and Fire Extinguishing Unit, Social Unit, Environment Unit, Agriculture and Horticulture Unit, and Industry and Trade Unit— all have different budgets. The budget allocation for education is 31% of the total local annual spending, making it the work unit with the largest budget management. The health unit receives an average allocation of 6.7% for the 2014-2016 period, while the other remaining units are allocated an

Source: Pekanbaru City's Budget of 2014, 2015, and 2016

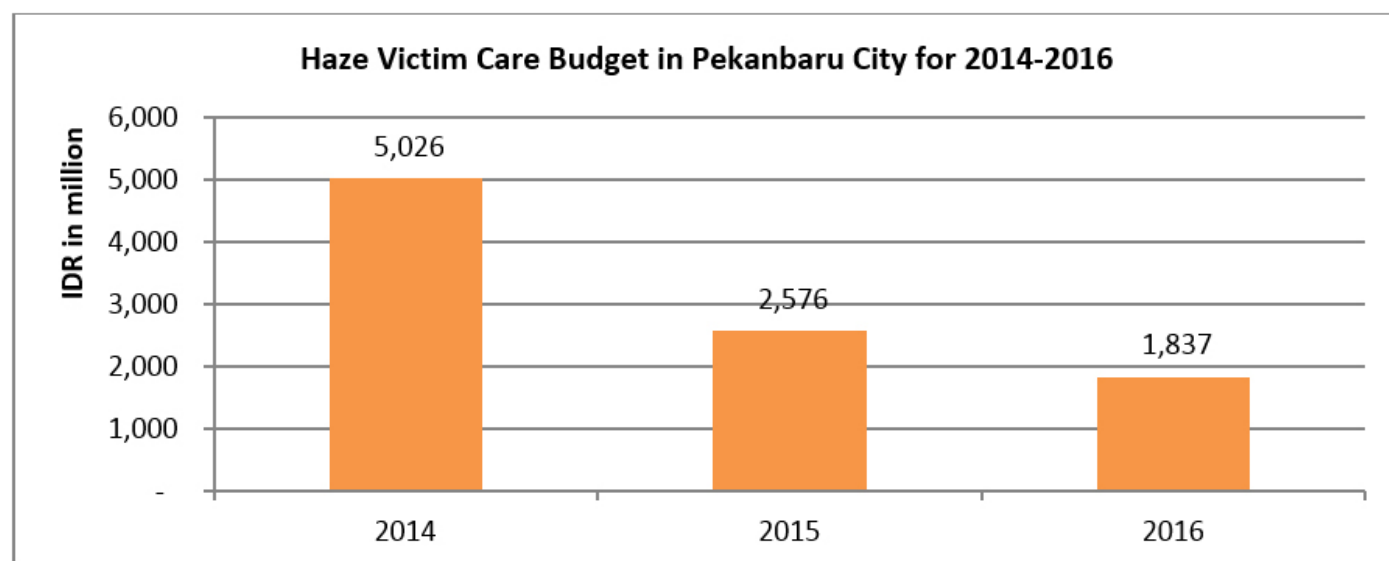


Table. Programmes for Disaster Victim Management

Programmes/Activities	2014	2015	2016
Disaster Management and Fire Extinguishing Unit			
Natural Disaster Victim Management			
Programme	3,823,418,326	1,123,191,330	1,384,335,600
Total	3,823,420,340	1,123,193,345	1,384,337,616
Health Office			
Improvement of healthcare services for disaster victims	347,577,350	347,577,350	347,577,350
Prevention of Pneumonia	104,888,850	104,888,850	104,888,850
Total	452,466,200	452,466,200	452,466,200

average annual budget of 0.3%-0.7% of the total local expenditure.

In 2016, Pekanbaru City Government did not allocate a contingency budget in the local budget (APBD), while in 2014-2015 it only allocated IDR 1 billion for this post; one of which was used for disaster response. The allocation of contingency budget was merely 0.03 percent of the total local expenditure.

The Pekanbaru City Government commonly provides budget for victim handling or care through two work units (Health Office and the Regional Disaster Management Agency). The Health Office budget has budget items for the improvement of public health services for disaster victims as well as a pneumonia prevention program with a total of IDR 400 million. This budget is considered too limited, and as a result pregnant women, children, and toddlers are unprotected. Hospitals, Puskesmas and Pustu (village health centres) are unable to provide a sterile room from the haze, and there is no provision of the specific medicines needed by the victims of haze.

One of the impacts of the haze, apart from health effects, is the disruption to access education. In 2015, for instance, the disaster interrupted school activities, especially in primary schools. Schools were closed for uncertain durations, which caused students to fall behind in their lessons. However, the government through the Health Office's programmes and policies did not respond to this issue. The government should be able to improve school facilities that can be used to support learning activities during the haze, for instance by providing humidifiers in schools for the students.

Although similar incidents are predicted to re-occur in 2016, Pekanbaru City Government did not allocate an emergency response budget (through the contingency budget) at all. This was due to the local government's revenue issues due to the decline of various local revenue sources this year. On the other hand, the president, through the Minister of Domestic Affairs, has instructed local governments to optimise their local budget allocation for emergency response and disaster managements.

Local Budget for Disaster Management

The issue of disasters has been responded by the government with the ratification of Law No. 24/2007 on Disaster Management. In this Act, "disaster" is defined as the incident or series of incidents that threaten and disturb the people's lives and livelihoods caused by natural and non-natural factors, leading to the loss of lives, loss of possessions, environmental damages, and psychological impacts.⁴ This was followed by a national policy issued on 24 October 2015, where the President of Indonesia ratified the Presidential Instruction No. 11/2015 on the Improvement of Forest and Land Fire Control, which was addressed to all government institutions (from ministries and law enforcers, to provincial and local governments). The Presidential Instruction emphasises that the local government is to allocate the budget of forest and land fire control in the local budget. Although Pekanbaru City is not the place where the fires originated, it is also an area that is most likely affected by the forest and land fires by way of the haze; thus, is one of the priority areas in the Presidential Instruction's mandate.

However, in reality, Pekanbaru City Government failed to allocate an adequate budget to facilitate forest and land control efforts in the 2014-2016 local budget. The allocation of a more flexible, readily used budget in the form of contingency spending is also very limited, and in 2016 even amounted to none at all.

End Note

- ^{1.} *The statement of the Head of the Officer for Management of Regional Finance and Assets (BPKAD) Pekanbaru City, Musa, to Riau24.com. Accessed on 7 June 2016, at 11 pm.*
- ^{2.} *According to the Health Office during the FGD in Grand Cokro Pekanbaru Hotel on 27 May 2016, the Health Office does not provide special facilities for vulnerable groups such as pregnant women. The government provides free health checkups in their health facilities but it is a general one for all affected.*
- ^{3.} *The document used in this analysis is the 2014-2016 Pekanbaru City Government "Pure" Budget documents, i.e. approved by the local parliament (DPRD) and not yet revised.*
- ^{4.} *Article 1 paragraph 1 Law 24/2007 on Disasters*

References

- Annex of the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) Pekanbaru City in 2014
- Annex of the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) Pekanbaru City in 2015
- Annex of the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) Pekanbaru City in 2016
- Health Problems Caused by Haze, Infodatin: Data Centre of the Indonesian Ministry of Health, 2015
- Law No. 17 of 2003 on State Finance
- Law No. 24 of 2007 on Disaster Management
- Governmental Regulation No. 21 of 2008 on Disaster Management
- Minister of Domestic Affairs Regulation No. 21 of 2011 on the Amendment to the Minister of Domestic Affairs Regulation No. 13 of 2006 on regional budget management.