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Indonesia Transmigration Sector Review Files - Gloria Davis - Integration of
Indigenous People in Transmigrant Communities

October 10, 1978

To: Files

From: Gloria Davis

Subject: Integration of Indigenous People in Transmigrant Communities.

The Government of Indonesia now has a policy requiring that 10% of sites within Transmigrant communities be reserved for the resettlement of local people. This is intended to promote indigenous development and regional integration. There is no question that this will be done, the question is how it will be accomplished.

Several alternatives have been proposed:

1. Every tenth person in every village could be indigenous;
2. Small dukuhs of 25-50 locals could be settled within each village of 250 to 500 Javanese.
3. Whole villages of 250 to 500 locals could be settled within each site.

The transmigration office appeared to favor the first alternative when I discussed the issue with them in September. Public Works which has already integrated locals into its settlement in Sittiung is now using arrangement 3.

An early decision on this issue is important not only to keep peace in the family but to assure the effective integration of local people in the areas reserved for them. For this reason I wish to make my own views clear at this time.

I personally believe that position 1, is the least desirable:

- 1) It places the entire burden of accommodation upon the local families who share neither the language nor the work practices of the Javanese;
- 2) It is considered the least attractive to local people;
- 3) It maximizes the likelihood that local settlers will either refuse to participate or leave the project area after they have been settled.

While the goals of regional integration are commendable, the integrity of local communities must also be respected. In all conversations I have had in the field both local people and their officials have requested indigenous enclaves which allow internal development and growth. For this reason I favor arrangement three (150 families is about the minimum for an internally differentiated community which allows diversity and growth). As a fall-back position I would support position two on an experimental basis so long as locals were given areas with no fewer than 15 - 30 families.

The Sittiung experience should be able to provide some insights into the effectiveness of proposal 3.

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