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PRESS RELEASE

April 26, 2022

Installation begins of a community owned solar and battery renewable energy system in villages in Central Sumba, who have never had electricity.



Picture 1: David Lutman, Head of Low Carbon Energy and Infrastructure Team British Embassy Jakarta; Bapak Sahid Junaidi, Secretary of Directorate General of New and Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation; Drs. Paulus S. K. Limu, Central Sumba Regent; Ir. Daniel Landa, Central Sumba Vice Regent, mark the start of the MENTARI off-grid solar PV installation 95 kWp in Central Sumba.

- The UK-Indonesia MENTARI Low Carbon Energy Partnership held a ground breaking ceremony on 19 April 2022 in Mata Redi and Mata Woga villages in Central Sumba, ahead of construction of a 95 kWp off-grid solar and battery system which will provide clean, affordable and reliable energy for the whole community.
- Officials from the British Embassy Jakarta; Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR); Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration, BAKTI Kominfo, local government, including the Sumba Tengah Bupati, and community leaders attended the ceremony.
- Until now, the villages have not had electricity. The project will provide inclusive access to energy for the whole community – 200 households, 1000 people – and to public facilities. Renewable energy is an ideal, low



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cost way to reach remote communities not connected to the grid.

In April 2022, MENTARI, a UK-Indonesia Low Carbon Energy Partnership, began the installation of a renewable energy system using solar energy with batteries in Central Sumba. On April 19, representatives from British Embassy Jakarta and Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR), national and regional government, and local community members attended the ground-breaking ceremony in Mata Redi and Mata Woga villages.

Mata Redi and Mata Woga villages have never had electricity access, relying only on kerosene lamps for lighting. As a result, many aspects of everyday life are more difficult. School children do not have the luxury of studying at night, there are no economic activities after dark, it is difficult for health services for emergency cases to be carried out, and safe mobility for women after dark was limited.

All that will soon change. With an installed capacity of 95 kWp, the off-grid renewable energy system is expected to be up and running in just four months, benefitting 155 houses and 11 public buildings in Mata Redi and 45 houses and one public building in Mata Woga. A battery bank will provide power captured during the day, at night.

Clean, affordable, and reliable energy provides opportunities for productive uses of power including enhancing agricultural output, water and irrigation management, education and health services. Together, this project could transform the welfare and economy of this remote community.

The ground-breaking marks the first phase of the installation which will be completed in August 2022. As part of the local wisdom, the official event included traditional ceremonies from the Marapu belief. The local ceremony was led by community and religious leaders and are part of the local customs and traditions to ask for blessing and safeguarding of civil and construction projects.

Community buy-in is vital for an innovative project like this to be successful and sustainable in the long term. MENTARI has worked hard to ensure that the community from the project have a sense that they own it – developing skills of local leaders, and including the whole community – in terms of both project design and making sure the benefits of the project are shared with all. For example, the Programme believes that capacity building is as important as providing the power infrastructure for the community. While preparing the installation, MENTARI has so far delivered 14 training sessions focusing on gender and inclusion (G&I), solar PV, and productive uses of energy (PUE).

In October 2021, the team delivered a Training of Trainers for “Gender Action Learning System” (GALS). The training aimed to equip local facilitators to implement a community-led empowerment methodology using specific participatory processes to allow women and men, youth and marginalised groups to take part in co-designing the project through entrepreneurship and productive use of energy to ensure ownership and sustainability.



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MENTARI is supporting adoption of new skills for the community, especially women and girls, including partnering with local training providers to train local young people in carpentry and electrical engineering. This will bring benefits far beyond this individual project.

With clean and reliable electricity, the villager's quality of life will improve significantly as well as increase women, youth and marginalised groups' participation in the local economy. To safeguard the long-term operation of the installation, MENTARI is engaging closely with the community, local vocational schools and the provincial government to ensure local youth operators are trained in the operation and maintenance of the system while also closely liaising with the electrical utility (PLN) to prepare for smooth transition in the future.

As well as benefits for these communities, through this project the UK and Indonesian governments will work together to develop workable business models to electrify remote off-grid areas using blended finance – a mixture of public and private finance - to expand inclusive energy access and drive economic growth locally and nationally. Once a community has electricity, it is much easier for them to participate fully in the economy and create more economic growth.

Bapak Sahid Junaidi, Secretary of Directorate General of New and Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources said: *“MEMR is pleased to partner with British Embassy Jakarta to bring clean electricity for people in Mata Redi and Mata Woga via the MENTARI Programme. We hope the Programme can run well and benefit the community not only in term of clean electricity access but also their quality of life.”*

Drs. Paulus S. K. Limu, Central Sumba Regent said: *“I welcome MENTARI Programme to operate in Mata Redi and Mata Woga. Today we mark the official ground-breaking of the installation and I am looking forward to the completion of solar panel installation. I am pleased that MENTARI Programme will be beneficial for people in Mata Redi and Mata Woga.”*

Rob Fenn, Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy Jakarta said: *“Rob Fenn, Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy Jakarta said, “We are delighted by our partnership with Mata Redi and Mata Woga villages which will provide clean, affordable and reliable power. Together, we are showing how off-grid power can serve the needs of remote communities, help grow local and regional economies, improve education and health, and reduce poverty and inequality. This pilot project validates the Indonesian Government’s exciting plans to ramp-up access to renewable energy across the archipelago.”*

Notes to Editors

- Funded by the UK Government, MENTARI is a partnership between the British Embassy Jakarta and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources of the Republic of Indonesia and the four-year programme will help deliver the policies, capacity and investment



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needed to realise a low carbon energy transition that benefits the economy, people and the environment.

- MENTARI draws on local and international expertise to broker investment, facilitating finance for promising renewable energy projects, particularly in eastern Indonesia to help increase energy access for economic development.
- MENTARI is providing expertise to improve policies and regulations that can help drive more renewable energy investment, including drawing on the UK's own experience of low carbon development, and its creation of a stable, favourable policy environment that has incentivised the development of the world's largest offshore wind capacity.
- MENTARI is developing a new solar PV project on the island of Sumba, that will pioneer new approaches to community-led renewable energy development. As with all of Mentari's work, Gender and Social Inclusion principles are at the heart of this; renewable energy can empower and provide economic opportunities for women and disadvantaged groups.
- Low carbon energy can deliver affordable and reliable energy access for all. The cost of renewables continues to fall rapidly and Indonesia can take advantage of this global trend. Indonesia is blessed with some of the most abundant solar and other renewable energy resources in the world.

For further information, please contact:

- Head of British Embassy Jakarta Media and Communications Team - John Nickell – john.nickell@fcdo.gov.uk +62 8121091372 or
- Deputy Head of British Embassy Jakarta Media and Communications Team - Faye Belnis – faye.belnis@fcdo.gov.uk +62 8118777 762
- MENTARI Team Leader - Julio Retana - julio.retana@thepalladiumgroup.com +62 82110049187

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Pictures



Picture 2: Central Sumba Government with British Embassy Jakarta, Don Bosco Training Centre, MENTARI delivery partners after ground breaking event on 19 April 2022



Picture 3: David Lutman from British Embassy Jakarta with Drs. Paulus S. K. Limu, Central Sumba Regent, in the MENTARI Demonstration Pilot Project ground breaking event on 19 April 2022