

## **Field Visit among People with Disabilities within the Indonesian Areas Affected Cyclone Senyar in Aceh Province, Indonesia (2026/2/3-7)**

Theme: Cyclone Senyar, floods disaster, disability, vulnerability, Indonesia  
Venue: Aceh Province, Indonesia

In response to the ongoing floods in Aceh (2025–present) following Cyclone Senyar, two researchers from the International Research Institute of Disaster Science (IRIDeS), Associate Professor Sébastien Penmellen Boret (Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Lab) and Assistant Professor Hyejeong Park (International Cooperation for Disaster Medicine Lab), conducted preliminary visit in collaboration with Dr. Alfi Rahman (Universitas Syiah Kuala) and Mr. Ahmad (Kafalah Indonesia).

During the visit, the team also met with representatives of the local disaster agency (Badan Penanggulangan Bencana Aceh, BPBA) and the leaders of the Indonesian emergency responder team (BASARNAS) to gain in-depth knowledge of emergency response operations and the transition toward early recovery. The visit aimed to assess the social impacts of the floods, particularly among marginalized populations, and to situate the current crisis within the longer disaster history of the region.

The floods resulted in widespread and repeated power outages across the province. Nearly one million households temporarily lost electricity, in some cases for extended periods. Although restoration progressed gradually, recurrent flooding exposed the fragility of infrastructure and highlighted uneven coping capacities among communities. Limited access to fuel further constrained mobility and response efforts.

A central component of the fieldwork consisted of in-depth interviews with persons with disabilities. These interviews documented lived experiences of the floods, including evacuation challenges, shelter accessibility, access to information, and disruptions in care and support systems. Participants were also invited to reflect on previous disasters—particularly the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami—and on how these past experiences shaped their present perceptions of risk, preparedness, and institutional trust.

The findings underscore recurring structural issues: barriers in evacuation support, insufficiently accessible shelter environments, communication breakdowns, and heavy reliance on informal networks. At the same time, interviewees emphasized the crucial role of family members, neighbours, religious communities, and local associations in ensuring safety and dignity during crisis situations. These insights point to persistent gaps in inclusive disaster planning and response frameworks.

The visit reaffirmed a core principle of Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (i-DRR): disasters are produced through the interaction of hazards, exposure, and social vulnerability. The Aceh floods illustrate how pre-existing socio-economic inequalities and patterns of exclusion significantly shape disaster outcomes. They also demonstrate the importance of integrating the voices and experiences of marginalized populations into preparedness, response, and recovery strategies.

This collaborative research contributes to ongoing efforts to strengthen inclusive disaster governance in Indonesia and to deepen long-term academic and institutional partnerships between IRIDeS and local stakeholders in Aceh.

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**Further reading and local analyses:**

– Universitas Syiah Kuala, “Senyar Aceh” Flood Monitoring and Analysis Platform:

<https://senyar-aceh.usk.ac.id/>

– Rahman, A., “Ingatan Tsunami, Ujian Senyar: Bagaimana Memaksimalkan Peran Kampus dalam Situasi Bencana,” The Conversation Indonesia:

<https://theconversation.com/ingatan-tsunami-ujian-senyar-bagaimana-memaksimalkan-peran-kampus-dalam-situasi-bencana-271629>



Flooded house in Pidie Jaya, 2 months after Senyar, North Aceh



Visit at the affected RSUD Pidie Jaya Hospital



Flooded house in Pidie Jaya 2 months after Senyar, North Aceh



Interviews and Distributing relief goods with Kafalah Indonesia at impacted people with disabilities

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