

Dear Sumba Friends

Today we have a little bit of rain shower...it feels so good to hear the sound of rain again after having no rain for a long time, lately we have been fighting the dust because it is too dry. To make matters worse is that it is common practice to burn grass, so we are also dealing with ashes and smoke from the fires, causing many of use to have colds and coughs. Currently we are spraying the ground at least once a week to prevent our trees from dying. Having rain today is a blessing to be able to smell the wet soil again.

Two weeks ago we had an earthquake, this was the biggest one we have had on the island. At the time I was in the market and many people were screaming and running out of the houses. We felt it two times. The center of the earthquake was in Flores. Sumba is close to Flores. later we heard Flores was hit very bad, and they still have been feeling the aftershocks. We still feel some minor aftershocks here. Currently, thousands of people have lost their houses and many have lost their lives in Flores. We pray that God will help them and bless this island. here in Sumba some people have damaged/fallen houses but they are not as bad as in Flores. Even us we have some cracks on the boys dorm however it is not a really big issue. We have heard from BMKG that it is possible to have yet another earthquake. We are praying that God will protect us, as we leave this in His Hands, only He is able to calm the storm. We know that we have to be more alert now, but we can only pray and beg Him for mercy and safety from these uncertain situations.

Each year we are required to do earthquake drills and socialization with all the students as one of our school programs. This activity involves a combination of structural preparedness, emergency planning and active safety drills to minimize the risks with natural disasters. We hope this program will help the children know what they are to do when we have an earthquake.

Once again this month the government asked me to give teacher training for 37 schools. I help train on making school programs, such as analysing school tests and literacy. This is a challenge for me because many of the teachers and principles are older than I am and each have their own teaching and school management style. During the discussion time key principles which each teacher/principal should have are clear communication, transparency, appropriate discipline and being a good leader all came up. There was also a discussion on the difference of a teacher/principal as being "called" vs "a job" was also discussed. Those who are called have a heart to teach the children. We need a good mindset on how we see and treat the children. When we are "called" we will teach these children as if they are our own. We will love and care for them and do what is best for them. Some of the schools I visited were in poor condition and the teachers/principal lacked motivation for teaching. When I visit and meet with the teachers and principal for this teaching it helps to motivate them and help them see the necessity of being a teacher the way God wants them to be. We need lots of love, patience and strength from Him. We are helping these children to build their future. I hope God blesses these teachers and principle with awareness towards the children.

This long dry season means that hunger season is coming too. we can see it by how often our children will faint in the morning. There was one girl who fainted several times last week, this girl lives with one of her relatives. Her parents left her with two other siblings, after the

teacher talked to her we found out that many times she doesn't have food. Many times she has meal just once a day. We try to talk to the family if she can stay with us in the home, but they don't allow her. I think they don't want to let her stay with us because they need her to do the work in the house. It sad to see this, but I am going to seek another way to get her to our home. for now, I ask the teacher just to give her extra food in the morning or call her to have meal in the home in the morning. So that's the reason why we give snack to the students in our school at 10.00. they usually get a piece of bread and tea, porridge, once a while milk. There are many these kind story among our children. Our job as teacher here are not only to feed them with knowledge but also to feed their bodies.

The children are doing great with their garden, the cattle, the chicken and the fish pound. We are enjoying our vagetables, catfish, eggs and chickens. We still have to buy our vagetables, eggs etc. because what we have now in the garden not enough to supplies our food.

Another good news for this month, our government help us by giving us another class room for the kindergarten. We only have one classroom for our kindergarten. We split the room into two. We are going to build it next week. We try to ask extra classroom for junior high school but so far no response yet. As you know that our junior high school need 6 rooms but we only have 3 class rooms, for now we use our hall as class rooms.

Next month are going to become very exciting month, lots of programs in the school has to be done and also some programs with the government to help the other schools, and next month our teachers from elementary school who are going to do the teacher training. We'll set a date and the teachers from other school will come to our school. by doing this, it means another way to help the students from other schools.

We come to the end of this letter, I want to thank you all for your continuous support and trust to our work here. Thank you for being a friend who help us to carry this load. We can't carry this load especially in this kind situation without your support and prayers. There is a time when I feel heavy burden, worried because of what I see in my hand, despair when I see our load. But as I read Jeremiah 17: 7' Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.' This verse reminds me that when we put our hope in Him, it will brings joy and a peaceful life. it means I have to be fully surrendered before Him.



Teacher's training

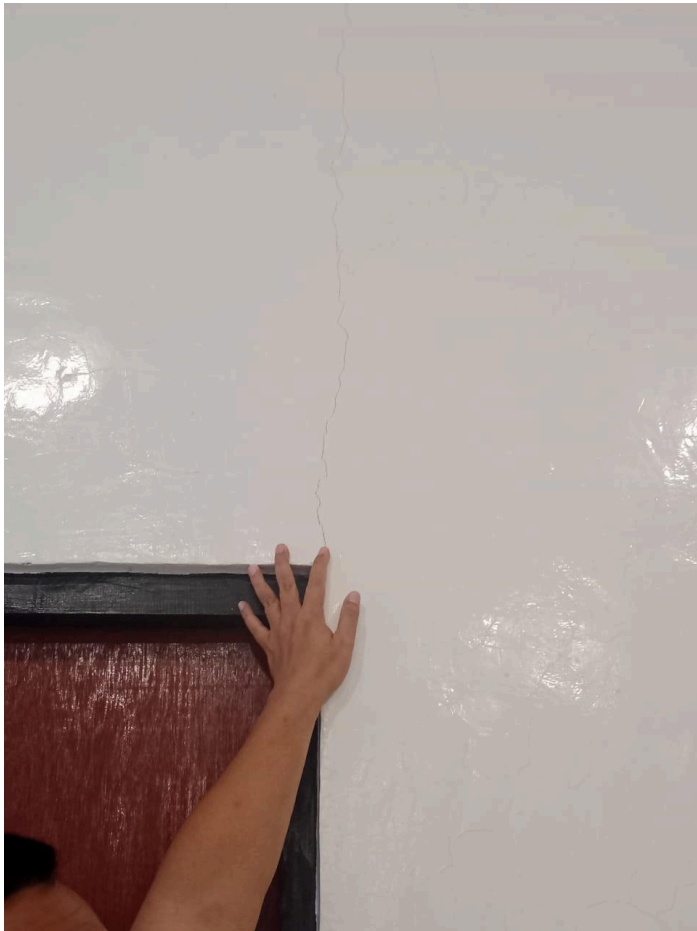


Morning Exercise

Music class



Lunch time



The crack on the wall by the boys dorm

Sunday school in Proyek

