We want to achieve big goal, we cannot do it alone; we will need to have a group." Armin Sahari, Head of KOMUNTO

KOMUNTO (Tomia Fishermen Community) is a community-based organization in the Sub-district of East Tomia (Wakatobi, Indonesia) made up of the representatives of fishermen groups from throughout the island of Tomia. Its vision is to encourage the sovereign management of natural resources that is sustainable and continuous in order to increase the well-being of its members. The establishment of this organization was based on shared concerns and finding solutions on the issues of: territorial takeover by foreign actors without prior discussions with traditional fishermen, the influx of non-local (non-Wakatobi) fishermen who uses destructive fishing methods, and the local government’s lack of clarity in the direction of the management of Wakatobi’s natural resources. KOMUNTO was able to organize previously scattered fishermen groups which have evolved to become the agents of innovation in their respective villages. Members continuously encourage their own communities to further identify issues that they face, such as: decreasing levels of catches, bleached coral reefs, unstable fish prices, lack of business capitals aid funds and lack of interest shown by the local government, and financial difficulties. In response to these issues, KOMUNTO forged a number of partnerships to advance: community capacity building, advocacy of sustainable natural resource management and economic enhancement, improvement of research and information access, preservation and development of ‘local wisdom’, and to increase mutually beneficial cooperation between the partners.

What did we achieve?

Establishing 3 fish banks that serve as the main source of food and income for 3 fishermen groups, comprising 161 fisher families

Involving women/women’s groups in fish trading and processing, generating income and used for training to advance their skills and for setting up small-scale businesses

Advocating traditional fishing areas within Park zonation system, allowing local fishermen to have exclusive fishing rights in specific zones within the Park

Implementing financial management schemes i.e. savings, voluntary savings, compulsory monthly fees, and loans ensures sustainability of the organization. This also enabled 18 groups comprising of 306 fisher families to either set up small-scale businesses or obtain financial assistance

Proactive in environmental and sustainable fisheries campaigns and programs together with partners from government and non-government institutions at local, national and international level (USAID, CIDA, WWF, TNC) and other community groups in Wakatobi and beyond

Ensuring good governance of KOMUNTO to pursue the mission and achieve our vision.