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Pastoral Work in the Moluccas
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Introduction

The church testifying and serving in the context. The church performs *Missio Dei* not in an empty space. That context was the social and political situation, economic, education, culture and religion in which it exists. Therefore it is said, the church is a church that has contextual awareness.² So did minister of the church. They serve in that context. They preached the word of God as well as perform the sacraments in particular contexts. Church and the ministers serve the people who live in the context of each. That's where the church is doing theology contextually.³ That context is not single one but diverse. There is a private context, family context, congregational context, local, national and international context.⁴ Therefore, when the church was the church that has contextual awareness, therefore we can also say that the ministers of the contextual awareness.

The title above i.e. the Pastoral Work in the Moluccas itself indicates that what is meant is the pastoral work of the ministers/pastors in the Moluccas or Maluku Protestant Church in details (the GPM). Then the context of Maluku became the locus of the pastoral work done by the GPM's ministers. In that connection then I would start by exposing the several contextual issues that faced the GPM at the present time. Then proceed with the how should the ministers carry out the duties of the service of the contextual problems.

Several issues the GPM are facing

In order to arrange the Ten Years Strategic Planning for Development and Ministry of GPM (PIP-RIPP 2015-2025),⁵ then department of research and development of the GPM (BALITBANG GPM) conducts research concerning the actual issues that are developing within the church and society which needs to get the attention of the church in his service. Research is done by embracing the opinions and input of the 32 existing presbyteries (clasis) of the GPM about problems that arise there. Also with attention to development issues in the document was issued by the government of the province of Maluku i.e. Working Draft Regional Development (RKPD),⁶ and Medium-Term Regional Development Plan (RJPMD).⁷ In addition note also an ecumenical issues contained in the Five-Years Work Programme of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PROKELITA PGI) by 2015-2020.

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² E.G. Singgih, *Mengantisipasi Masa Depan*, Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2004, p. 56.

³ Daniel J. Adams, *Teologi Lintas Budaya*, (transl), Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1992, p. 84-85.

⁴ B.F. Drewes & Julianus Mojau, *Apa itu Teologi*, Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2003, p. 114-115; cf. Paul Avis, *Ambang Pintu Teologi* (transl.), Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1991, p. 11.

⁵ In bahasa called Pola Induk Pengembangan (PIP) and Rencana Induk Pengembangan Pelayanan (RIPP).

⁶ In bahasa called Rencana Kerja Pembangunan Daerah (RKPD).

⁷ In bahasa called Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Daerah (RPJMD).

Results of the research made clear that for the next five to ten years, there were 13 issues problems that must be faced and dealt with by GPM:

1. Environmental degradation and natural disaster
2. Poverty and economic durability
3. Tackling HIV-AIDS
4. Developing church formal education and theological education to church member
5. Strengthening family spirituality
6. Improving or increasing the capacity of ministers
7. Strengthening ecumenical relationship
8. Dialogue and inter-faith cooperation
9. Strengthening basic education and college
10. The political role of the GPM.
11. The possessive of the church
12. The Development of information, communication and documentation
13. Improving of the financial management GPM effectively and sustainable.

Here I will discuss those issues one by one.⁸

1. Environmental degradation and natural disasters

Environmental degradation and natural disasters, not only is the issue of international and national, but also the problem of the Moluccas. According to Robert P. Borrong, Indonesia experienced a great environmental crisis due to economic growth, forest loss, agriculture, consumption of energy, etc.⁹ It can be noted that the degree of environmental degradation in Maluku and North Maluku has reached a stage which is quite worrying, caused by illegal logging, looting or plundering of ulayat land,¹⁰ mining concession, Rights Concession Forest (HPH),¹¹ exploration and mining exploitation, the development of large-scale monoculture plantations, construction of a new settlement centers annually, and so on. This condition is caused by two things: strategy development of the region which are not “environment friendly”, this refers to the government’s policy and views as well as the behavior of the community who see the environment solely as an economic resource which must be drained out.

The impact of this environmental degradation is the occurrence of natural disasters in the form of flooding and landslides. In the city of Ambon and Seram island natural disaster has happened two times in a row in 2012 and 2013. Floods and landslides on both these events are among the largest in history, has swallowed the victim lives and their possessions. Not just a natural disaster. Due to customary land, looting or plundering of ulayat land mounting tensions between the community and the company. This tension developed into physical conflict that culminated in the courts.

⁸ Quoted from the Draft of PIP-RIPP GPM 2015-2025.

⁹ See Robert P. Borrong, *Environmental Ethics and Ecological Theology: Ethics as Integral Part of Ecosystem from an Indonesian Perspective*, Amsterdam: Academisch Proefschrift, 2005, p. 1-6. According to Borrong, deforestation in Indonesia is largely the result of a corrupt political and economic system that regards natural resources, especially forests, as a source of revenue to be exploited for political ends and personal gain. Now Indonesia is facing the problem of illegal logging.

¹⁰ Ulayat is right of a group in society to have a peace of land together.

¹¹ HPH is Hak Pengusahaan Hutan.

2. Poverty and economic durability

Despite the poverty index of Maluku province and North Maluku are experiencing improvements from year to year based on the data of the National Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), percentage poverty in the Moluccas are still classified as high i.e. amounting to 19,13 % with the largest distribution in rural areas. This figure put Maluku province's fourth poorest in Indonesia after the province of Papua, Western Papua and East Nusa Tenggara. While in North Maluku by 7,30 %.

As for the poverty index according to the BPS is obtained from the sum of the food poverty line (minimum needs synchronised with 2100 calorie/capita/day) plus the non food poverty line (minimum requirements for housing, clothing, health and education). Areas where there is a poor community in the area of services of GPM are found such as Southwest Maluku, Aru Islands, South East Maluku, and most part of Central Maluku. This to be challenges for the GPM.

3. Tackling HIV-AIDS

HIV-AIDS has become a social phenomenon was worrying over the last few years. Many Christian families are infected, there is the husband of the wife, there's only, or after, and children. According to the research that has been done most victims turn out to come from the younger generation aged between 25-35 years old. There are two main cause factor i.e. free sex (free sex) and drugs (narcotics). The data shows a great concern. Ambon city has been noted as city with higher infected population. The church must have concern to this phenomenon.

4. Developing church formal education and theological education to church member

The development of formal education of church and theological education to church member based on the results of the study Balitbang GPM, shows that strengthening the church's formal education (in this case Sunday school and Catechism) is one of the main issues that must be managed by the of GPM. Dynamics and motion changes the community which took place rapidly plus strengthening the development of information technology, has been producing a range of new issues, both theology and non-theological issue, demands adjustments to the formal educational materials of the church. In addition to the material, the development of learning methods are also being aspects that must be taken into consideration.

In line with that, the educated members of the church are also important. The importance of theological education of the members of the church among other things caused by globalization has created a community without borders. Church members are easily to make ethical-theological justification independently based on information which can be obtained freely without filtering the information. In other words, the community grew in the situation of multi-contextual in which various issues require assessment and response theologically. In this regard the role of the Faculty of Theology becomes more and more important.

5. Strengthening family spirituality

Family spirituality is one of the big issues that are spread out evenly across the various classis. The widespread of new growth centres of society, accompanied by rapid social change, as well as the development of the dynamics of communication and information

technologies have an impact on the Christian lifestyle. There are three major influential lifestyle against behavior of Christian families namely the materialism, hedonism and consumerism. Dealing with these bad impact then spirituality “**keugaharian**”¹² PGI defined in Assemblies that the year 2015 become the spiritual movement must occur at churches in Indonesia. Spirituality keugaharian give stress on the pattern of simple living, inclusive and attempts to build the common goodness. This spirituality must be built on Christian families. In addition, it was found that the act of violence, infidelity, divorce, marriage, towards teens and youth to drugs and free sex happens anyway on Christian families. This indicates that the Church must give special attention and serious efforts on strengthening the family through the spirituality of marriage as well as develop pre grazing patterns youth are better suited to the problem at hand.

6. Improving and increasing capacity of the minister

Observing the problems at the various presbyteries in GPM as well as fundamental changes in program management services in GPM implicates directly the needs of the increased capacity of the minister of the GPM in levels. Some aspects of the development of the minister to note is: first, strengthening the capacity of the minister to respond to the theological issues that arise as a result of modernization, globalization and the swift information and communication flows that affect the behavior of the community. Second, strengthening the capacity of minister in the pastoral areas, namely by developing the pastoral care models that are effective in addressing a change in behavior that occurs in society. Third, strengthening the capacity of minister related to spirituality. It was felt that "sense of calling the" begin to weaken. Fidelity to the duties and responsibilities begin to diminish.

7. Strengthening ecumenical relationship

In many clasis of GPM, relationship between denominations widened the issue quite seriously. As a result of efforts to re-evangelization in the denomination of the church, which is known by the term "stealing sheep", then the tension of one another that leads to legal and physical problems. The Charter of Mutual Recognition and Acceptance (PSMSM) and The Outline of the Mission and Common Calling (PTPB) from PGI has not been implemented well among churches at local level. This situation is exacerbated by the growing range of new sects of Christianity as Christian Zionism, Anglo Israelism, Spiritual Baptist as well as various forms of Charismatic movement. This state indicates that the need to strengthen the understanding of GPM confession of faith and its ecclesiology among church member and develop insights into the oikumene through conversation and ecumenical dialogue.

8. Dialogue and interfaith cooperation

Maluku have experienced conflict which impacted largely relationship between Moslem and Christian there. In this regard, dialogue and interfaith cooperation become important. Segregation based on religion not only happens geographically but also mentally. In the segregation areas the narratives “lost and win” (kalah-menang) related to past conflicts flourish and transferred or demoted to a new generation in the Moluccas. The trauma of conflict have not healed entirely. Meanwhile, radicalism grew into a phenomenon that worries the nation Indonesia and demonstrate its impact for our religions in Maluku. It

¹² What is meant by keugaharian is the life style in which people are motivated to feel enough to their possessive, practising simple living while avoiding themselves of being consumerism. See DKG of CCI 2014-2019.

therefore needs to be intensively seeking GPM dialogue cross-faith (interfaith dialogue), looking for a model of living together in harmony as well as establishing cooperation in addressing shared problems like social injustice, environmental degradation and so on.

9. Strengthening basic and higher education

Strengthening basic education and higher education in general quality/quality of education in the Moluccas is still low and therefore need to get serious attention by either the government or the church. Good infrastructures is concerned, the quality of teachers as well as the governance/management education in various places has not met the minimum standards set out by the government. GPM organize primary and secondary education and also of the college. But the obstacles faced were the lack of a supporting facility next to the shorthanded teachers especially in remote areas. Whereas the organization of higher education, namely the constraints facing the UKIM because the main source of funding is from the students when the number of students do not always grow every year. Therefore the GPM as owner UKIM needs to give serious attention.

10. The political role of the GPM

As the church that have large number in Maluku, the political role of the GPM must be considered. The participation of church members in practical politics also increases with the expansion-blossoming into a new district or sub-district. Because it needs to play the role GPM at politics through: firstly, develop a partnership was critical for the organizers of the state as well as other political offender. Corruption, collusion and nepotism which increasing from time to time in Indonesia became the reason for GPM to continuously expressed its prophetic voice in pushing government a clean, fair and supportive of human values. Secondly, GPM compelled to do pastoral politics by way of preparing and accompanying its cadres of his serving in the field of politics and government. To run the controlling function as part of the "civil society", critically need to give GPM contribution in formulation of any constitution (Undang-Undang) and Draft of Local Order (RANPERDA),¹³ through its cadres both the executive and the legislative level. Third, the GPM takes part actively in developing political education of the people especially regarding the rights and responsibilities of the political community in order to create of a balance and social order, as well as fulfil the principles of justice and righteousness in among government at all levels.

11. The possessive of the Church.

Question about church possessive or property especially land emerged in many clasis. The church are in need to make data and managing all its property continuously. It was found that there are still many assets the unclear status of the GPM ownership. Because it happens the transfer church property without going through the ecclesiastical procedures. Therefore, in future beside processing data the GPM have to deal with legal status of all church property in order to avoid wrong utilization of the properties. In this regard, sertification process of lands of the church should become main project.

12. The development of information, communication and documentation

The development of information, communication and documentation of the effect of information and communication technology are massive in several decades must be seen as an important means for the church to develop the task in proclaiming the gospel. This

¹³ RANPERDA: Rancangan Peraturan Daerah.

medium can help spread the message of the gospel and the church's teachings of the church, as well as through the utilization of media, the church can integrate the gospel message into a new culture produced by modern communication models. The importance of the utilization of information technology is not in spite of the fact that the younger generation church currently has been growing into a digital generation with a variety of information technology. Therefore they need to be accompanied in the pastoral in order to use the media properly. GPM should not miss on this need to form a media centre as a medium for empowerment and development of GPM.

13. Improving of financial management GPM effectively and sustainable

The church has improved institutional governance sustainable and effectively at the synodical period 2010-2015. This period is characterized among other things by the changed management services thoroughly on all levels. The implementation of the strategic plan (Resntra) at the level of the congregation, Five Annual Program (Prolita) at the clasilcal level have changed the cycle of church assembly from synod to congregation as to became from congregation to synod have implication on regulatory changes and improvement of an effective institutional management at all levels. The necessity of development of governance is well in line with the institutional change and the governance and institutional management that are developing at the moment. This condition gives the opportunity for the church to support partnerships that are beneficial to the development of institutional governance in GPM. In addition to effective governance, it needs also the management in transparency, accountable, professional as well as the monitoring and evaluation should be done regularly.

Pastoral work to the issues

Abraham van de Beek suggests that "traditionally the minstry in the church covered the six elements: (1) Guarding the community in the tradition of the Christian faith the us formulated in the Creeds and founded in the Bible; (2) Conducting in the liturgy; (3) Being a living example of Christian life; (4) Caring for people who are in need; (5) the Leadership of the organization of the church; (6) Representation of the holy and thus saving and securing the congregation and its members from evil powers and influences.¹⁴

When we look at the issues on top of some of the issues that's closely related to what is being said van de Beek.¹⁵

Specifically for GPM, then his ministers at various levels should seriously deal with these issues in the programes of work that are concrete. In the Master Plan Services GPM (RIPP) the 13th issue has been elaborated and implemented into other forms of concrete ministerial programs. Not enough time for us to expose them all here. That ministerial programes should become guidance for every ministers or pastors in their performance.

That only can be said is that these issues will be a big job in the ministerial works for the coming ten years so that the GPM service GPM will be answering the problems in its context contextually.

¹⁴ See A.van de Beek, Background Paper MTB Houten Conference at 21,22 and 23 October 2015, p.1.

¹⁵ See issue one to four and element four in comparisson; issue five to six and element one and three in comparisson; see also element five and issue threeteen in comparisson.

Conclusion

Being a church that contextual meaning must always do research on problems encountered as both within the church and society and then putting them together in a framework of ministerial/pastoral planning. The GPM ministers have to deal with these problems in proper way seriously. The church not only takes care of the matter of ritualistic, by conducting liturgy, praying and preaching, but should convey its prophetic voice to the problems that arise, as well as designing the concrete programs to deal with it. In that regard, an efforts to reinforce theology of the ministers become important here. The sense of calling must always become a matter of meditation. That for these problems he or she has been called by God. For the tasks of the church in Maluku including the ministers for the coming years are heavy and demanding a serious approach.

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