

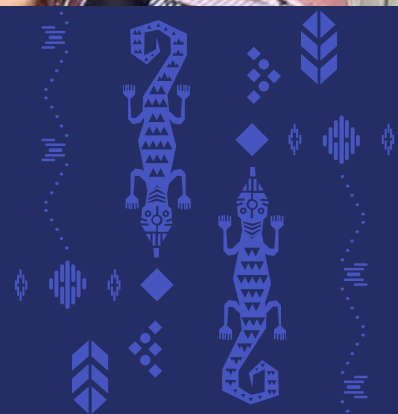


Field and
Farmer
Stories

Pigs

The hard fall

The road to recovery for smallholder
pig farmers in NTT



PRISMA is partnering with pig feed and breed companies to improve farmers' access to better quality inputs and increase incomes. African Swine Fever spread through pig populations in NTT in 2019 and outbreaks continue to impact animals and farmers. PRISMA is supporting public and private sector partners to encourage the uptake of biosecurity measures on smallholder farms and prevent further losses.



Kementerian PPN/
Bappenas



Australian Government



Mikhaela Immaculata stands outside her door, looking at the small patch of maize she is growing in her front garden. Two large lontar palms stand on either side of her small piece of land.

Resting against the palms are long bamboo poles fashioned into ladders. "My husband climbs the palms to harvest the lontar fruit to make make," explains Mikhaela. "That's how we survive day-to-day right now. Kasianus sells the make on the roadside by the litre so we can eat."

Mikhaela is a pig farmer in Wakuliwu village in Sikka district on the island of Flores, NTT. Pigs are big business in Flores. Pigs are used in all ceremonies and are an integral part of the culture. In 2015, PRISMA started helping pig farmers like Mikhaela increase their income by working with feed and breed companies to improve farmers' access to better quality inputs.

As a result of this work, pig farmers like Mikhaela could access high-quality piglets, a better feed regime, and knowledge of better husbandry practices. The fattening time for pigs was reduced from 18 to 4 months. With the help of an initial loan in 2017 from a farming cooperative working with the feed company, Malindo, Mikhaela purchased

good-quality piglets. The loan included embedded services of concentrate feed, information, and support services, including that of a vet. With this loan package, over 4 years, Mikhaela was able to increase her pig numbers from 2 to 25. Rather than pig breeding being a side income for the family, Mikhaela's pig farming was the primary income.





Mikhaela and Kasianus could afford to purchase additional land, planning to expand their farm to include cattle. However, in early 2020 NTT was hit by 2 significant shocks. The first was ASF, a highly contagious virus that swept through NTT, virtually wiping out the pig population. The second was COVID-19, which resulted in supply chain disruptions and saw restrictions in social movement. These restrictions meant many farming groups and cooperatives disbanded, including the one Mikhaela was part of.



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"I couldn't believe it," says Mikhaela. "We were thinking about the future one minute, and the next minute our dreams crumbled before our eyes." Everyone in Wakuliwu village was affected by ASF.

Despite setting up a quarantine perimeter and implementing strict health protocols, none of Mikhaela's pigs survived. "The vet said flies could carry the virus, and flies do not respect health protocols," says Mikhaela wryly.

"We used antimalaria mosquito nets over our pens to stop the flies, but it was not enough." Gradually all of Mikhaela's pigs succumbed to the disease. "I cried and screamed as I sterilised the house and pens," says Mikhaela softly.

"There was nothing else I could do." Since ASF hit, Mikhaela and Kasianus have struggled to make ends meet. "During the lontar season, we get income from selling moke on the roadside," says Mikhaela. "We have also sold the land we bought from the profits of my pigs," she explains.

Because everyone's pigs died and capital is short, the buyer pays off the land in instalments. The land sale enables Mikhaela to continue to support her son's university fees, and the family can eat. "Without the savings from the pigs, we would be living a tough life," admits Mikhaela.

With only 10 percent of the pig population left in Sikka, it may be some time before Mikhaela will take another loan to restart her pig business. While ASF infection numbers are reducing, the outbreak remains active, and community confidence is low.

"I want to continue with the good quality piglets and concentrate feed, but I need to ensure that my piglets will not die first," says Mikhaela. While all the members of Mikhaela's pig rearing group, Wawi Dadi (Pigs Forever), recognise that using

good breed and concentrate feed is best, most farmers still need to be ready to move beyond traditional methods. "No one has spare cash at the moment," explains Mikhaela. "And many have now accumulated debt."

Mikhaela was recently given a local piglet from one of her family members a month ago to raise, and so far, so good. Mikhaela has been rigorous with safety protocols, and there have been no signs of ASF in the new pig. "I will try for one more month using locally foraged food. If this pig survives, I will consider returning to concentrate feed," says Mikhaela.

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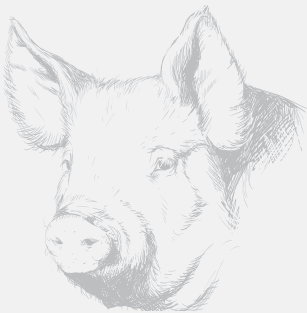
It is too early to say how long it will be before the pig sector in Sikka recovers. The good news is that institutional changes made by the breed and feed companies remain in place. Families like Mikhaela's have weathered the storm better than others because of investments made from savings. However, the length of the outbreak overlayed by COVID-19 does mean that farmers have a long way to go before reaching pre-ASF dreams.



Pig sector summary

Sector	: Pig
Location	: NTT
Strategic aim	: Women and men pig farmers benefit from restocking their farms with high-quality piglets, using quality inputs, and improved animal husbandry practices.

In late 2019, ASF hit NTT and decimated the pig population. The loss of pig stocks caused a significant decline in feed and pharmaceutical demand – 2 of PRISMA’s main functional areas. PRISMA has refocused the pig strategy towards sector recovery by building and strengthening the breed and animal health management systems by partnering with the private and public sectors. This semester, the ASF cases in NTT declined, and the farmers and breeding farms are starting to restock; hence the demand for piglets, feed, and pharma products is increasing.



Constraints

Pig farmers in NTT have limited access to quality breeds and information on good husbandry practices, including farm and breeding management. Pig health products are not readily available. If farmers do not adopt good animal health practices, the risk of ASF outbreaks will continue. Trade transactions for pigs and pork products are restricted due to government regulations, restricting options to re-stock. The need for pig stock is the primary constraint for farmers and the private sector.

Vision

PRISMA will support the NTT government's plan to enable recovery in the pig sector. PRISMA has set itself a target of a 10 percent sector recovery. The focus will be on detection, response, prevention, and recovery from ASF by improving restocking, awareness, and information about animal husbandry practices. Sector resilience will focus on breed improvement by building the capacity of key market actors and by strengthening the regulatory environment.

Impact

Up to Dec 2022.

 **126,665**
households have benefited

 **714 billion**
in income increases

 **11.46**
investment leverage

About PRISMA

PRISMA is a partnership between the Government of Indonesia and the Government of Australia to increase the productivity and income of smallholder farmers. Increased productivity contributes to food security and builds farmer resilience to market and agricultural shocks, including climate change.

PRISMA is supported by the Governments of Australia and Indonesia and implemented by Palladium, with Technical Assistance from Swisscontact, Zurich.

Find out more:

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