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WHO HAS GOT WHAT?, WHY? AND HOW?:
The Political Economy of Reintegration Policy in Aceh

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INFORMASI ARTIKEL	*Abstrack*

This article focuses on the power relations between former GAM (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka) elite and non elite in the post conflict reintegration policy in Aceh. A number of scholars have linked the post conflict reintegration to the GAM ex-commanders conflicts over predatory processes of resource appropriation. However, what is missing in their account is that the attentions to the rank and file ex-fighters, including female ex-combatants. The finding of the study suggests that the post conflict reintegration has provided opportunities for the former GAM commanders to build and consolidate their political and economic power. Since the former GAM commanders occupied the reconstruction space, they have captured the peace building processes through their predatory behaviour and patrimonial networks. In this context, the ex-commanders GAM elite has become a new dominant post conflict group while the non-elite group of the rank and file ex-combatants, particularly women ex-combatants, lost opportunities to enhance their welfare. As local elites are powerful, they have the capacity to select who are excluded from and included in their alliances. In these circumstances, the welfare outcomes from post conflict reintegration will be framed in terms of 'who has got what?', 'why?',and 'how?'.

A. INTRODUCTION

This article examines the power relations between elite and non-elite ex-combatants that underpin the post conflict reintegration policy in Aceh. Subsequently, the paper also explains the implications of these power relations for the inclusion and exclusion of male and female rank and file ex-combatants, from the GAM (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* or Free Aceh Movement) in relation to their welfare outcomes.

During transition periods from conflict to peace, reintegration policy is internationally recognised to be a crucial part of the reconstruction process. The prevalent approach to reintegration in the post-cold war era has three main elements: disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) (Barron, 2007). DDR seeks to "deal with the post conflict security problem that arises when ex-combatant is left without livelihood or support networks, other than their former comrades, during the vital transition period from conflict to peace development" (Barron 2007).

The reintegration policy started after the 2005 Helsinki agreement concluded 30 years of conflict between the Indonesian Government and the Free Aceh Movement or GAM (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*). Following the peace agreement, one of the reconstruction tasks for both parties has been to bring ex-combatants back into the broader community. In the Aceh situation, a former combatant is defined as "any person who was a member of the military wing of GAM, known as TNA (*Tentara Negara Aceh* i.e. had a commander in TNA or was in the military structure), for at least one

month between 1998 and 2005" (Tajima, 2010). It is hard to gain the exact number of these ex-combatants but, based on the Helsinki MOU, the number who were the target of the reintegration program was 3,000 (Baron 2007).

In regards to the cease fire process, the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) was established to manage the demobilisation of ex-combatants. To bring ex-combatants back home, the Government of Aceh established the Aceh Reintegration Board whose main task was to facilitate the return of ex-combatants into their community. As reintegration was derived from the basic assumption that former fighters were coping with economic difficulties, giving individual economic assistance was the primary focus to facilitate their return (Baron 2007). Arguably, however, after several years of implementation, the reintegration policy has failed to reach the poorest ex-fighters, especially women ex-combatants. Giving ex-combatants economic assistance is useful for short term economic relief but in the long run it cannot guarantee the sustainability of their livelihoods.

In terms of post conflict reconstruction in Aceh, the situation indicates that it is the GAM ex-commanders who benefit most. They have successfully used their patrimonial networks to increase their power and gain access to political decision making, economic and natural resources and business opportunities in the private and public sectors for private accumulation. In contrast, rank and file ex-fighters have had to deal with economic hardship and unemployment. This social and political phenomenon in Aceh, and especially the relationship between elite and non-elite ex-combatants needs to be investigated since this is a key aspect of the political dynamic of post conflict reconstruction. Reintegration policy now operates to include some rank and file ex-combatants but some others are excluded in this competition. In recent research into the political economy of peace in Aceh, Edward Aspinall (2009) has studied how GAM elites use predatory practices, rent seeking and even extortion as a means of gain and controlling political and economic power and resources for their private benefit. Elites have been successfully utilizing patrimonial networks among former-rebels to co-opt the peace process in Aceh

(Aspinall, 2009). However, he pays less attention to the rank and file ex-fighters, including women ex-combatants, as well as to the dynamic relationship among them. This dynamic power relationship between elite and non-elites links to the welfare aspects of ex-combatants is important in understanding the current picture of reintegration policy in Aceh.

In explaining this phenomenon, this article is divided into four sections. This first part examines the theoretical debates on the post conflict reconstruction approaches. The second explains the methodology used. The third explores the discussions on the Aceh context. Finally, the last section discusses the conclusion.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the context of international intervention to countries emerging from war or conflict, there are some terminologies used either by international donor's institutions or authors interested in post conflict to conceptualize effort to harness conflict and development of peace process. Borrowing Johan Galtung work on peace (Call & Wyeth, 2008) Secretary General Boutros Butros Ghali's *agenda for peace* in 1992 associated peacebuilding with post conflict society. He described peacebuilding as "action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict". Beyond narrowly defined as security context, that comprises disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR), Jenkins (2013) argues that peacebuilding involves development and human right including 'transitional justice, democratic decentralization and women empowerment'. For Jenkins (2013, p. 2) peacebuilding has shifted beyond technical matters like physical, administrative or economic infrastructure to comprise partly political in involving "the main actors in conflict and address its root cause particularly those steaming from developmental deficits and or the basic structure of the political settlement".

Like peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction is defined broadly either by both the World Bank and the UN. The World Bank conceptualise reconstruction in two overall

objectives: "to facilitate the transition to sustainable peace after hostilities have ceased and to support economic and social development (The World Bank, 1998, p.4, in Barakat & Wardell, 2005). The UN described reconstruction as:

> ...disarming the previously warring parties and the restoration of order, the custody and possible destruction of weapons, repatriating refugees, advisory and training support for security personnel, monitoring of elections, advancing efforts to protect human rights, reforming or strengthening governmental institutions and promoting formal and informal processes of political participation (Boutros-Ghali, 1995:11, in Barakat, 2005, p. 10)

Hamre & Sullivan (2002) also suggest that post conflict reconstruction includes "providing and enhancing not only social and economic well-being and governance and the rule of law but also other elements of justice and reconciliation and very centrally, security".

The current literature on post conflict reconstruction or peacebuilding broadly focuses on a critical evaluation of liberal peacebuilding. Accordingly, it variously brings in and highlights the importance of local actors and culture, global governance, political economy and gender aspects as main themes of peacebuilding discourse. The approaches to post conflict reconstruction can be summarized as shown in the table below:

Approaches on post conflict reconstruction literature

Characteristics	Approaches				
	Liberal peace	Localist	Global governance	Political economy	Gender
Perspectives on reconstruction	Reconstruction is created by nurturing democratization and marketization	Reconstruction process is legitimate if local actors, culture and agencies are involved	Reconstruction process is shaped by global stability and security concerns	Reconstruction has created contestation among interest groups	Reconstruction has an element of gender and it can conceal inequality and conflict
Power-relations	International actors through their agencies or experts influence the process of reconstruction	Local actors have more capacities to promote reconstruction agendas based on their local knowledge and understanding about peace	International actors direct reconstruction based on global stability and security concerns	Elites power and vested interest groups dominate reconstruction process	Reconstruction can be understood in terms of power relations and inequality between men and women
Mode of reconstruction	Institutional and capacity building design for reconstruction	Local or indigenous type of reconstruction arrangement or 'hybrid' form of peace including local-international actors	Multi-level of governance networks organizations design involving governments, international agencies and NGOs	Social competition among interest groups	Post conflict through deconstructing gender inequality between men and women

This diagram was classified by the author

a.   The liberal peace concepts

Studies of post conflict society comprise various approaches dealing with the prevailing, ambitious liberal peace framework for tackling conflict and post-conflict reconstruction. The liberal peace framework so-called because it adheres normatively to key elements of liberalism which focus on "individuals and their choices". These foci raise issues of justice, representation, democracy and equity. Economic liberalism, also about individuals and choice, focuses on the market" (Robison & Hewison, 2005). Accordingly, liberal peace promotes democracy as a means of enhancing freedom and human rights as well as accelerating a market-based economy through competition.

In the book *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict*, Rolan Paris (2004) described the history of 'liberal thesis' that comes from statements from the US President Woodrow Wilson. "Wilson viewed the American model of market democracy as the apogee of political development and believed that the spread of this model would promote peace in both domestic and international affairs". According to Paris (2004, p. 41) after both World War I and the post-cold war era, "the international community faced a security threat to which is responded with a Wilsonian remedy". Democratization and marketization are said to nurture peace in post war countries (Paris, 2004, 41). Likewise, "Wilsonian liberal peacebuilding is the classical model of liberalism based upon the promotion of procedural democracy and market economics as a means of building peace and stability within and between states" (Newman, 2009, p.49).

Authors such Berdal (2017), Hameiri (2010) and Newman (2009) categorize the liberal peace approach as a technical or problem solving approach. Efforts at state-building in post conflict societies consist of assisting state institutions in relation to capacity building, service delivery, coordination as well as implementation of reform. Liberal state-building is technocratic in that it tends to focus on 'inputs' such as time, financial aid, and troops and police on the ground and on the promotion of particular institutional templates rather than actual processes of state-building, the dynamics between external and local actors and their impact on the political economy of societies

(Berdal 2017). Hameiri (2010, p.13) indicates that neo liberal institutionalism, as a main framework in state-building, pays much attention to improving the functioning of state institutions in association with market development. Newman (2009, p.38) agrees that "scholarship on peace operations has generally, until recently, been of a problem-solving nature- preoccupied with coordination, effectiveness and sequencing- and it has often been observed that this scholarship has been under-theorized".

In the context of this research, understanding how this liberal approach has been underpinning the process of post conflict reconstruction and how this has impacted on the broader social political dynamic between elite and non-elite ex-combatants is a crucial matter for investigation.

b.   Critical perspectives

Recent debates in post conflict reconstruction have also involved discussions on the local actors and culture, global governance, political economy as well as gender. In this particular discussion I divide the current debates in the critical perspective literature into four main approaches, namely localist, global governance, political economy and gender.

1).   The local approach

The common characteristic of the local approach to peacebuilding is its emphasis on the importance of considering local actors, culture, agencies, and traditions in peacebuilding or reconstruction processes. Authors such Oliver Richmond, Edward Newman, Khristofer Liden, and David Roberts are those who have critiqued the liberal peacebuilding and intervention in post conflict reconstruction in these terms. This approach pays attention to local legitimacy and consensus building "(Richmond, 2006. Roberts, 2011) and local culture, custom and norms (Richmond, 2009, Newman, 2009). The other essential notion from thelocal approach is the promotion of a 'hybrid' form of peacebuilding that combines international actors, the state and the local or domestic community (Richmond, 2009, Lidén, 2009, Roberts, 2011).

The local approach also criticizes the liberal or neoliberal peacebuilding project for tending to ignore welfare aspects of peacebuilding. This

approach proposes that a greater focus on welfare would bridge local resilience to conflict resolution (Richmond, 2009, 165-166). Welfare strategy is imperative for international and state actors in dealing with peacebuilding. It needs to be realized by supporting local identity and by creating networks and communication with the local community before establishing what types of welfare are appropriate for the local, in a collaborative manner, involving respect and trust (Richmond, 2009, p. 158).

Nevertheless, there are at least three weaknesses in the local approach in explaining the dynamic local peacebuilding:

a). Local power and local agencies are in fact fragmented and contested. This factor is not sufficiently understood and explained. The local approach fails to provide clear explanations in regard to how this dynamic arrangement is contested among groups and how this mode of conflict resolution has an impact on different classes and ethnic groups.

b). This approach fails to incorporate the dynamic construction of a welfare framework in terms of the contestation of local interests. The local framework ended up explaining the importance of the injection of welfare strategy only in terms of building legitimacy and consensus with local actors. Despite welfare being pivotal to the local peacebuilding or reconstruction, the term welfare is itself contested locally.

c). Since the local approach is lacking explanation about power especially power relations, it cannot explain gender and its roles in peacebuilding.

2). *The global governance approach*

Another block of scholars assesses the liberal peacebuilding as efforts constructed and backed up by international powerful states that favour global stability and security concerns. Mark Duffield and Michael Pugh are very critical in evaluating the role of global capitalist states in pursuing humanitarian assistances in post conflict society through optimizing networks of multilevel governance actors rather than merely the nation state.

For Duffield (2014) the liberal peace has shifted its approach from 'hierarchical', territorial and bureaucratic relation of government to non-territorial decision making networks that brings together governments, international agencies, non-governmental organization in new and complex ways. (Duffield, 2007; Ignatieff, 2003) Imperial *Lite* (2003) to state that new interventionism comprises "a new form of ostensibly humanitarian empire in which western power led by the United States band together to rebuild state order and reconstruct war-torn societies for the sake of global stability and security". In this framework international interventionists work with diverse and sophisticated international donor governments, UN agencies, militaries and NGOs by promising 'self-rule' or 'self-management' and dealing with elites in order to succeed its objectives (Duffield, 2007, p.8).

Pugh is a critical theorist who is concerned to examine the liberal peace support operations in war torn societies. He drew his argument from the work of Robert Cox and Mark Duffield on the global governance framework of peacebuilding intervention. By borrowing from Duffield, Pugh states that "the metropolitan capitalist centres attempt to govern peripheries by projecting authority through sanctions regimes to control war lord criminality and through assistance often provided by NGO networks" (2004, p. 41). For Pugh, international peacekeeping operations are highly supported by powerful states that are concerned to merge development and security, to control riots and to allocate power and responsibilities among elites (Pugh, 2004, 2005).

However, this approach does not elaborate on the domestic or local political economy that dominates the constellation of conflicts of interests in post conflict reconstruction. The global governance approach also poorly explains the gender aspect in global market and security concern.

3). *The political economy approach*

The other block of researchers has been very interested in studying the constellation of politics in post conflict societies. They have voiced their concerns that the liberal peace or neo liberal interventions in the peacebuilding process have promoted market friendly policies rather than supported welfare and protection measures in local

domestic policies, allowed elites and vested interests to capture economic resources, and tended to foster social and political tensions among different interest group. Authors such as Caroline Hughes (2009), Michael Pugh (2005), Mats Berdal and Dominick Zaum (2013), and Shahar Hameiri (2010), are classified as those who are concerned with political economy and power contestations between external and internal actors.

Scholars of the political economy of peacebuilding discuss largely how external interventions have impacts on elite formation, the state and their relationship with society (Hughes, 2009, Berdal and Zaum, 2013, Hameiri, 2010). The political economy approach explores how the domestic political constellation dominates the reconstruction of post conflict society. Power in fact is contested and fragmented among actors. Elite's power is more likely shaped and nurtured to a large extent by their own struggle rather than as influenced by international actors. They organize the power by themselves using their patrimonial networks and build alliances that they think are crucial for their own interests. Local elites also select to align with groups based on class and social status in relation to their interests. Post conflict reconstruction has given a space for local elites to nurture their power in order to structure the process of reconstruction. Local elites perceive post conflict reconstruction as an arena for them to produce, distribute and control their power. In this circumstance, they have capacity to select groups of who are included and excluded in the arena of social competition. Nevertheless, the political economy approach does not much pay attention to gender, but it is possible to include this under this approach when understood in terms of power relations.

4). Gender

Writings on gender aspects are often separated from the mainstream discussion of international security scholarship: "feminist theorists have rarely achieved the serious engagement with other international relation scholars for which they have frequently called" (Sjoberg, 2009; Tickner, 1997) Nevertheless, some current literature on peacebuilding indeed discusses gender and women in post conflict society. Yet, very little of the literature on peacebuilding explores women ex-combatants' voice and experience, especially in terms of their position within society. This aspect is crucial to understand women ex-fighters' differences and experiences as well as their struggles during the conflict and post conflict situation.

For example, by using a case study method in Sierra Leone, scholars such as MacKenzie (2009) discussed women-combatants' role in post conflict society who had been undermined by the social structure embedded in patriarchal system. McKenzie's (2009) findings confirmed that the return of women ex-combatants to peace was considered as 'normal' and unproblematic since they come back to their traditional or domestic roles. Understanding the why and how questions regarding women ex-combatants' struggle to uphold their destiny including the social political structure impacted their life would be lively significant to uncover the situation of oppression of women ex-combatant in Aceh.

C. METHODOLOGY

The arguments made in this article draw on the empirical findings from semi-structured interviews conducted with 72 individuals in Aceh province over seven months, between October 2014 and February 2015 and April and June 2016. The interviewees fall into four groups. First, 11 members of the elite ex-commanders group, ranging from the highest ranked, through middle-ranked to lowest, *Sagoe* (village level), commanders. Second, the GAM civilian leadership, represented by two formerly exiled leaders and six former civilian negotiators who were involved in the peace process. Both groups-the ex-commanders and the civilian leaders were identified as belonging to the GAM leadership holding authority in the government of Aceh, through the parliament, bureaucracy and/or local political parties. Third, the interviewees included 43 former rank and file GAM soldiers: 21 male and 22 female. Fourth, the remaining interviews were with public officials and NGO personnel who had been involved in the reintegration of GAM ex-soldiers. They comprised of ten participants from public offices who were involved in the reintegration program, but were not

members of GAM, and some NGO and the women activists who also participated in the reintegration policy.

D. DISCUSSIONS
a. *Reintegration policy*

Aceh's peacebuilding was implemented under the 2005 Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MOU Helsinki). It was a peace agreement aiming at concluding the 30 years armed conflict. It was signed by the Indonesian government and the GAM on 15 August 2005, having been subject to international mediation led by Martti Ahtisaari, a former Finish President. MOU Helsinki (2005) aimed at facilitating the peace process by providing socio-economic assistance in the form of reintegration funds, suitable farming land, employment and social security. The MOU even stated that the former GAM soldiers had a right to seek employment in the Indonesian security forces, the TNI and the police. The agreement mandated the establishment of an authority to administer the reintegration scheme (the BRA), and also a Joint Claims Settlement Commission (JCSC) to resolve unmet claims (MOU Helsinki 2005). It was stated in the MOU that the government of Indonesia makes all of these provisions, including allocating the reintegration funds (MOU Helsinki 2005).

Initially, before the establishment of the BRA, the scheme was delivered by the Indonesian government, the Aceh provincial government and international agencies (the World Bank and the International Organization for Migration).

As agreed by both parties, the Indonesian government and the GAM, in October 2005 the first tranche of the reintegration fund from the government of Indonesia (1 million rupiahs per ex-soldier per month for six months) was distributed to GAM regional ex-commanders (Schulze, 2007). At this stage, no list of the names of 3,000 GAM ex-soldiers who would receive the fund was provided by the KPA to the local government. The money, in fact, was disbursed by the ex-commanders widely to a larger number of the GAM people that, in addition to ex-soldiers, included GAM civilian supporters (*pemuda gampong*), widows and orphans (ICG 2006a, 10). Since the regional ex-commanders claimed that they had more than 3,000 soldiers, in practice every

ex-soldier only received between Rp. 175.000 and Rp. 200.000 (Schulze 2007, 17; ICG 2006a, 10). In late October 2005, another Rp. 1 million for every ex-soldier was released by the Aceh Governor (as a representative of the Indonesian government) to the local *Bupati* (head of district) as the second reintegration package. The money was again delivered to the GAM ex-commanders, but this time by the *Bupati* (head of district) in 15 locations across Aceh province. The third reintegration fund in January 2006 was also sent to the local GAM ex-commanders for distribution.

In February 2006, some four months after funds were initially disbursed, the BRA was set up to administer the continuing disbursement of the socio-economic assistance elements of the reintegration package, including housing for conflict victims, land and job training. The BRA was not a provincial government department (*dinas*) but an ad-hoc body with specific authorities and tasks that was responsible to the Governor of Aceh. It operated in every district across Aceh Province for almost seven years from 2006 to 2012 ' (Avonius, 2011). After the BRA closed its operations in January 2012, its functions were reorganised by the Governor of Aceh into a new body, BP2A (*Badan Penguatan Perdamaian Aceh* or the Aceh Peace Board) (*Serambi Indonesia* 2013).

Within the total budget transfer from the central government of 2.03 trillion rupiahs, and the additional provincial budget of 37.8 billion rupiahs (Avonius, 2013, 8), in 2006 the BRA set up a sum of 25 million rupiahs for each ex-soldier (Schulze 2007, Braithwaite, et al., 2010). According to the BRA's former Deputy of Finance, Dr. Islahuddin, this amount was targeted to the list of 3,000 soldiers. In contrast to the approach used for the previous reintegration fund disbursement, the method of delivery was to be 'by name, by address'.

Islahuddin then explained that the money was delivered successfully to individual ex-soldiers, though he was also aware that the GAM ex-commanders again took control of distributing the money to a larger number of former GAM soldiers, again exceeding the 3,000-strong list provided by the GAM ex-commanders.

Yarmen, a former member of the BRA staff, maintained that 'the sum of 25 million was a package

given to ex-soldiers which involved 15 million for starting businesses and 10 million to buy land. So instead of the government giving them land, we gave them money in order for them to buy land themselves in their villages'. Yarmen further said that Zakaria Saman (former GAM exiled leader and GAM Defence Minister during the conflict), who was acting as the interim GAM leader in the AMM, was aware of this arrangement and spoke about it publicly during a symbolic ceremony in Banda Aceh in 2006.

Besides assisting the former GAM soldiers, the BRA also delivered funds to another 6,500 former ex-militias, called the anti-separatist front or PETA (*Pembela Tanah Air*), that were formed by the TNI during the counter-insurgency period in Aceh. In this case, each ex-militia received 10 million rupiahs. The assistance also targeted around 33,000 conflict victims in the form of housing, microcredit and financial compensation.

b.   Who has got what, why and how?

Based on a decision made by the *Majelis*, in December 2005 the KPA (*Komite Peralihan Aceh*, Aceh Transition Commision) was established and headed by MuzakirManaf, the last former GAM supreme military commander (*Panglima* GAM). The structure of this new institution exactly mirrored the hierarchical structure of the GAM military organisation in the conflict period. Based on this military command structure, the KPA has the same hierarchical pattern; where the *Panglima Pusat,* Muzakir Manaf, is responsible for overseeing the 17 *Panglima Wilayah* (regional commanders), and every *Panglima Wilayah* controls four or five districts; while, in turn, each *Panglima Daerah* (district commanders) control six to seven *Panglima Sagoe* (village commanders). The two top levels of *Panglima Pusat* and *Wilayah* (province and district) were filled by high ranking GAM military men, and the rest were occupied by lower ranked ex-soldiers. Women soldiers who were organised under the *Pasukan Inong Balee* was also part of the KPA organisational structure. In this structure, no women ex-soldiers hold retained military status as *Panglima*, rather they are categorised as women soldiers. The hierarchical chain of command structure that was in place in the KPA allowed the

re-formalization of former GAM military titles and ranks. This was done by placing the elite male field commanders at the top rank as *Panglima*, while the mass –the rank and file – were at the bottom as ex-troops.

When first established, the KPA was declared by Muzakir Manaf to be a civilian organisation tasked with assisting the reintegration scheme (ICG 2006b, 2). Yet in the post-conflict situation, the KPA operates as a key body that has been able to preserve the military ideology and retained military status of former GAM 'combatants'. The KPA is the place where their collectivity as comrades with combat experience can be maintained. Although the war is over, the rank and title position of GAM soldiers, either as *Panglima Wilayah, Daerah or Sagoe,* still attach to ex-soldiers in the KPA. Social mobilisation in this hierarchy is possible; as the previous lower rank and file ex-soldiers can be promoted to a higher rank as *Panglima Sagoe* in their villages. In short, whilst the GAM as a rebel organisation group had been disbanded with the demobilisation mandated by the MOU Helsinki, its military ideology, as well as its militarised status, remains intact.

Nowadays the KPA also functions as an organisation for the GAM ex-commanders to consolidate, control, and mobilise their former troops for political or economic purposes in the new civilian context. The post-conflict economic resources that flowed after peacebuilding in the form of reintegration funds, tsunami reconstruction projects, special autonomy budget, and other sources of funding such as revenue sharing and local government revenues, have been the main economic bases that provided a significant glue to re-tighten the social bonding among the GAM elite ex-commanders and rank and file ex-soldiers. Through the KPA, former GAM ex-soldiers can gain access to contracting businesses, jobs and social networks with the local government officials and parliaments. Finally, it is through the KPA itself that the GAM elite commanders have played out and invested in their social status as elite ex-commanders, which has been important in maintaining their access to power and resources in the post-conflict situation.

Through the KPA, some ex-commanders have become new local bosses with huge economic assets, and have gained political offices such as vice

governor, members of local parliaments and heads of local districts. Ex-commanders have the power to access local government projects and thus become rich with plenty of assets including land, restaurants and other businesses.

Muzakir Manaf, the head of the KPA and former GAM supreme commander, owned the PT Pulau Gadeng business group and won a large contract for tsunami reconstruction including building houses for tsunami victims, ex-combatants and conflict victims, and rebuilding of the *Cunda* Bridge in Lhoksemawe '(Aditjondro, 2007). PT Pulau Gadeng was also undertaking the upgrading of the Malahayati Port, including supplying 150 tonnes of cranes at the port '(Aditjondro, 2007).

Although the official technical process of reintegration of the GAM ex-soldiers was delivered through institutional offices led by the BRA, the post-conflict reintegration of GAM ex-soldiers was in fact managed under the KPA's hierarchical and military-style command structure. Accordingly, the formal aspects of the reintegration policy in fact operated under a militaristic ideology and institution led by the GAM ex-commanders. As such, an ideology that values a strong hierarchical command structure and compliance to the leadership command underpinned how the reintegration worked. According to one source, the chief GAM ex-military commanders strongly influenced how the reintegration operated. As a consequence, reintegration funds were distributed unevenly to the GAM ex-soldiers and in turn, this created dissatisfaction and resentment among male and female ex-soldiers.

Under the peace process, former GAM soldiers were supposed to lose their military status and become civilians through the reintegration program. Yet the post-conflict reintegration program in fact facilitated the re-constitution of their militarised status as 'combatants'. Thus, reintegration has not simply been a means of accessing and controlling resources by the KPA, it has been a mechanism for status re-consolidation in relation to who are 'the insiders' and 'the outsiders' of the former GAM male soldiers' group. Through the reconstitution of male combatant status, the KPA has been able to strengthen its organising power and capacity to make larger political and economic gains.

From the outset, the reintegration process did not set any criteria to define who the eligible GAM combatants were; nor did the ex-commanders in charge of disbursing the funds set clear criteria for qualification as a combatant. As reintegration delivery relied on the GAM command structure, it was the ex-commanders themselves who established a de-facto grading system to determine who deserved the reintegration benefits more than others. The grading system was used to disburse reintegration funds to a larger number of former GAM soldiers than the 3,000 initially planned.

The ex-commanders I interviewed were not able to explain why they established the grading system. Although it was created, the money that was disbursed by the GAM ex-commanders varied across Aceh regions and depended on the regional ex-commanders' discretion to decide a block of money to be disbursed to their troops. In Passe, North Aceh, for instance, the funds were distributed to more than 4,000 GAM soldiers, including GAM supporters – civilians who help the GAM troops by serving mainly as intelligence and logistic suppliers. In this case, each received no more that Rp. 350,000 (US$35). In South Aceh, the number of former GAM soldiers exceeded 2,500 and, as a consequence, each received Rp. 300,000; some other former GAM soldiers in nearby areas received Rp. 50,000, and many received nothing (ICG 2006a).

Based on the grading system, the first group received the highest retained military status of 'true GAM ex-combatants' (the loyalists). These were the GAM fighters who spent most of their time in the jungle, had experienced military training, and fought on the battlefield until the MOU was signed in August 2005. In my interviews, none of the ex-commanders mentioned the exact number of this group. Yet they all admitted this group of soldiers had benefited more from the reintegration package and had greater access to contracting business. These were the ex-soldiers who successfully joined the inner circle group of their commanders – other sources called them 'the KPA *Meodong*' (see ICG 2006b, Anderson 2013). Ex-commanders within the Muzakir Manaf group generally had access to political offices and economic resources. They might have dual and even triple roles, as for example a local political party leader, a businessman and also a

bureaucrat. Accordingly, the troops who were loyal to them and work with them could have more than one status or role linked to these functions and positions; they could be part of the KPA structure as *Panglima Daerah* or *Panglima Sagoe*, a member of Aceh Party, and also worked as contractors and businessmen. Having been able to manage to hide in the mountains, protecting the commanders till the peace agreement came out, this group has been rewarded with more access to contract business through the KPA clientelistic networks.

The second group was the former GAM male soldiers who joined military training for at least 3-6 months, fought in the battle, but then fled to a safer place during the Indonesian counter insurgency era between 2003-2004 or when their ammunition ran short. This group is often known by the ex-commanders and rank and file ex-soldiers as 'the escapees'. Others refer to them as 'KPA Hijrah' (see ICG 2006b, Anderson 2013). There is no clear number of these available, but according to my interview sources, they included the GAM male soldiers who joined military training but never showed up in the mountains, as well as those who were captured during military operations, those who escaped from the camps, and those who put down their guns and joined the GAM civilian movement; mostly in The Aceh Referendum Information Centre (SIRA). This group, despite their 'escapee' status, remained loyal to their commanders, and managed to return to the jungle after the tsunami. Some ex-soldiers who were categorised in this stratum gained fewer reintegration funds than their comrades who is close to the ex-commanders (the first group of ex-soldiers above), and some even received nothing. Yet they were still recognised as 'GAM combatants', as long as they showed loyalty to their former supreme commander (Muzakir Manaf) and joined the KPA. As a result, after the conflict some received access small businesses; but mostly in the village areas, and some were provided with chances to be involved in larger government-awarded contracts. Others felt obliged to look for charity or petty funds by knocking on official government doors (in particular, seeking their GAM leaders). There are different dynamics within this group of ex-soldiers. Some show loyalty to their ex-commanders. Despite

being relatively neglected in not having the same access to business opportunities as the aforementioned privileged group, they still join the KPA group. Some retain positions as *Panglima Sagoe* (village commanders) in their villages. However, there is also some resentment towards those in the first group – the ex-commanders and the 'true GAM combatant' loyalists closest to the ex-commanders – due to perceptions by those in the second group that they did not benefit equally or fairly from reintegration and the subsequent elite business opportunities.

The remainder of the GAM ex-soldiers comprise those excluded from the above two groups. They are not part of the KPA. Instead, these ex-soldiers have established alternative organisations after the MOU Helsinki. There are two separate ex-soldiers groups which fall into the category of 'the excluded'. The first group calls themselves *Tim Relawan Aceh* (the Aceh Voluntary Team). The other excluded ex-soldiers are the former GAM soldiers who had deserted or surrendered during the conflict to the Indonesian Army and had joined TNI affiliated group, called *Forum Komunikasi Anak Bangsa* (FORKAB) or Communication Forum for the Nation's Children (ICG 2009). This is the lowest-ranking level of the GAM ex-soldiers. They feel entirely excluded from the reintegration packages and the opportunities associated with the ex-commanders' businesses. Although they are not a part of the KPA, they consider themselves to be GAM ex-soldiers.

c. Where are the GAM women ex-soldiers?

In the case of women ex-soldiers under the military wing of the GAM movement, the *Pasukan Inong Balee*, those interviewed felt that they have been discriminated against and excluded from the peacebuilding and reintegration scheme. Amid the male ex-soldiers' euphoria with business, wealth and political power, none of the women appears to be involved in the elite's businesses, political positions and bureaucracy.

During the disbursement of the reintegration funds, there were no GAM women ex-soldiers' names on the list provided by the GAM ex-commanders (Schulze 2007, 17, see also – Jauhola, 2010; Lee-Koo, 2012; Meghdadi, 2009). The 3,000

demobilised GAM ex-soldiers mentioned on the list were all men. When asked why the women were not listed, two reasons were provided. One former GAM regional commander, said that 'male rank and file ex-soldiers were the priority on the list of the reintegration beneficiaries as they bear the burden of feeding their families. The women do not. Most of the women were already married and it was the responsibility of their husband to feed them and take care of their livelihoods'.

Most female ex-soldiers interviewed for the study did not know what the reintegration funds were for exactly or how they had been delivered. Some did receive money but the amount varied from village to village. Some said they received money from their ex-commanders but did not clearly understand where the money had come from.

Two former BRA staffers, Yarmen and Dr. Islahuddin Daud, maintained that since the GAM provided a list of 3,000 of ex-soldiers which comprised entirely men, female ex-soldiers were left out of the program, but the BRA tried to accommodate the women ex-soldiers' economic needs in other ways. As the GAM women ex-soldiers were considered by the BRA to be the victims of conflict, women ex-soldiers would not receive assistance from the reintegration program. At the time that the reintegration package was being managed primarily by the BRA, many local NGOs and women activists criticized the BRA for not having gender sensitivity in the reintegration program. The BRA then attempted to include women ex-soldiers in different programs, such as the conflict victim scheme. However, none of the women ex-soldiers I interviewed received any share of funds from the conflict victim scheme. What they understand is that the scheme was targeted at ordinary people whose properties were burnt or damaged during the war.

d. Male GAM ex-soldiers' grievances

As a result of the grading system applied to the male rank and file, and the unfair distribution of reintegration funds, the GAM ex-soldiers have a range of grievances. Some expressed this in the form of disillusionment, and some through violence. Some ex-soldiers I interviewed, in particular those classified by their ex-commanders (using the grading system) as GAM escapees, were very disappointed with how their ex-commanders treated them during reintegration fund disbursement. Some said they only received enough of the reintegration funds to pay for a cigarette (*uang rokok*); or received nothing at all. One male rank and file ex-soldier from the district of Biruen expressed extreme disillusionment about the ex-commanders during his interview. He said 'the commanders are living in mansion house while their troops live in hardship even staying in "cow cages" (*kandang lembu*)'.

Another GAM escapee and a former GAM soldier in *Tengkup Sagoe*, Aceh Besar, expressed his grievances over what he had experienced in the post-conflict era. He was an operational commander in *Tengkup Sagoe*, Aceh Besar, but was captured in 2002 and jailed for more than two months during a military operation in there. However, he received nothing from the reintegration fund.

Other ex-soldiers' grievances have been expressed in various kinds of violence and crimes. These are committed in particular by male rank and file whose military status was ignored by their ex-commanders, as well as the deserters and those who surrendered; the excluded ex-soldiers. The violence carried out by this group of ex-soldiers has taken the form of kidnappings, intimidations, killings and robberies (Jones, 2008). In 2007, for instance, there was a range of violent acts committed by Badruddin and his armed men, a group of ex-soldiers in North Aceh, Sawang (Anderson, 2013). The Badruddin group did not gain any share from the reintegration and reconstruction benefits. They were excluded from the reintegration scheme as they were not considered to be 'GAM combatants' by their ex-commanders. Badruddin and his men were accused by the KPA in North Aceh of not being 'real GAM combatants' as they had surrendered to the Indonesian army before the Helsinki agreement (Anderson 2013). The kidnapping of a World Bank consultant, Adrian Morel, and the extortions of staff from the NGO CARDI (or Consortium for Assistance and Recovery toward Development in Indonesia) in 2008 were linked to the Badruddin group (Anderson 2013).

In an interview, a member of the Aceh parliament from East Aceh (Aceh Timur) region in

the GAM mainstream political party (PA, *Partai Aceh* or Aceh Party), stated that most GAM ex-soldiers living in East Aceh were dissatisfied with the amount of reintegration money they received. As a result, many have fallen into crime, including robbery and kidnapping. He maintained that the kidnapping of British expert Malcolm Primrose in 2013 in East Aceh was due to the ex-soldiers' resentment over the unresolved reintegration problems. Although he did not mention the name of the ex-soldier(s) who committed this crime, in the local media it was reported to be Nurdin Bin Ismail (also known as Din Minimi or Abu Minimi) and his armed group (*Sumatera Post* 2014a). It was also stated that the group committed the kidnapping as a result of their discontentment over their welfare outcomes post-conflict, along with the fact that they wanted to put pressure on their GAM leaders (*Serambi Indonesia* 2014a).

The GAM ex-commanders did not acknowledge that Din Minimi was a GAM ex-combatant, as the latter was not on the list of KPA members in East Aceh. Yet voices from the ground troops maintained that Din Minimi was a GAM combatant, and that he had participated in operational battles in the district of Pidie. For example, he was reportedly involved in a GAM attack on an Indonesian police post, along with other GAM troops, in that district. More recently, Din Minimi and his armed group were charged with the kidnapping and the killing of two Indonesian soldiers (from the TNI group) and have become wanted persons (*Serambi Indonesia* 2015c).

Din Minimi and his armed men have maintained that they did not feel that the peace reintegration had had a positive impact on their welfare outcomes (Nur Djuli 2014; *Serambi Indonesia* 2014b). Both the Abu Minimi and Badruddin men have accused the KPA of failing to fulfill the Helsinki mandate to help the economic livelihoods of the GAM former foot soldiers. These groups had limited or no opportunities to access material resources via the elite ex-commanders' businesses. Hence, they have continued the old illegal fundraising activities that the GAM insurgency undertook during the war to support themselves (Aspinall 2009; Anderson 2013). The Badruddin group have also raised funds

through extortion and kidnapping (Anderson 2013); while the Din Minimi group have generated their income through robbery and marijuana cultivation (*Sumatera Post* 2014b).

Here, I argue that it is not merely economic concerns that have led to this gun-related violence and crime. Importantly, these acts are related to the ex-soldiers' perceptions that their masculine identity as militarised ex-combatants were being challenged or ignored by their ex-commanders. Having been graded by the ex-commanders at a low retained soldier' status meant not only that they received little access to political and economic resources; it also represented a devaluation of their status as men (and family breadwinners). This was even worse for the male ex-soldiers who were totally excluded (such as the ex-soldiers who were captured during the war and then surrendered to the Indonesian military).

In the eyes of some male ex-soldiers interviewed, their status as GAM ex-combatants not only generated pride in being recognised as a former GAM fighter, it also entailed dimensions of masculine ideology; specifically, men's breadwinner status. Being ex-combatants continues to carry the prestige of being men with honour (high retained military status and material gains). Being GAM ex-combatants means being able to access public money through maintaining clientelistic businesses, and opportunities to have a job and to secure funds for one's family.

In Aceh's post-conflict stage, a particular form of masculinity is associated with men and guns. The military ideology that was accepted during the war justified the use of violence; even killing the enemy (Maringira, 2015). The soldiers were trained and raised to be combatants and GAM killing machines (Anderson, 2013). Therefore, for GAM ex-soldiers, violence is now their reference as well as their expression. Violence is both their reality and their performance as militarised ex-combatants. The kidnappings and killings committed by some of the GAM male ex-combatants in the post-conflict setting mirror this normalisation of violence. When their masculinity as an armed soldier is threatened by rival groups of men, then violence is seen to be a way out of their problems.

E. CLOSING

Conclusion

This article has explained the peacebuilding process, in particular, the reintegration of the GAM ex-soldiers. It has been shown that the reintegration policy has failed insofar as it has led to remilitarisation of a different kind, through the reconstitution of both the GAM military ideology and hierarchical command structure. Through the establishment of the KPA, the ex-commanders have been able to appropriate political and economic resources, both for their own personal wealth and to benefit their groups more broadly, particularly their loyal ex-combatants. Nevertheless, because economic resources in the KPA were unequally distributed among the ex-commanders and the male and female rank and file soldiers, conflict and resentment have been created, especially among the excluded male rank and file ex-soldiers. This was heightened by the grading system set up by the ex-commanders in the KPA, through which some male rank and file ex-soldiers' status as 'combatants' went unrecognised, most notably in the case of those who escaped from the battlefield or who surrendered to the Indonesian soldiers. As the grading system was followed by unfair economic distributions to these ex-soldiers, it eroded their economic circumstances, particularly their male breadwinner status as the heads of their household. As a result of this, some excluded GAM ex-soldiers have expressed their grievances through displays of anger and disappointment, while some others have gone further to articulate their grievances through violence involving guns.

Recommendation

Based on the extensive research and fieldworks in Aceh, there are two important recommendations to enhance the post-conflict reintegration policy in Aceh. The first is related to the knowledge contribution and the second is linked to the practical implication for the future of the reintegration policy:

1. Knowledge contribution

This research has contributed to the development and debate on peacebuilding and reintegration policy literature, particularly on the political economy and gender aspect of the reintegration policy. In terms of political economy aspect, existing studies on reintegration policy in Aceh have been lacking to explore how the ex-commanders power has been established since the demilitarisation process through the establishment of the KPA and how the KPA has been used to appropriate political and economic resources. KPA has become a home-base for ex-commanders and loyalist ex-combatants to nurture their power by excluding the non-loyalist male and female ex-combatants. In relations to gender aspect, there has been very limited research to study how reintegration policy has implicated to the female ex-combatants, especially with regard to the welfare aspect of women ex-combatants. Gender aspect is pivotal in exploring why and how economic distribution is important for the wellbeing of the female ex-combatants after the peacebuilding process in Aceh.

2. Practical implication

In terms of the practical contributions, there are several policy recommendations particularly for the central and Aceh Province government to improve the future of the reintegration policy. First, the government should re-establish the Aceh Reintegration Board that previously assigned to distribute funds both to male and female ex-combatants. Since the funding for this reintegration process has been cut by the central government due to the lack of fund, there is no assistant from the central government to manage this policy. With limited budget and poor administration, the reintegration has been managed by the Aceh Provincial Government. Second, in order for fair and just reintegration policy, both central and Aceh provincial government have to focus on how the fund should be distributed equally or both male and female ex-combatants by setting up the clear standard operational procedures including criteria of who deserve to receive the reintegration fund from the government. Finally, since both central and provincial government has been experiencing limited resources, for sustainable future reintegration policy, governments can invite some international non-governmental organisations that were previously existed such the World Bank, USAID or AUSAID to involve and strengthen the reintegration policy.

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