Pondok Perasi is one of many traditional fishing villages located on an idyllic beachfront north of the Ampenan port. In recent years the traditional fishing industry has been economically sidelined by rampant and uncontrolled exploitation of the Lombok Straits by foreign trawler fleets. Despite this the communities are growing, with a resultant increase in demands for housing, basic services and above all the need for employment.

Recognising the dire economic situation in all the fishing villages, the City of Mataram has formed a partnership with GTZ’s Urban Quality team. This partnership explores various options for sustainable development of the traditional fishing villages in Ampenan, and strengthen local decision-making structures of its urban management.

The participatory approach was adopted, bringing together a cross-section of community members for intensive sessions. The Urban Quality team believes that the participation of stakeholders in each phase of the project’s development will assist in building trust and confidence between the affected community and the local government authority and will encourage community participation during future phases of the project.

The processes provide valuable learning experiences for young public servants through sensitising them to the aspirations of a poor community as well as demonstrating the principle of equality where all members of the community have equal access to opportunities to better their socioeconomic situations.

How can you improve your neighborhood?
Effectiveness of Community Action Planning: A Yearly Assessment

So, after one year, was it all worth it? How does one judge success? Community mobilization is a long-term effort, but even on the short-term, there is an expectation of visible, tangible outcomes. There need to be positive outcomes that are recognized by all to maintain momentum and enthusiasm, and to validate the process.

A workshop format has shown to be an effective approach which brings structure, transparency and communication to a community. It was arranged in a series of stages. Each stage had a defined task and a specific output. The tasks were straightforward and focused on basic issues.

1. Setting up!
   Build a simple model of the community for exploring issues.

2. Get Started!
   A formal opening raises energy and interest. Write the whole community and your partners from the city. A new speech by all!

3. Problems & Opportunities?
   Brainstorm all the issues that confront your community. Write the ideas and place them on the model. List all the issues, clarifying why it is an issue, and who does it most affect.

4. Priorities!
   For each of the key issues, decide which must be handled NOW, ‘LATER’, and ‘LATER’. Consider them as ‘needs’.

5. Priorities!
   For each of the key issues, decide which must be handled ‘NOW’, ‘SOON’, and ‘LATER’. Consider them as ‘needs’. What is needed now and cannot wait?

6. Be Strategic!
   Select the key concern that the community can do IT BY THEMSELVES, WITH SOME HELP or CAN NOT DO IT. Consider costs.

7. How do we Start?
   What small, ‘NOW’ concern catalyst project gets things going? Consider we can do/little cost strategy, and decide the project: TASKS, TEAM and NEXT MEETING.

8. Now Celebrate!
   Show everyone the results: invite your city partners and the whole community. Confirm the programme strategies with the community, and applaud the beginning!

URBAN QUALITY WORKSHOPS IN MATARAM, INDONESIA
And the bigger picture.

From the community, the concern is that this does not end with the initiatives identified in the workshop, and from the municipality, the focus is on how to spread and manage the approach throughout the area, and to capitalise on the mutual benefits accorded by this approach.

Sustainability at the Community Level
What can the community do?

- The community and the leaders should continue to explore new initiatives in addressing the needs of their settlement, and not stop after the projects addressed in the initial workshop are addressed.
- They need to take an active role in maintaining continuous contact with the municipality, to assure follow-through of commitments and to remain aware of municipality concerns and programs.
- They need to keep in mind that their inputs are vital, and that they can do many things themselves. Reliance on the government or outsiders should be the last resort.

Sustainability at the Municipality Level
What can the municipality do?

- Continuation of support to communities after the initial assistance. And without question, follow-through of commitments jointly made to maintain credibility in the process.
- Establishment of an organisational structure that includes community representatives as active members. This structure must effectively link concerns at the two levels. It should not be just another input but should be an integral part of the decision-making structure.
- Development of a cadre of staff that works with communities and provides the link between community and municipality. Professional standing, respect, and validation of their efforts is a necessary condition.
- Establishment of a mechanism for incorporating community inputs into decision-making and budgeting as a regular process.
- Initiation of procedures to involve other communities into the program, with the goal of establishing a city-wide network.

A third level at the national scale should consider supporting municipal efforts and dissemination of the process throughout the country!