

ORGANISATION PROFILE



15 Full-time staff members



20% Female Staff members



Located in **Waingapu**, Eastern Sumba Island



Founded in **1996**

Partnered with Amos Australia since **2018**



65+

Coffee farmers supported through the Kopi Humba Project



24

Villagers engaged in agri-business training



6

New agri-businesses created so far

BACKGROUND

Koppesda, formally known as *Koordinasi Pengkajian dan Pengelolaan Sumberdaya Alam* (or Coordination of Assessment and Management of Natural Resources) have a longstanding relationship with the land and community of Sumba.

Originally established in 1996 through the formation of a research team focusing on participatory research and land conservation in nearby National Parks, Koppesda has since expanded their work in the decades since to a wide range of community and land development projects.

Koppesda bring highly technical skills and expert knowledge of environmental issues from their decades of environmental research, and combine it with a truly extensive and holistic relationship with the local Sumba community. This helps produce extremely effective programs that are not only in tune with the true needs of the community but are sustainable and simultaneously help to address broader environmental issues such as climate change.

Amos Australia first partnered with Koppesda in 2018 after hearing of their highly effective work from our other partner organisations. Since then, we have helped support a number of key programs, including a fair-trade coffee farmer co-operative known as Kopi Humba, and an Agri-business program which helps local farmers grow high demand vegetables using innovative and environmentally friendly techniques.

We admire the way Koppesda manage to blend their expertise and passion for the environment, with a love for the gospel and the communities they serve.

ABOUT KOPPEDSA

For over 20 years, Koppesda have been working across the island of Sumba to address a wide range of environmental and agricultural issues. From organic farming and ecotourism development to climate change mitigation, and disaster preparedness training, the impact of Koppesda's work has been felt by dozens of communities across the island and is attracting increasing attention from a range of international partners.

Originally founded in 1996, Koppesda was built on the idea of utilising participatory research practices to improve the environmental and resource management. Today, much of Koppesda's work aims to improve agricultural and environmental conditions for Sumbanese farmers and protect the local national parks in Nusa Tenggara Timur Province.

Much of Amos Australia's recent work with Koppesda has centred around the creation of a sustainable Agri-business program which teaches farmers more effective and sustainable farming methods, as well as the Kopi Humba Project, a coffee cooperative which seeks to provide a stable income for local farmers. Following the outbreak of COVID-19, Koppesda and Amos Australia have been working to disseminate important health and vaccine information to the local Sumba community.

KOPI HUMBA - COFFEE COOPERATIVE

The Kopi Humba Project was launched in 2018 in response to concerns of the poor treatment of local coffee farmers by third party 'middle-men'. These traders were manipulating local coffee markets, purchasing bulk coffee orders from desperate farmers for below market prices before on selling the coffee for greater profits. This became increasingly prominent in Sumba during recent seasons where drought had produced poor harvests and made local farmers particularly vulnerable to exploitation.

Together with support from Amos Australia, Koppesda launched the Kopi Humba project to not only protect local farmers, but generate a sustainable return investment.

Koppesda works with a cooperative of local coffee farmers to make bulk purchases of yearly harvest at or above market value, thereby providing farmers with a stable and fair income. Koppesda then processes this coffee product locally, roasting and packaging the coffee beans, before marketing and selling it to wider markets throughout Sumba and cities beyond.

The Kopi Humba project also provides participating farmers with support and training on improved coffee cultivation practices to increase both the quality and quantity of coffee product.

Any profits generated by the sale of the up-processed Kopi Humba products are split between the farmers and Koppesda. Farmers are encouraged to return this profit into their sustainable farming practices while Koppesda utilises these funds for additional community development initiatives and for coffee purchasing the following season.

“Koppesda is a brilliant example of a small organisation embedded in a community that demonstrates a firm commitment to implementing good development practice.”

- Clinton Bergsma, Executive Officer, Amos Australia.



Image 1: Kopi Humba final packaged product

AGRI-BUSINESS

A majority of families in Sumba are sustenance farmers and grow rice and corn as their primary sources of food for the year. Excess stock is typically sold in order to generate a small income for the local farmers to then purchase other goods and food products. While most food consumed by residents is grown locally in Sumba, often stock will run short, causing some essential food products such as tomatoes, potatoes, garlic, and onions to be imported from neighbouring islands. This causes significant food insecurity, as prices will fluctuate unexpectedly, and many families are forced to sell rice reserved for regular household consumption to keep up with price fluctuations.

This has created significant financial and nutritional uncertainty for local communities, particularly during the rainy season where prices for some products such as chilli often skyrocket to nearly 100,000 RP / kg (approximately \$10 AUD/kg, or 1 days' worth of wages).

To help address this growing issue, Amos Australia supported Koppesda in the establishment an Agri-business program in early 2020 - which aims to not only reduce food insecurity for local communities but increase the income of participating farmers and improve sustainable farming practices in the local area.

In the pilot phase, Koppesda is working together with approximately 22 farmers and 2 pastors from the local church congregation to tend to a single plot of land where these participants will learn important and innovative skills to take back and implement on their own plots of land.



Image 3: Agri-business greenhouse set up



Image 2: An Agri-business workshop



Image 3: Participants working on the agri-business pilot land plot



In the Agri-business program, Koppesda draws on their wealth of agricultural and environmental knowledge to firstly teach participating farmers innovative farming techniques to help maximise the yield of their crops. This includes workshops on effective land management, and the creation of organic pesticides, herbicides, and fertilisers. Koppesda also teach farmers how to cultivate many of the in-demand crops such as chilli and garlic utilising poly-tunnels and mini-greenhouse like structures.

This program therefore enables farmers to diversify their crops beyond rice, working to ensure more secure food supplies for the farmer's families and community. Farmers are able to avoid fluctuating costs associated with imported products, whilst also generating increased income by growing and selling these in demand vegetables locally.

Finally, farmers are able to employ sustainable, and more environmentally friendly farming practices, generating long term benefits for their family and land



SHARED VALUES AND COMPLEXITIES

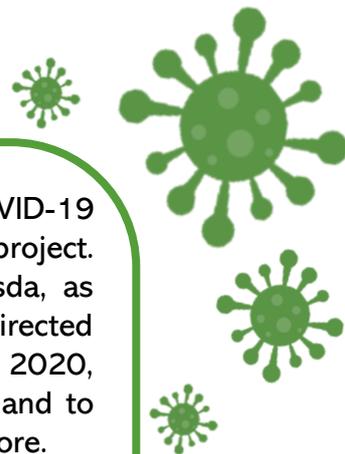
We were introduced to Koppesda through a mutual friend, and when we sat down together for our first coffee, we took turns sharing our concerns about the way in which many international aid partnerships work: that the funding partner often has too much power, decides funding cycles and transfer regimes that often don't work well for the implementing partner or make it difficult to retain good staff. But we also got talking about what we understand to be good poverty alleviation practices, and we were so impressed by Koppesda's commitment to good development practice.

Alleviating poverty is often clear and easy in theory, but the theory is often so difficult to implement that many small organisations ignore it in reality (and understandably so!). Koppesda somehow walk a third way of understanding the theory and letting it shape the way they design their programs and projects while still having an implementation approach that is very contextual and locally flavoured.

IMPACT AND RESPONSE TO COVID-19

As with our other international partners, Koppesda was hit hard by the unfolding COVID-19 situation, resulting in temporary halts to many programs, including the Agri-business project. Unfortunately, these program pauses dealt even further financial blows for Koppesda, as funding from other external organisations such as the UNDP was permanently redirected towards COVID-19 relief, leaving Koppesda with significant funding shortfalls. In late 2020, Amos Australia supported Koppesda with a small grant to ensure financial stability, and to ensure valuable staff could remain at the organisation until programs resumed once more.

During this time, Koppesda were proactive in still making a difference to the local community and launched a local public health promotion campaign early in the pandemic in collaboration with other small NGOs in Waingapu to educate the public on COVID-19. Staff also launched their own agri-business, which provided needed food for staff and another avenue of income for the organisation. In 2021, Amos Australia supported another public health campaign developed by Koppesda, which aimed to counter local vaccine misinformation, encouraged vaccination uptake, and provided the community with up-to-date health information regarding COVID-19 safety protocols.



For more information:

Amos Australia's Website – <https://www.amosaustralia.org/tlm.html>

Koppesda Website - <http://www.koppesda.co.vu/>