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OECD Review of the Indonesia Education Sector

Photo: PIH Kemendikbud

Indonesia is one of five priority countries for co-operation for the **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)** with a view to helping Indonesia becoming an OECD member in the next 15/20 years. The OECD report, *Review of National Policies for Education: Education in Indonesia - Rising to Challenges*, will be published in March 2015, and launched at a special event held on 25 March 2015 in Jakarta in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Bappenas, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education.

The review, supported by ACDP, was undertaken in 2014. ACDP produced a background report - *Overview of the Education Sector in Indonesia 2012* - as a key source of information for the OECD team. The review report has also drawn on a number of other ACDP studies.

Development of the Indonesia Qualifications Framework

Support for the development of the **Indonesia Qualification Framework** in 2014 and 2015 aims to improve the quality, efficiency, relevance and competitiveness of national education and skills formation through the establishment of a qualification framework and associated systems and capacity.

More specifically it is expected to contribute towards,

- i) Improved qualifications which better meet the needs of the labour market,
- ii) Consistent standards for education/training providers and quality assurance,
- iii) Improved access to information for prospective students, employers and other stakeholders,

iv) Flexible pathways through the education and training system for lifelong learning, and

v) International recognition of Indonesian qualifications in the context of increased mobility of labour and competition between country's education and training systems.

National and international experts are providing technical support to the Directorate General for Higher Education, Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education, and are also working with the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration in respect to informal and work-based vocational training.

Study visits to selected countries will facilitate learning from international good practice. The program will specifically contribute towards the development of selected higher education study program qualifications and quality assurance, systems for recognition of prior learning including equivalency and credit transfer between different qualifications, and the establishment of an **Indonesia Qualifications Board**.

Teacher Absenteeism in Indonesia

This research, undertaken in 2014, involved one of the largest studies of teacher absenteeism undertaken anywhere in the world.

Specially trained teams made two unannounced visits to a sample of 880 primary and junior secondary schools across six regions of Indonesia.

By using a similar methodology as in earlier work on teacher absence in Indonesia, the study design also allowed comparative analysis of change in absence rates and the impact of selected policies and programs over time.

The study found one in ten teachers to be absent from

school. These results are encouraging, but are not grounds for complacency as 12%-14% of teachers scheduled to teach were found in school but not in the classroom.

Teachers who were absent from the classroom were most frequently found in school but not necessarily engaged in activities related to academic or administrative duties.

Absence rates varied widely among different types of teachers, regions and schools, and the study identifies characteristics that contribute to higher rates of absenteeism.



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For example, rates were found to be generally higher among male teachers than female teachers, teachers who worked at more than one school, teachers in remote areas, schools with poor physical facilities and schools where the principal was also not present.

High rates of teacher absence were found to adversely affect the operations of schools, other teachers and students.

Two critical issues need to be addressed in policy:

Firstly, addressing the determinants of teacher absenteeism in order to further reduce absences from the school and classroom; and,

Secondly, managing teacher absences in the school when they do occur to minimize impact on the loss of instructional time and student learning.

The study makes a number of policy options at the national, district and school level for reducing as well as improving the management of teacher absenteeism.

Suggestions include reconsidering current national policies on teachers' working hours, strengthening support and supervision of the teaching and learning process, strengthening principal selection and competency development, and providing schools with clear policies and support for managing teacher absence so as to minimize the adverse impact it has on student learning.

Rural and Remote Area Education Strategic Planning for Tanah Papua

This strategic planning study identifies key issues and options for the provision of basic education in the rural and remote areas of the two provinces of Papua and West Papua (together referred to as Tanah Papua).

Over **70 percent** of the population in these provinces reside in rural areas (or villages outside urban areas) and approximately **40 percent** reside in the mountainous highland districts or in remote and isolated islands.

Access to quality education is limited and the high incidence of poverty, poor health, cultural and linguistic diversity and weak infrastructure contribute to making it one of the most challenging environments with one of the lowest Human Development Indices in Indonesia and in the world.

Based on both international and local good practice, the study argues for a major refocusing on the part of local governments to create greater community demand for and increased supply of quality education that meets the specific needs of underserved rural and remote populations.

The proposals include adopting an appropriate and effective model of mother-tongue based multilingual education and reforming the Papuan Teacher Education Colleges.

Other recommendations include reviewing the use of potential of ICT, determining **Minimum Service Standards** for rural and remote schools and developing capacity within local governments to ensure the delivery of quality education services.

The need to ensure that education service provision responds to community demand is at the heart of the strategy.

Effective dialogue with the communities in targeted areas is presented as crucial to responsive service delivery.

The study has informed aspects of the **Papua Government's five year** strategic plans, and also the education section of the **National Medium Term Development Plan 2015-19** which, for the first time, specifically acknowledges the importance of the use of mother tongue in early grades and states that it should be used as the language of instruction where appropriate.

Photo: PIH Kemendikbud



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Improving the Teaching of Islamic Education

ACDP has supported the Ministry of Religious Affairs through a study on Religious Education in schools and madrasahs from the perspective of promoting values of multiculturalism, tolerance and democracy. The study found that Islamic education taught in schools is generally unattractive, is not promoting such values, and in some cases is encouraging radical behavior. The study highlighted the need to improve both the purpose and content of Islamic religious education, and also teaching methodology and teacher competency.

In response to this, ACDP is supporting MoRA's capacity development program to improve the teaching of Islamic education. Forty selected Islamic religious education teachers attended a Training of Trainers program on Teaching Methodology for Islamic Religious Education, at the University of Oxford, United Kingdom, in December 2014. The participants were exposed to a reflective-type of teaching practice, including development of lesson plans enriched by classroom dialogue, dynamic classroom management and the use of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) for teaching purposes. Participants visited schools, a community college, and religious institutions and foundations to gain perspectives on the religious education context and practice in the UK.

The training program is an initial step towards larger scale of capacity building. This includes developing and piloting a teacher training manual, syllabus and training modules. These programs will be rolled out nationally by MoRA, including training of over 200 provincial level trainers, over 1,000 trainers at the district level, and to further train around 145,000 Indonesian Islamic religious education teachers by 2016.

These initiatives support national priorities for improving the quality of religious education, in respect to tolerance, character, values, mutual respect between religions, as part of the mental revolution, as outlined in the education section of the new National Medium Term Development Plan 2015-2019.



Photo: PIH Kemendikbud

Improving Student Assessment

This program of technical and capacity building support to the Centre for Assessment, Ministry of Education and Culture, starting in 2015, aims to contribute towards improving the quality of student learning outcomes through enhancing the reliability, validity and efficiency of assessment systems at both national and school level.

This is premised on the important role of assessment in fulfilling a number of objectives: supporting effective teaching and learning in classrooms, providing reliable information on individual performance by which to select students for further stages in the education system or for employment, as well as providing decision-makers with estimates of achievement levels in the education system as a whole at a particular age or grade levels.

Specific objectives include:

- i) Aligning the organizational structure of the Assessment Centre with its role and function in the national education system and strengthening the technical capacity of the staff,
- ii) Improving the development, administration, analysis and reporting of the national exams (including the computer-based version) and the Indonesian National Assessment Program,
- iii) Supporting classroom teachers to improve teaching and learning through enhanced assessment for learning; and
- iv) Informing preparation of an Assessment Framework and Roadmap to enable Indonesia to systematically develop a world class assessment system addressing the different purposes of assessment needed in future.

Research studies and other analytical work are available on the **ACDP** website: www.acdp-indonesia.org

The Government of Indonesia (represented by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the Ministry of National Development Planning / BAPPENAS), the Government of Australia, the European Union (EU), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have established the Education Sector Analytical and Capacity Development Partnership (ACDP). ACDP is a facility to promote education policy dialogue and facilitate institutional and organizational reform to support national strategic priorities and education performance improvement. The EU's support, through the Education Sector Support Program (ESSP), also includes sector budget support along with a Basic Education Minimum Service Standards capacity development program. Australia's support is through Australia's Education Partnership with Indonesia. This Newsletter has been prepared with grant support provided by the Government of Australia and the EU, through ACDP.

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