

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INDONESIA SMART CARDS (KIP) TO IMPROVING ACCESS FOR MARGINALIZED GROUPS IN INDONESIA

Team of Network for Education Watch Indonesia
(NEW Indonesia, 2020)

INTRODUCTION

Access to education is a right for all citizens. But unfortunately, citizens are still blocked from getting access to education, especially for marginalized groups. For this reason, the Indonesian government made a breakthrough in the Indonesian Smart Card program, or we call it Kartu Indonesia Pintar (KIP). This program scheme aims to increase access for marginalized groups, reduce school costs, and prevent school dropouts.

Through this program, students will get a yearly assistance fund of IDR 450.000 (USD 30) for primary, IDR 750.000 (USD 50) for junior secondary and IDR 1.000.000 (USD 67) for senior secondary. In 2020 the government provided a total of IDR 15,76 trillion (USD 1.008.186.465) for this program. It will be useless if this large amount of funds is not used equitably.

This is a very good breakthrough program, but its implementation in the regions still needs improvement. Based on the news in the media, many KIP distribution findings are not fair and not on target. There were inclusion error and exclusion error on it. There are still many poor children in areas that do not get KIP fund, so they are threatened to drop out. Is that right? This research will answer it and show the data. For this reason, this research is important as an evaluation material and input to the government to optimize the use of funds in the KIP program for marginalized groups which have so far been blocked from accessing schools.

DECENTRALIZATION AND CASH TRANSFER POLICY

Since the early 2000s, there has been a dramatic change in educational policies. While the government decentralized the educational administration of primary and secondary schools from central to regional authorities,¹ there remains at least two major challenges, inter alia: providing inclusive education and providing improved educational quality. Indeed, government decentralization grants regional authorities' larger opportunities to solve challenges; however, the formulation of policies to promote the right to education is another problem arising in contemporary Indonesia when considering diverse problems in each region. Therefore, after almost two decades of a decentralization agenda, there is still a high number of students that cannot access education at formal schools.²

Indeed, providing access to education is a key component to solving a number of barriers to

¹ In the third phase of regional authorities' decentralization, it introduces concurrent affairs, viz. compulsory concurrent powers and optional concurrent powers. The decentralization of educational administration is categorized as part of compulsory concurrent powers divided into three levels which is essentially: (a) national authority to regulate standardization and accreditation; (b) provincial authority to manage senior secondary school; and (c) district and municipal levels to manage primary and junior secondary schools.

² ADB, and OECD. Reviews of National Policies for Education: Education in Indonesia Rising to the Challenge. Reviews of National Policies for Education. OECD Publishing, 2015.

an inclusive education system. It is a key component specifically because it deals with compulsory education provided by the government. In 2013, the government unveiled universal secondary education which prioritizes the accessibility of education (Ministerial Regulation of Education and Culture No. 80 of 2013 on Universal Secondary Education).³ This action implies that the government acknowledges that education should be universally attainable. This initiative does not only deal with the obligation to provide but also shaping of the country's future development with competitive human resources in the globalized world.

With the following disparity, in 2005, the Indonesian government introduced the School Operational Assistance Grant or Bantuan Operasional Sekolah (BOS) to respond to the rising of school's tuition fee charged by schools to students. The BOS scheme opened opportunities for more accessible education with a lower tuition fee. To some extent, schools applied for the free, monthly tuition fee because the schools' basic expenditure has been provided by the government (Sugiono et.al 2015). The program gradually contributed to the reduction in the charge of tuition fees which positively impacted the rising of student participation in accessing a formal education.

A decade after the BOS program, the government launched the Smart Indonesia Program or Program Indonesia Pintar (PIP). It compensates students from poor families through a card, a legal document required in the PIP subsidy. As the distribution of cash transfers is administered through an electronic form, the program improves upon the Poor Financial Aids or Bantuan Siswa Miskin (BSM) (Ministerial Regulation of Education and Culture No. 12 of 2015 on Smart Indonesia Program) which was launched in 2008 (OECD/Asian Development Bank 2015). The main aim of the program is to apply universal junior secondary school and senior secondary school so that students from poor families can successfully complete 12 years of education (Art. 2 Ministerial Regulation of Education and Culture No. 12 of 2015). Thus, it is important to discuss further the relationship between the right to education and the PIP policy.

THE KIP POLICY AND THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

In President Joko Widodo's administration, BSM was replaced by the Indonesian Smart Card Program or Kartu Indonesia Pintar (KIP). This administrative requirement is one of the few differences with the former cash transfer program. In addition, the nomenclature of BSM was strongly characterized as cash transfers prioritized to poor students, while the PIP subsidy has been identified as a program given to smart students from poor families.

Administrative rules define the PIP subsidy as a cash transfer program granted to children from the age of 6 to 21 from families that hold a Welfare Family Card or Kartu Keluarga Sejahtera (KKS); therefore, the grant should be given only to poor families. The goal of the PIP policy is for all students to study in formal and non-formal institutions. Formal institutions

³ Universal secondary education is materialized in the form of providing education as much as possible to citizens to access formal educational levels, viz. (a) Junior Secondary School or Sekolah Menengah Pertama (SMP)/Islamic Junior Secondary School or Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs)/equivalent levels; and (b) Senior Secondary School or Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA)/Islamic Senior Secondary School or Madrasah Aliyah (MA)/ Vocational Secondary School or Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan (SMK)/equivalent levels. The primary aim of universal secondary education is to provide every citizen services on the basis of equal opportunity to access secondary school.

comprise of students in primary schools, junior high schools, and senior high schools. While non-formal education includes Islamic boarding schools, course institutions, and training institutions.

To adhere to the KIP policy, it could be an alternative to diverse government formulas to alleviate the educational gap, including child participation and the right to education. Through the KIP policy, the government strives to reduce the number of drop-out students due to economic disparity. This policy is aimed to contribute to the improvement of access to education which will widen learning opportunities for students from poor families. This policy affirms a non-discriminatory policy in which the program is aimed at providing larger access to education, regardless if the student is boy or girl, rich or poor, and living in village or city. Therefore, this article assumes that the government through the KIP policy has the responsibility to protect and provide human rights through positive action as guaranteed in the 1945 Indonesian Constitution since it is expected to provide inclusive education.

On one hand, such program can be included as a means to bring equal protection under the law by asserting equality before the law needs positive action⁴ (Tussman & TenBroek 1948). This policy confirms the government to actively reduce gaps by providing special treatment for the most vulnerable persons. Therefore, this reflects that the effort to provide cash transfers is intended to realize equality of rights and treatment in response to inequality⁵ (Sartika, Safitri, & Edison 2017). In the end, with such cash transfers, students have the potential to access basic education despite economic challenges in their families.

On the other hand, while the PIP policy has contributed to school participation (Ahmad 2018), this program encounters problems regarding the spread of information and the distribution of the subsidies. Despite the absence of reliable data verification, there is no adequate information on the program. So, many families do not know how to access information and gain benefits from this program. As the program is not well informed, there are many families that do not use the subsidies properly (Saraswati nd). There were many students from rich families who received this cash assistance.

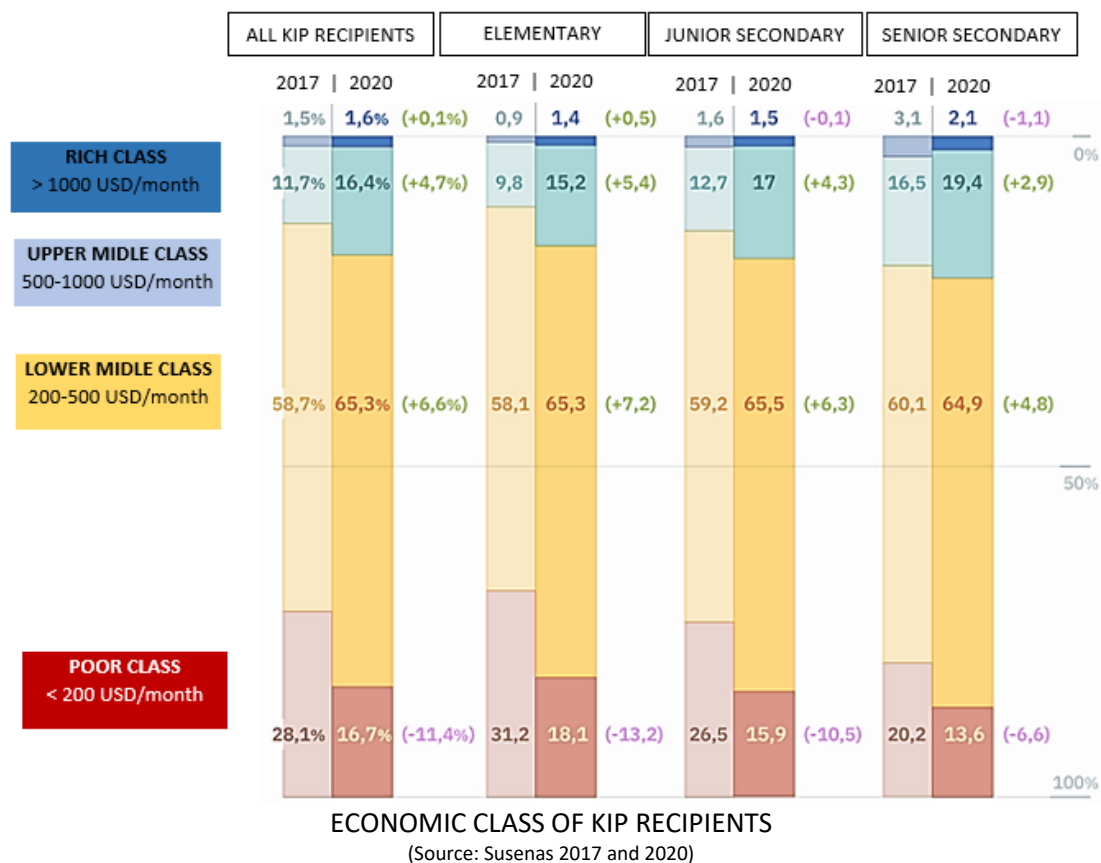
These facts confirm that such problems are serious as this policy was substantively aimed to provide positive action in human rights. Cash subsidies are seen as protection for citizens who need special treatment to access the right to education. Unfortunately, in practice, benefits are going to richer families. Similar problems often occur, particularly when government programs, in the form of financial assistance, have been followed by further challenges due to poor data collection and verification, including worse aid distribution. In this context, the KIP is counterproductive and does not meet what was expected: to anticipate and answer high rate of dropouts among students. These problems, therefore, can be concluded to be a result of the negligence of the government in its efforts to protect human rights.

⁴ Equal protection of the laws is aimed at the state responsibility to actively provide the protection to all citizens to enjoy human rights so that it enables to objectify equality to all citizens.

⁵ Positive action can be interpreted as an action to identify and overcome discriminatory practices, especially for those who do not benefit.

PROBLEMS OF INCLUSION ERROR ON KIP DISTRIBUTION

The KIP program has a good goal, helping children from poor and marginalized families to stay in school. However, data shows that the percentage of participants in this program from upper-middle income class families is actually getting bigger. On the other hand, the main target of this program is that the lower income class families do not get many benefits. The percentage of students from the middle to upper income class family group is actually getting bigger. This is what we call the inclusion error. Students from rich families who should not get KIP, they are actually the group that benefits a lot from KIP.



In 2017, the proportion of participants from the group earning USD 500 and above was only 11.7 percent, but in 2020 it was 16.4 percent. Participants from lower income class families continue to decrease. In 2017 it was 28.1 percent, but as of 2020 it was only 16.7 percent. Their expenses are equal to or under 200 USD every month. The same condition also occurs if the data is disaggregated by school level. The proportion of elementary, junior secondary, and senior secondary students in each class of expenditure also shows the inaccuracy of the target of this program. The proportion of students from lower-class families who participate in KIP is still small.

PROVINCES	POOR CLASS < 200 USD/month	UPPER MIDDLE CLASS 500-1000 USD/month
DKI Jakarta	0,04%	99,96%
Kalimantan Timur	0,8	99,2
Kep. Bangka Belitung	1,1	98,9
Kalimantan Utara	1,4	98,6
Kep. Riau	1,4	98,6
Maluku	1,7	98,3
Maluku Utara	2,2	97,8
Riau	3,3	96,7
Sumatra Barat	3,4	96,6
Sumatra Utara	4,2	95,8

ECONOMIC CLASS DISPARITY OF KIP RECIPIENTS
(Source: Susenas 2017 and 2020)

The data above shows the province with the lowest acceptance of participants from families with expenditure classes below 200 USD per month, the group that should be the main target of KIP. For example, in DKI Jakarta the number of recipients is less than 1 percent. The conditions in East Kalimantan are not much different. Only 0.8 percent of families with expenditure classes below 200 USD per month become KIP recipients.

QUO VADIS: EDUCATIONAL SUBSIDIES OR THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION?

In the context of human rights, there are two consequences for providing educational subsidies while attempting to fulfil the right to education. Providing educational subsidies may affect the fulfilment of the right to education, but the right to education specifically emphasizes the obligation of the state to provide adequate education. In other words, the state is obliged to ensure that every student can access their rights so that they can go to school and receive proper knowledge at school. This is different from providing subsidies which play a role in supporting the level of school participation through cash transfers, not the accessibility and availability of education to be enjoyed all citizens. Indeed, it takes how the government considers the proper formula on the right to education.

It is essential to take experiences from other developing countries on how they formulated duties on the right to education. As Indonesia is a third-world country, there is the assumption that the country has relatively similar problems with other developing countries, such as

improper planning and budget distribution. To this extent, most programs unveiled for poverty alleviation, including in the field of education, are in the form of cash.

In Mexico, cash assistance became a popular policy model. Cash was granted to families who met certain requirements to ensure school-age children could attend school properly. In the end, this program was re-evaluated because of the ineffectiveness of its implementation. However, the evaluation often does not consider what matters make success in improving children's quality and family welfare (de Brauw & Hoddinott 2011).

Mexico's experience confirms that the cash assistance program, in practice, does not have positive impacts to solve the problems in the country. In other words, cash assistance is not an appropriate tool to answer problems of poverty and vulnerable citizens as this model is faced with difficult challenges to its effective implementation.

In general, African countries also often adopt the cash assistance policy model as a way of increasing growth (Garcia, G. Moore, & M. T. Moore 2012). This model is also applied in order to meet the pressure to reduce poverty and fulfill human rights, but it is still not an effective drug to solve problems in Africa (Garcia, G. Moore, & M. T. Moore 2012).

Ecuador's experience is another example. The country also faced difficult challenges in implementing a cash assistance program. Ecuador expected that its policy model would provide positive achievement for the development of children. However, in practice, those who are from poor families often wasted the cash they received for their other needs (Paxson & Schady 2010).

The use of assistance in the form of cash in Indonesia remains at a high level of risk. These risks include the accuracy of the use of cash assistance for the benefit of supporting access to education. In other words, there is the concern of whether cash assistance would be used for the intended need or for other purposes that are counterproductive in the mission of accessing education. Therefore, from such facts, it is important to suggest that the government re-evaluates the PIP policy, including improving the data collection, verification, and its distribution into other than cash transfers rather than just the mode of distribution.

THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

SUBSIDY programs in education will become more intense to debate as it is discussed in the lens of human rights. The right to education is guaranteed in the constitution and international covenants ratified by the government of Indonesia. The right to education covers what matters need to be fulfilled by the government in realizing the protection and fulfilment of human rights to education to its citizens. As in Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution, the right to education is granted for citizens and they are obligated to attend basic education, whose finance is subsidized by the government.

Further provisions are regulated in the Law on the National Education System (National Education System Act). Article 34 confirms that the government, both at the central and regional levels, guarantees the implementation of minimum compulsory education for basic education without fees. In addition, Article 5 states that the right to education includes the same rights to obtain quality education. It is also stated that there is a special protection of

rights for citizens who have physical, emotional, mental, intellectual, and social disorders. In this context, the right to education includes special service education for citizens who live in remote or underdeveloped areas, including indigenous peoples. Special education is also given to citizens who have special talents and intelligence. All rights granted are in the context of providing citizens with the opportunity to improve education so that citizens are life-long learners.

In referring to international instruments, the provision of the right to education also includes free, basic education which requires the government to fulfil and provide. This right is mentioned in Article 26 (1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, Article 13 Paragraph (2) (a) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966, Article 28 (1) (a) of the Covenant on the Rights of the Child 1989 or Article 4 (a) of the Covenant on Discrimination in the Education 1960.

Such laws justify the right to education as an important role in the national agenda, particularly, when the state is obliged to provide free, basic education. This paper considers that Indonesia will enjoy demographic dividend by 2030 but they depend on how the government formulates the right to education so that education is accessible for the young generation⁶ (McDonald 2014). UNICEF introduces a conceptual framework for the approach to the right to education comprising of three interrelated dimensions. These three dimensions include the right of access to education, the right to quality education, and the right to respect for the learning environment.

The right of access to education is based on equal opportunities without any discrimination; it is an inclusive approach to education for children. The right to quality education enables children to develop their potential and use various opportunities to develop their skills. To achieve this goal, education is required to be child-oriented with relevant curriculum and support by appropriate resources and supervision. The right to respect in the learning environment is entitled to every child. To achieve this goal, education must be consistent with human rights, including equal respect for each child, various opportunities for participation, free from all forms of violence, respect for language, culture and religion (UNICEF and UNESCO 2007). Therefore, this asserts that the scope of access to education includes not only equal opportunities without any discrimination as part of inclusive education for all children but also excellent education that supports every child to enjoy learning environment.

While access to education should meet the quality of education, this paper considers Article 5 of the National Education System Law that is concerned at providing quality education. This law states providing access to education should be followed by the improvement of quality so that there is an improvement in the quality of human resources. Such article affirms the importance to improve the quality of education so that it brings positive impacts to the quality of learning and skills-based student achievement. The government, however, needs to formulate the budget in a way that supports access to education, followed by an improvement in the quality of education, as it is widely known that better education will

⁶ It is estimated that during 2010-2035 there will be increasing population of Indonesia consisting of 30 million in Java, 18 million in Sumatra, 4 million in Bali and Nusa Tenggara, 6.5 million in Kalimantan, 5 million in Sulawesi and 4.5 million in Maluku and Papua.

influence a better rate of economic growth. Subsequently, the improvement of the quality of education justifies at improving the welfare of citizens.

Eric Hanushek, an economist on the economics of education and public policy, argues that without the improvement in the quality of school education, developing countries will face difficulties improving their long-term, economic sustainability (Hanushek 2013). The role of quality schools at this stage influences the increase in resource capital, so the better education supports individual income and economic growth. For example, when Singapore gained the autonomous status from the British Government, it was poor with the majority of its population having high illiteracy and no skills. At the same time, policy focused on expanding basic education as quickly as possible and recruiting large numbers of teachers to achieve a universal basic education. This was achieved in 1965. Quality-based policies began in 1979 with emphasis on skills in order to support domestic economic growth.

In fact, Indonesia cannot eradicate poverty through education policy as quick as what Singapore has practiced. Indeed, Indonesia is complex consisting of culturally, religiously, and linguistically diverse population with higher economic gap compared to Singapore. However, Indonesia revised educational policies by providing a larger amount of national budget. It is written in Article 31 Paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution in which the state prioritizes a minimum education budget of 20% from the state budget to support the implementation of the national education system. This improvement then juxtaposes Indonesia and Singapore as countries that have high priority in education, reserving a budget portion of 20% of the total state budget (Tan, Liu & Low 2017).

After more than a decade, however, Indonesia faces considerable challenges in regards to the expense of providing better education. As the unitary state, education in Indonesia is a nationally-driven agenda, and provincial and local governments are limited in exercising powers. One of the fundamental problems is that Indonesia cannot resolve complex problems nationally. Such problems are, nonetheless, providing decent schools, free basic education, and unskilled teachers which result in lower quality of education. Three surveys measuring worldwide educational performance, such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), show that education in Indonesia has not improved significantly from the previous rankings.

The latest PISA results published in 2018 ranked the average score of Indonesian students in reading, mathematics, and science as number 74 of the 79 countries in the world participating in this survey. In contrast, in the same survey, Singapore was ranked first in the world. Therefore, it is evident that the success derives from their reform educational policy and because the country put education as a driving aspect of its national economic development. Therefore, when education is considered important to improve the quality of human resources and the standard of living, the government has obligations not only to provide access to basic education but also use funding efficiently.

CONCLUSION

Educational policy has become increasingly complicated in Indonesia, especially when it is articulated, debated, and negotiated with the right to education. A series of policies were created by the Indonesian government in order to increase school participation and improve the quality of education in Indonesia. In its implementation, however, these efforts often were challenged to the extent to which the government formulated a series of weak policies that resulted in human rights debates.

While the series of KIP policies were unveiled, for instance, inaccurate data collection suffered the unfair distribution of aid to students from poor families, the distribution of cash assistance, in some cases, was wrongly targeted so that it essentially contradicted with the aim of the program. As the policy is linked to human rights, its implementation confirms that the government has been negligent in a series of policies in fulfilling human rights responsibilities. Indeed, a cash assistance program was aimed by the government to raise school participation; however, it tends to lack effectiveness when the budget allocation is not distributed to support the right to education, including accessible education and free education as both are officially acknowledged by the government as universal education.

It is necessary to review the effectiveness of KIP policies as an effort to fulfil the right to education for citizens, especially for marginalized groups. The evaluation includes the use of the budget to be more relevant to the fulfilment of human rights. In the midst of budget constraints, the clash of policy formulations between cash assistance and free basic education commitments are on the problem of formulation. On the other hand, by referring to Article 5 of the National Education System Law, the commitment to provide education, which includes quality aspects, should be considered by the government. This is especially because Indonesia is often ranked by TIMSS, PIRLS, and PISA to have lower performances in education compared to that of other countries in Southeast Asia.

In responding to this, the government needs to reconsider the aspect of the fulfilment in the right to education. Free education should be an impetus to fix the budget expenditure rather than use the budget inefficiently. A series of policies need to re-evaluate education as an investment in order to support the national economy in providing prosperity in the country.

[]

REFERENCES

- ADB, and OECD. *Reviews of National Policies for Education: Education in Indonesia Rising to the Challenge. Reviews of National Policies for Education*. OECD Publishing, 2015.
- Bangay, Colin. *Private Education: Relevant or Redundant? Private Education, Decentralisation and National Provision in Indonesia*. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 35, no. 2 (June 2005): 167-79.
- Brau, Alan de, and John Hoddinott. *Must Conditional Cash Transfer Programs Be Conditioned to Be Effective? The Impact of Conditioning Transfers on School Enrolment in Mexico*. *Journal of Development Economics* 96, no. 2 (November 2011): 359-70.
- Chang, Mae Chu, Sheldon Shaeffer, Samer Al-Samarrai, Andrew B. Ragatz, Joppe de Ree, and Ritchie Stevenson. *Teacher Reform in Indonesia: The Role of Politics and Evidence in Policy Making*. The World Bank, 2013.
- Garcia, Marito, Charity G. Moore, and Charity M. T. Moore. *The Cash Dividend: The Rise of Cash Transfer Programs in Sub-Saharan Africa*. World Bank Publications, 2012.
- Hanushek, Eric A. *Economic Growth in Developing Countries: The Role of Human Capital*. *Economics of Education Review* 37 (2013): 204-212.
- Kristiansen, Stein, and Pratikno. *Decentralising Education in Indonesia*. *International Journal of Educational Development* 26, no. 5 (September 2006): 513-31.

Network for Education Watch Indonesia (NEW Indonesia) is a coalition of several civil society institutions that have a concern to strengthen access and quality of education for all Indonesian citizens. Established in 2010, the coalition was under the name Civil Society Organization Initiative for Education for All (CSOiEFA). To reinforce the position and focus of coalition work, then on November 2, 2012 the coalition has been officially renamed the Network for Education Watch Indonesia (NEW Indonesia) or Jaringan Pemantau Pendidikan Indonesia (JPPI). NEW Indonesia is currently a member of ASPBAE and the Global Campaign for Education (GCE).

SECRETARIAT: Jl. Cililitan Kecil III No.12, RT.12/RW.7, Cililitan, Kec. Kramat jati, Kota Jakarta Timur, Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta 13640. Email: newindonesia12@gmail.com. Website: <https://new-indonesia.org>.