

The Changing Face of Education in Indonesia: 'Creating Learning Community's for Children'

Access to good education is the right of all children without exception. This was the message proclaimed in the Dakar Declaration on Education for All in 2000, that has characterized discussions and planning on education ever since. The Declaration emphasizes the fact that improving the quality of education is just as important as improving access to education.

The quality of education in Indonesia has been taken into question since the beginning of the Reformation era in 1998. So, the cry for a "renewed renewal" in education began to be heard far and wide. Various approaches toward improving the standard of education were offered and tried.

In 1999, the CLCC initiative (Creating Learning Community's for Children), developed jointly by UNESCO, UNICEF and the Indonesian Government, emerged. CLCC was supported by three pillars: School-Based Management (SBM), Active, Joyful, Effective, and Creative Learning (AJEL) and Community Participation (CP).

CLCC was initially applied in seven districts (*kabupaten*) in four provinces: West Java, East Java, West Nusa Tenggara and South Sulawesi. In 2006, it was enlarged to cover 42 *kabupaten* (11 provinces). The seven new provinces added were: Banten, Central Java, West Sulawesi, East Nusa Tenggara, Maluku, North Maluku and Papua.

Wahana Visi Indonesia, World Vision Indonesia's working partner, took part in introducing CLCC in service areas in the provinces Aceh, North Sumatra (Nias), Jakarta, East Java, North Maluku, Central Sulawesi, West Kalimantan, East Nusa Tenggara and Papua. The program was replicated in the local context.

In implementing CLCC programs, Wahana Visi worked together with the Education Office, community stakeholders and various educational institutions. Wahana Visi worked together with the Surya Institute in facilitating the training of teachers so that they would be able to teach science and mathematics "easily

and enjoyably." Cooperation was also established with the *Sekolah Mangunan Yogyakarta* (Dinamika Edukasi Dasar Foundation) and *Sekolah Alam* to develop a contextual and empowering teaching system.

In 2008, a number of areas such as Surabaya, Singkawang, Sanggau, Poso, Banggai, Tobelo, Rote and Jayapura were able to apply the SBM-AJEL method. There were a number of schools that could serve as models for application of the SBM-AJEL method for other schools in their areas.

In that period, Wahana Visi assisted in the development of 52 model SBM-AJEL schools, trained 1,179 teachers and 142 School Committees and facilitated the formation of 44 Teachers Working Groups.

"When I was assigned to this school, I immediately got a chance to get trained in the SBM-AJEL method, which was facilitated by Wahana Visi," said Supriyadi, the principal of the Putat Jaya IV Elementary School in Sawahan, Surabaya.

That training course inspired Supriyadi to decorate his school yard with various kinds of trees and flowering plants, and to ornament his school's classroom walls with handicraft created by his pupils. Activities like this, which beautify schools, are also a key part of the AJEL method.

The AJEL method also brought some change among his pupils. Having been assigned a more active role, they became motivated to study harder.

"Now I have the courage to ask the teacher questions," said Maria Ulfa, one of the school's students.



This is what a typical daily classroom activity at Tentena's GKST-2 elementary school in Central Sulawesi looks like. School attendance has increased since the AJEL method was applied in this school. Student classroom activity and creativity have also improved.

Since the CLCC program was initiated, the community's contribution to the school has become more evident. In April 2008, for example, a group of residents donated 100 plants to this school.

Indeed, community participation cannot be overlooked in the context of improving the quality of education. In a number of areas, Community Self-Help Groups (KSM-Kelompok Swadaya Masyarakat) started an Education Savings movement to support a continuing education for their children. They also set up a Child Learning Center (CLC) to support the AJEL activities, and involved themselves in developing local educational media.

A number of schools in West Kalimantan have even started a cooperation network among schools and between parents and a Credit Union (CU) to encourage saving by their children. According to the latest reports, some 5,000 children now have education savings in their own names. These savings will guarantee a continued education for the children.

To further contribute to the development of the CLCC program, Wahana Visi is at present considering integrating a Peace Education and a Values Education scheme into the CLCC method. A Peace Education project is planned to start in Poso, North Halmahera and Ternate. Values Education projects (in the context of education against corruption) will begin in a number of schools in the Rote District in East Nusa Tenggara. This plan

Reflection

Children are miracles of life, dreams and hopes fulfilled, the seeds of future leadership, Indonesia's most valuable asset.

And yet, the barriers that surround so many of this nation's children, the limited access to good education are holding back their development, meaning they are unable to reach their full potential and the gifts that God has given them.

These barriers include poverty, child labour, the limited availability of teaching materials, inadequate infrastructure, non-contextualized teaching methods, violence against children, rejection and neglect of children with special needs, a lack of financial transparency and accountability, along with many other challenges.

Education is the right of all people, especially children.

Through education all individuals can unlock the gates of change that lead toward a better world, a world that is full of opportunity and choice.

Therefore, we ask God to open our minds, encourage the will and the ability of all our citizens to mobilize all resources we have, inspire our leaders to answer the challenge of our children's needs and make available the kind of quality education that is affordable, so that every child can look to the future with hope and confidence, and build a better future for Indonesia.

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World Vision Recommendations

We recommend the fulfillment right of children to an education as mandated by the Law on the Protection of Children No.23, 2002, Articles 48-54.

In order to achieve this, World Vision is calling on all government institutions and civil society elements (including businesses), to improve their coordination and collaboration regarding education. Further, World Vision calls on their representatives at the local, regional and national levels to continually improve their practices and to evaluate education programs, for accessibility and quality. These programs must uphold the interests of all children, without discrimination and work towards realizing the following:

- Ensuring that all children between the ages of 3 and 6 years, including children with special needs, get a formal and informal education within their families and in the communities in which they live.

- Ensuring that all school-age children, including children with special needs, finish their basic education and get the opportunity to continue their education on a higher level, or receive life skills education that will ensure their future employment, using the talents they have developed.

- Providing the space and the opportunity for children to express their opinion and their ideas regarding the form of education they want.

- Supporting innovative community-based education systems in the context of local needs and situations.

- Encouraging the application of various active, creative and participatory learning methods across the education environment by accommodating community-based initiatives in various local contexts.

- Encouraging a transparent and responsible management of education funds.

World Vision
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World Vision at a Glance

World Vision Indonesia is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organization working to create lasting change in the lives of children, families and communities living in poverty. World Vision serves all people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.

World Vision operates in 97 countries and supports more than three million children.

World Vision Indonesia, have been serving Indonesia's poorest for more than 50 years, is currently supporting community and child empowerment programs in more than 700 villages in nine provinces, including Aceh and Papua. More than 1.5 million people benefit from its programs.

As a humanitarian organization focusing on children, education is one of the main sectors World Vision prioritises. In 2008,

World Vision and its partner Wahana Visi, spent more than Rp 30 billion on its various education programs. At present, more than 80,000 children in nine provinces receive support to continue their education until they complete their senior high school education.

World Vision's work to make education more accessible include, but are not limited to, providing school buildings, tutoring fees or other formal approaches, but also includes various active undertakings, such as increasing access through Early Childhood Care Development (ECCD) Programs, Creating Learning Community for Children (CLCC) and, most recently, providing transmission network facilities (VSAT) in a number of isolated areas to enable students in the hinterlands, such as in Lamno in NAD or Boven Digoel in Papua, to access information through the internet. This service is being developed together with teachers in their respective areas.

World Vision Indonesia

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Inspirasi

BULLETIN

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Notes from the National Director

Albert Einstein once said that education is not acquired only in schools; it is a lifelong process.

Those words, spoken by the great thinker, carry a special meaning. Education is not merely about the opportunity to attend school. There are many ways that are available to acquire knowledge of quality, including through non-formal community based education and informal family based education.

Education, as we know, is the responsibility of the family, the community and the government. If education of good quality is desired, synergetic efforts by the government as the policy maker, the family and the community are needed.

The community has the right and the obligation to acquire and support good education. For that reason, it should be realized that the community has a significant role to play in developing a system of education outside the formal education format. Such non-formal and informal formats of education are fertile ground for members of the community to participate.

Community participation has become more prominent lately with the mushrooming of home schools, the equal level of education provided by Community Learning Centers and Early Childhood Care and Development establishments.

World Vision Indonesia (WVI) realizes the potential that is present in the community. In the context of education,

WVI is participating by developing a number of community-based education models in several districts/cities in supporting areas. Forms that have so far been developed include Early Childhood Care for Development (ECCD), Learning Centers for Children (*Pusat Belajar Anak - PBA*) and CLCC (Creating Learning Community for Children). In addition, WVI has taken the initiative to embrace the Surya Institute (an educational institute set up by Prof. Yohanes Surya Ph.D.) to improve the quality of the science and mathematics teaching in Papua Province.

Through this edition of our bulletin we hope to be able to present to our readers a complete model of community-based education. We hope this bulletin will open our readers' minds concerning the facts and challenges which education in Indonesia is facing, particularly in relation to community participation. We hope this will inspire our policy makers to make public policy decisions that are more sympathetic towards the interests

of children and the community, especially the marginalized.

Education in Indonesia is certain to gain greater advances with the participation of the community.

Trihadi Saptoadi
National Director World Vision Indonesia



President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in conversation with Fajriah, chairman of Koperasi Patroe Aceh, a cooperative assisted by World Vision, during an exhibition held by the Coordination Forum for Aceh and Nias, at the Jakarta Convention Center, on February 13, 2009 (above). On the occasion, the President also talked to Trihadi Saptoadi and the World Vision staff.

Developing a Holistic, Community-Based Early Childhood Care and Development Education Program

Children begin to learn as soon as they are born. A child's journey in learning begins well before they reach the age for school or start their formal education. In this sense, education refers not only to a child's formal education that starts when they reach the age of 5 or 6 and attend school, but also recognizes that the education process begins long before this.

While learning for all children begins the moment they are born, socio-economic factors and learning abilities can have a significant impact on early childhood learning. It is commonly known that a child's first five years is the most important stage for building the learning foundation for the development of their cognitive, emotional, psychological, language and spiritual skills. This period will lay the basis for the formation of his or her identity and values later in life. One education framework to promote the development of these crucial aspects during this stage is often referred to as Early Childhood Care Development (ECCD).

At present, there are many institutions that provide such programs for children between the ages of 3 and 5 years. However, such establishments and programs are often not easily accessible for many people, either because they cannot afford the fees or the institution is located far from their homes.

Geographical and financial limitations however, should not become reasons for denying children between the ages of 0 and 5 years to get their basic education. The challenge is motivating parents and members of the surrounding community to meet their responsibility of providing a good education and a proper upbringing for children from the moment of their birth.

It is in this context that World Vision and its partner, Wahana Visi Indonesia, work together with community groups in several regions to develop such a holistic community-based Early Childhood Care Development (ECCD) program.

Through this program, families and communities can realize their potential as learning facilitators by fully participating in the program and thereby helping their children to grow and develop. Part of this role includes establishing an atmosphere that is safe and healthy environment that is conducive to children's learning. Specifically this means paying attention to health care, good nutrition for children and pregnant women, an adequate supply of clean water, and the practice of a clean and healthy lifestyle. To ensure a child-safe environment learning must contain child-friendly life skills.

ECCD does not even need to operate its own infrastructure. As long as awareness and commitment on the part of the



Children of Wosi, Kurulu, at play and studying at the HBA. Through the facility, every aspect of their development is meticulously taken care of.

community is present, ECCD can utilize the public facilities that are already present. Facilities that can be used include Integrated Service Posts (*Pos Pelayanan Terpadu-Posyandu*), village community halls, kindergartens, school buildings and even citizen's homes.

Together with the communities in Singkawang (West Kalimantan), Poso, Banggai (Central Sulawesi), Port Numbay, Kurima, Kurulu (Papua) and Rote (East Nusa Tenggara), World Vision has been able to establish 110 holistic community-based ECCD programs. These institutions have been given different names by their host communities. Some are known as *Wahana Pena Emas* (Golden Pen Institute), while others are called *Honai Belajar Anak* (Honai for Child's Education) or *Taman Belajar Anak* (Children's Learning Park).

Whatever their name, these educational establishments embody the care and concern that have led people to work together to ensure that children receive their right to a proper education. This effort to work together must come entirely from the will and initiative of the communities concerned. Evaluation and planning are carried out only after this has been assured. In the process of evaluation, World Vision invites members of the community, children as well as adults, to a dialogue to identify their views about the program. This includes their views on children, the care of children and the cultural aspects of behavior that are practiced with regard to children. Further steps are then planned leading to the organization and setting up of holistic Early Childhood Care Development programs. Learning facilitators are selected from the community and trained, a location is selected and learning modules and educational toys are developed. In this way, a sense of ownership and care for the project is built

**As of January 2008
only 48 percent
of children between the ages of
0 and 6 years
enjoyed an early age education.**

(www.pnfi.depdiknas.go.id)

among members of the community.

This process was evident in the building of the *Honai Belajar Anak-HBA* (Honai for Child Education) in the Kurulu area near Wamena, Papua. Boas Mapel, facilitator and tutor, reports that 20 families were involved in the construction of the facility.

"They were able to provide the location, their participation for example by getting the wood and *ilalang* in the forest. They climbed up together and went down together (to build the *honai*)," Boas said.

To build it in a local context, materials common in their daily lives were used in building the HBA. It has a floor of woven bamboo, wooden walls and a thatch roof.

Where ever possible, the teaching materials of the ECCD programs are made or taken from the surrounding natural environment. Many of the educational visual aids used are made of wood, bamboo, coconut shell, coconut fiber palm fronds, candle nut shells, nutmeg or other locally available material. In this way, the people are taught to appreciate and preserve whatever their natural surroundings provide.

The holistic community-based ECCD programs deserve the support of many parties, especially the government. During a function marking the establishment of the *Wahana Pena Emas* (WPE – Golden Pen Institute) in Poso at the end of 2008, district head (*bupati*) Piet Inkiriwang expressed his high appreciation of the organization.

"I am impressed. This is a very broad system of education," he said.

WPE's presence in Poso has moved many parties in the area to participate in the efforts to raise the quality of early childhood education for children in the Poso District. The Poso Office of Education, with the support of the district's Representative Council, have agreed to set aside funds to build some needed facilities for WPE and grant certain incentives to tutors.

It is hoped that the program, which is already underway, can continue and thrive. The community has taken the initiative and empowered themselves to learn, let us give them our support by taking concrete action so that the ECCD program may shine its light on the future of our children.* (INSPIRASI/ES)

Encouraging Talents, Brightening Hopes

Encouraging a person's talents from early on in their childhood is essential to ensuring these talents can grow and develop later in life. A child's skills and talents are a part of their resources that must be continually built and developed in order that he or she may have a future that is filled with hope.

To promote a child's talents so they can reach their full potential is to fulfill their right to holistic growth and development. This greatly improves the child's chance of protecting themselves, and encourages greater confidence in participating in society. Encouraging and guiding these talents should be done by everyone who interacts with a child's immediate environment.

This is the reason why World Vision, in partnership with communities, is developing, the learning environments to encourage the talents of children. Child Learning Centers (CLCs) are groups that are established at the village level or in specific areas for children (between the ages of 6 and 18 years) to meet and develop their talents in accordance with their respective ages and levels of intellectual ability.

CLCs aim to develop children's aptitudes by studying, playing sports and creating art. Besides this they also aim to help children understand their rights, create a space for children to socialise, connect children to activities in other organizations, develop children's character and leadership abilities, and inspire children to have empathy for others and concern for the environment. Until now, some 250 CLCs have been established and are now operating in more than 40 districts and municipalities, spread over 9 provinces serviced by World Vision.

Because community initiatives are involved and local values and customs are maintained, the Children's Learning Centers are known by names that differ from region to region. Some are known as *KBA-Kelompok Belajar Anak* (Child Study Group), others as *Children's Self-Help Group* (*KSA-Kelompok Swadaya Anak*), *Youth Groups* (*KAR-Kelompok Anak Remaja*) *Forum Anak* (Child Forum), *Kelompok Anak* (Child Group) or *Taman Bacaan Anak Plus* (Children's Library Plus). This is important as it shows the extreme diversity of the innovation of children and youth.

From the time the CLCs were first established, children and adults in the communities were actively involved in the program. Together with World Vision, participants drew up plans for activities in the context of local conditions and in line with regional needs for capacity development. The purpose was to ensure the sustainability and the self-sufficiency of the learning centers.

To complement local conditions, each CLC is unique and creative in its own way in order to respond to the children's specific needs in developing their talents to reach their full potential.

For example, the CLC in Keerom, Papua, boasts safe and



Children at Susukan improve the quality of their learning, and their self-confidence, at the local PBA. The PBA provides them with the additional skills and knowledge that helps them improve their learning at school.

environmentally-friendly computers with access to the internet. Children here learn to use computers and access the internet in a responsible manner. Further, the children's activities actually help to prepare them for future enrollment in the formal school system. After school, this CLC operates as a commercial internet service, which serves the public and at the same time earns the money that is needed to further develop the CLC.

In Susukan, East Jakarta, the CLC known as the *Forum Anak* (Children's Forum) holds training sessions in leadership, computer skills, character building as well as counseling sessions to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS. "I get help in my studies from the KBA (Children's Study Group, part of the Child's Forum). My friends and I get supplementary lessons at the Neighborhood chief's house, covering all subjects including English. It boosts my enthusiasm and my self-esteem," said Yusuf, an elementary school student whose school is nearby.

Not to be outdone in creativity, the CLC in Cawang, East Jakarta, instructs children in traditional dancing, painting, volleyball and soccer. As well English is taught along with automotive skills and mechanics, and enrollment preparation in the city's various colleges and universities.

Many CLCs have been successful in awakening their pupils' interest in social issues arising in their respective neighborhoods. Among those CLCs is the one at Lani Jaya in Eruwok, Papua Province, which won a 1st Prize - Citizenship and Governance Award for a play that urged the local authorities to respond to the dire conditions affecting the education system in their area.

But CLCs are just one of the many alternatives being developed in order to respond to the challenges of community based learning, which include low levels of community interest, high costs and financial limitations, and geographical distance.

Learning can be done everywhere and at every stage throughout life, and anyone can be the catalyst to initiate it. The challenge is to manage the learning processes in such a way that continuity and self-sufficiency are assured. The key is to involve all the parties in the community in the project, both as managers and as stakeholders, as teachers and learners. Through managing this process, specific attention must be played to the development of children's skills and talents so that they can reach their full potential. Creating this learning environment is essential to helping children realize their hopes and dreams, and in turn participate as adults in community learning.* (INSPIRASI/DOK)

Moving Toward Better Education in Papua

The classroom was full of excitement. Shouts of "I know, Miss," or "I know the answer, Miss," reverberated through the room as hands went up asking for attention.

Full of confidence, the children answered the teacher's questions about mathematics and science. The classroom was alive with children actively involved in the process of learning. Gone was the dread of those two subjects that are so often feared by children.

Of course, this kind of atmosphere is not strange to elite schools in larger cities. Soon, this occurrence and the learning atmosphere it implies will be commonplace in the much more modest schools in Indonesia's Papua province.

In cooperation with the Surya Institute, World Vision Indonesia is determined to bring that same

**In 2007 Indonesian
students won
51 gold medals
in various science
Olympiads.**

(<http://www.mandikdasmen.depdiknas.go.id>)

relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere to the teaching of Science and Mathematics to 25 elementary schools, scattered over the entire region from the Jayawijaya mountain range to Jayapura and surrounding areas.

Not less than 75 local teachers will shortly be joining a training program so they will be able to bring that

kind of learning experience to their students. This is a strategic step, taken as an alternative to overcome the low reading, writing and arithmetic abilities of school age children in Papua.

interactive method of teaching science and mathematics will reduce their students' fears and raise the competitive capabilities that they need in this age of increasingly sophisticated technology.

Marking the start of the program that aims to raise the standard of education in Papua, Prof. Yohanes Surya, Ph.D., the founder of the Surya Institute, and Mr. Trihadi Saptoadi, MBA, World Vision Indonesia Director, signed an agreement for cooperation at the end of 2008. The program will last until the middle of 2009.

It is hoped that the scheme will play a significant role in preparing teachers in Papua to impart to their students the skills, particularly in mathematics and science that they will need in their lives. It is hoped that a more enjoyable and

Thousands of students in Papua will reap the benefits of this program of cooperation and it is hoped that they will all eventually be able to improve their skills in a similar manner to the example of Hendrik Medlama.

Under the guidance of Yohanes Surya and sponsored by World Vision under its community development program in Kurulu, Hendrik Medlama (17) was able to defeat his fear of science and mathematics, to go to win first prize in the Physics Olympics 2008 at the provincial level, and finished second at

the national level. Hendrik represents the spark of hope that lights up a rather dark education scene in Papua at present.

Hopefully, the efforts that are currently being made through this cooperation agreement to improve the education scene in Papua will lead to the production of thousands more like Hendrik, which will no doubt improve the quality of life in Papua, and in Indonesia more generally.

This cooperation agreement will hopefully also inspire others to join hands in an effort to improve the standard of education throughout Indonesia. It is only through our joint concern and cooperation among all stakeholders that the standard of education in Indonesia can be significantly improved.* (INSPIRASI/LH)



Trihadi Saptoadi (right) and Yohanes Surya (left) putting their signatures on the agreement for cooperation. Watching the formality on October 13, 2008, is Hendrik Medlama (center).