

Improving Quality of Literacy Education through Entrepreneurship Literacy, Reading Culture and Tutor Training

A. Contextual Background

Indonesia has a population of over 234 million people, distributed between roughly 6,000 inhabited islands. This vast population is divided into over 300 distinct ethnic groups, and approximately 680 native languages. The delivery of educational infrastructure for a population so ethnically, linguistically and geographically disjointed is a tremendous challenge. However, Indonesia's public school system ranks as the third largest in the world, with over 50 million students studying in approximately 490 municipalities. It is due to such a comprehensive primary schooling system that Net Enrollment Rate (NER) for primary school in Indonesia reached 95.41 per cent in 2011. Accordingly, youth literacy levels are estimated at approximately 98.51 per cent (2010), with very little gender disparity.

Compared to the literacy rates amongst the youth, Indonesia's adult literacy rates are relatively low, at 94.98 per cent. 11.96 per cent of Indonesians live below food and non-food poverty lines with 248,707 IDR/ 24.87 US\$ per capita per month. The Indonesian Government has identified adult illiteracy as one of the major causes of this relatively high poverty prevalence.

Coordinated efforts to address illiteracy in Indonesia began as far back as 1945-1965. These efforts were built upon in 1970 with the introduction of the Package A programme, which was divided into 100 modules, of which A1-A10 were basic literacy, and A11-A100 were focused on literacy in the context of life skills. Over the period of the next three decades following the introduction of Package A, it is reported that the illiteracy rate was halved from approximately 21 per cent in 1970, to approximately 11 per cent in 2000, and that increased productivity of newly-literate people in various primary and secondary industries was observed.

The observation of cross-sector productivity improvements led to increased levels of interest in literacy attainment from many diverse parties, including the private sector and many government ministries. Indonesia's most recent educational targets are therefore products of an integrated approach from many government ministries and various stakeholders from wider society outside parties. From the year 2000, emphasis has been placed on the acceleration of literacy efforts, in line with the UNESCO Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE). Education and literacy targets have been a primary focus of national strategic planning, and the current target is to reach 95.8 per cent adult literacy by 2014.

B. Overview of the Program

Improving Quality of Literacy Education through Entrepreneurship Literacy, Reading Culture and Tutor Training is a program initiated by the Directorate of Community Education Development, Directorate General of Early Childhood, Non Formal and Informal Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, Republic of Indonesia to achieve Goal 4 of Education for All (EFA) in reducing illiteracy by half by 2015. The program, started in 2008, shows comprehensive unity in policy and diversity in practice depending on contexts, potentials and problems.

The program aims at realizing a literate, skilled, cultured-to-read and gender-aware society. Since its inception in 2008, it has reached over 4 million people throughout the country; more than 3 million people have obtained a government literacy certificate (SUKMA) and 3,500 tutors and managers have received capacity building.

The program originated from the fact that literacy is a doorway for knowledge based economy. Literacy education for knowledge-based economy and democratic society include building new skills and attitudes needed for work and social life. Therefore, literacy education programs have to contribute to the foundations for skilled, confident and competent workforce to survive in global world. The literacy programs would demonstrate an effective intervention to sustain reading skills of new readers while developing entrepreneurship literacy as a breakthrough for poverty alleviation. This program is very efficient since it reduces trends of relapsing. It does not simply introduce texts, but it stimulates all individuals to be productive and self reliant in generating income and being a part of national development. We can extend this perspective by seeing the fact that there have been a number of fundamental efforts carried out under the umbrella of Literacy Initiative For Empowerment (LIFE) which is re-contextualized into AkRAB! (*Aksara Agar Berdaya* or literacy creates power).

As an effort to prevent relapsing, this program operates community reading centers in public spaces such as markets and worship areas. In order to create and sustain a learning society, the program provides basic and digital literacy, entrepreneurship literacy, reading improvement program, tutor training and has invested in adult literacy. Through its integrated components including functional literacy in the mother tongues, it enhances the literate environment of communities and particularly endeavours to empower women through a combination of life skills and basic literacy and through capacity-building for gender mainstreaming in education at provincial, district and municipal levels.

By implementing this program, Indonesia has made an impressive achievement in meeting the global Education for All (EFA) targets. The total literacy rate for young people and adults was 5.02% in 2010. This population consists of three age-groups: 600,531 illiterate people (15 – 24 years old), 2,634,005 illiterate people (25 – 44 years old), and 4,312,808 illiterate people (45- 59 years old). In Indonesia, the targets of literacy programmes consist of three age-groups, namely youth literacy (ages 15 – 24), adult literacy (ages 15 – 59) and elderly literacy (ages 60 and above). However, there are gender disparities with regards to access to education and therefore, to literacy rates, due to socio-cultural and economic factors. These disparities are clearly manifested in the literacy rates among male and female adults (15-59

years) which stood at 1.84 per cent and 3.18 per cent respectively in 2010 (National Statistics Bureau/*Badan Pusat Statistik/BPS*, 2011).

From 2006 to 2012, the total number of beneficiaries of the literacy program is 6,858,557. Accordingly, the program awarded 5,782,387 literacy certificates to new readers and from the year 2012, 900,000 people participated in literacy courses, including 350,000 people funded by East Java provincial government as a response for being the province with highest number of adult illiteracy. In addition to that number, there were 235,000 people participating in entrepreneurship literacy courses and 2,200 people participated in family education responsive gender. Furthermore, there were 1,400 stakeholders participating in the workshop for parenting, trafficking prevention, and other destructive behaviour prevention, and 600 facilitators participated in the workshop of character and peace building.

Since then the literacy program has reached a significant achievement by reaching the Dakar target of Education for All (EFA), which is halving illiterate population of 15.4 million in 2004 to 7.5 million in 2010 and gender disparity reduced from 7.3 in 2004 to 2.34 in 2010 (BPS, 2011). Further data in 2011 indicated a progress of achievement with national average score 4.43% or 6,730,682 illiterate people, and gender disparity of 2,4 (BPS, 2012).

C. Aims and Objectives of the Program

The Directorate of Community Education Development, Directorate General of Early Childhood, Non Formal and Informal Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, Republic of Indonesia has identified the following objectives:

- accelerate literacy achievement;
- improve entrepreneurship and income generation;
- enhance reading culture;
- enhance gender equality;
- improve woman empowerment and community partnerships;
- improve tutor training;
- institutionalise and coordinate community learning centres and other community initiatives;
- improve facilities and infrastructure for delivering educational services

D. Implementation of the Program

Organizational Arrangements

One of the strengths of this program is that it is coordinated and implemented through a very holistic integrated approach, combining various stakeholders. This provides the program with great strength due to the diversity of ideas and funding sources, and the wide range of efforts from various sectors. This integrated approach also entails many challenges, especially with regards to identifying and agreeing upon common objectives.

The design and coordination of the program is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Republic of Indonesia. Other government ministries have the following roles:

- Ministry of Public Welfare – defines the roles of individual ministries in the movement, and assist in programme coordination.
- Ministry of Internal Affairs – pushes legal framework of provincial, city, and district administrators as well as the private sector, women’s organization, youth organization, NGOs and community organizations to participate in this movement.
- Ministry of Religious Affairs – Identifies religious facilities for participation and helps to implement AKRAB in religious institutions.
- Ministry of Finance – plans the AKRAB budget on accordance with the Ministry of Education proposals.
- Ministry of Women’s Empowerment - Creates social networks and advocates those institutions or NGOs under their guidance.

The implementation of the program is carried out by a wide range of different organizations. These include:

- NGOs, particularly women’s groups;
- Community Learning Centers (CLCs);
- Religious institutions;
- Environmental groups;
- Universities (through a MoU between the Director General of Non Formal and Informal Education --> now Director General of Early Childhood, Non Formal and Informal Education and 87 universities since 2007 intended to improve access to literacy education).

These implementing organisations submit their budgets proposals to join the program to the designated coordinator at the local level of governance. Depending on the specific agreement between the central and local authorities, the municipal coordinator can then either approve the proposal and budget directly, or recommend the proposal to the provincial authorities. The budget is awarded based on the proposed number of learners. In general, the budget for each implementing organization is paid for by the central government at national level (50%), the provincial government (30%), and the municipal government (20%). The cost of the program is approximately US\$62 per learner.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	TOTAL
Rp	381,493,459,000	582,714,039,000	411,459,836,000	406,153,882,000	482,103,259,000	2,263,924,475,000
USD	40.157.206	61.338.320	43.311.562	42.753.040	50.747.711	238.307.839

Recruitment and Training of Facilitators

Each year, one person is selected from each municipality for training to become a tutor. Candidates must have at least Senior High School education, they must reside in the local area, demonstrate high levels of commitment and duty, be able to master the teaching-

learning materials and be able to develop participatory learning methods. Tutors are then paid a basic wage of Rp10.500 (US\$1.20) per hour.

Mobilization of Participants

Recognizing the nations gender inequality problem, and the effect which gender equality has on household wellbeing and the development of the wider economy, the *Improving Quality of Literacy Education through Entrepreneurship Literacy, Reading Culture and Tutor Training* program places a strong emphasis on female participation, in an attempt to strengthen institutional capacity for the mainstreaming of gender-related policies.

Participation in the program is voluntary, but women are encouraged to participate by offering curriculums which are well tailored to the everyday needs of women and the household unit.

Training-Learning Methods and Approaches

In general, teaching is conducted in groups of ten learners per tutor, and programs last for between six and ten months. Although there is a specific program structure, the tutors are trained in a way in which this program can be made flexible, and the learning needs of each individual learner are identified by the tutor through observation and interview.

Three key teaching approaches are used:

1. **Participatory approach** – integrating relevant life skills into the program.
2. **Mother tongue based approach** – the program begins in mother tongue and develops into a mixture of mother tongue and Bahasa Indonesia as the learners' skills develop
3. **Transliteration approach** – ability to read Al-Qur'an and Arabic alphabets is transferred into the ability to read Latin letters.

The bulk of the learning material is developed by a team made up of the tutor and non-formal education experts, in line with the material made available through the national programme. In addition, an innovative element of this program is that learners themselves develop their own booklets and newspapers during writing classes which are then used as learning materials by other participants.

The program is generally implemented in five competency stages, as follows:

	Literacy	Entrepreneurship
Stage 1	Understand short text on a known topic. Gain information from general signs and symbols,	
Stage 2	Understand simple short text on a known topic correctly and independently. Gain information from previously-known short documents. Gain information from various everyday sources.	Identify types of enterprise that may be developed in the local context. Write and communicate the design of an individual or group enterprise.
Stage 3	Understand short and longer texts on various topics.	Master the production of the product or service of the chosen enterprise. Market the product or service developed.
Stage 4	Understand complicated texts on various topics correctly and independently. Gain detailed information from various sources.	Conduct profit/loss analysis. Establish partnerships for the growth and sustainability of the enterprise.
Stage 5	Use community ICT and reading gardens to maintain and improve literacy.	Continuously maintain and develop the competencies of reading, writing and communicating in Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian Language) in the running of the enterprise.

On completion of stage 4 to a satisfactory level, learners receive a certificate of literacy (*Surat Keterangan Melek Aksara - SUKMA*).

The fifth stage of the program is a phase of continuous learning and consolidation of skills. This is not a stage that is designed to be *completed*, but rather one that is always available to citizens for their personal development.

E. Literacy Situation Before and After the Inception of the Program

Literacy improvement had long been a national movement since the issuance of Presidential Instruction No. 5, 2005 on the National Movement to hasten Compulsory Nine-Year Basic Education and the Fight against Illiteracy (NMHFAI). In its implementation as a national-scope movement, literacy had successfully been perceived as a fundamental part of national development and followed with further policy frameworks from all levels for acceleration. As a result, the target of national adult literacy rate was achieved despite of disparity among provincial level, resulting illiteracy targets in far flung areas.

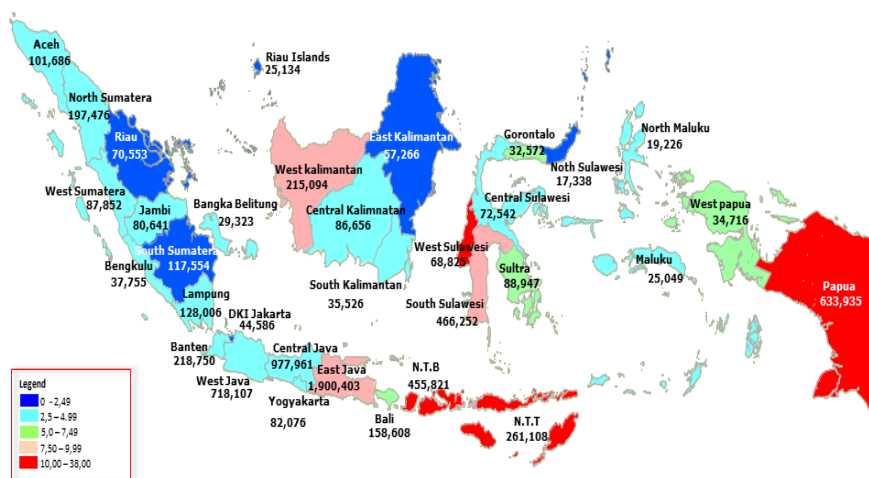
Literacy as a national movement along with its achievement became an overwhelming situation for Indonesia. It was felt that it was all enough and satisfying. However, the national movement, to some extent, turned to be vulnerable to relapsing when literacy was simply regarded and implemented as a national movement. Furthermore, today enough becomes not good enough when there is better.

Today, since the inception of the program, the commitment for literacy improvement program has no longer become a national movement; now it becomes a community movement to eliminate gaps in comprehending economic, cultural and digital literacy in order to build and realize peaceful, fair and prosperous Indonesia.

The commitment has been proved by the fact that Indonesia has reached an achievement beyond the target of Education for All Dakar (EFA) for halving illiterate population of 15.4 million (10.20%) by 2004, and 95.57% of Indonesian population have become literates. At present, our efforts in literacy movement will be concentrated to 6.73 million or 4.43 % of the remaining illiterate population.

On the other hand, despite this significant national achievement of adult literacy, there are still discrepancies among provinces and among districts. There are ten provinces performing less than the average percentage at national level. Figure-1 indicates the percentage of adult literacy and the number of illiterates at provincial level.

Figure-1 Percentage and Number of Illiterates in Indonesia



Source: National Statistics Bureau, 2010

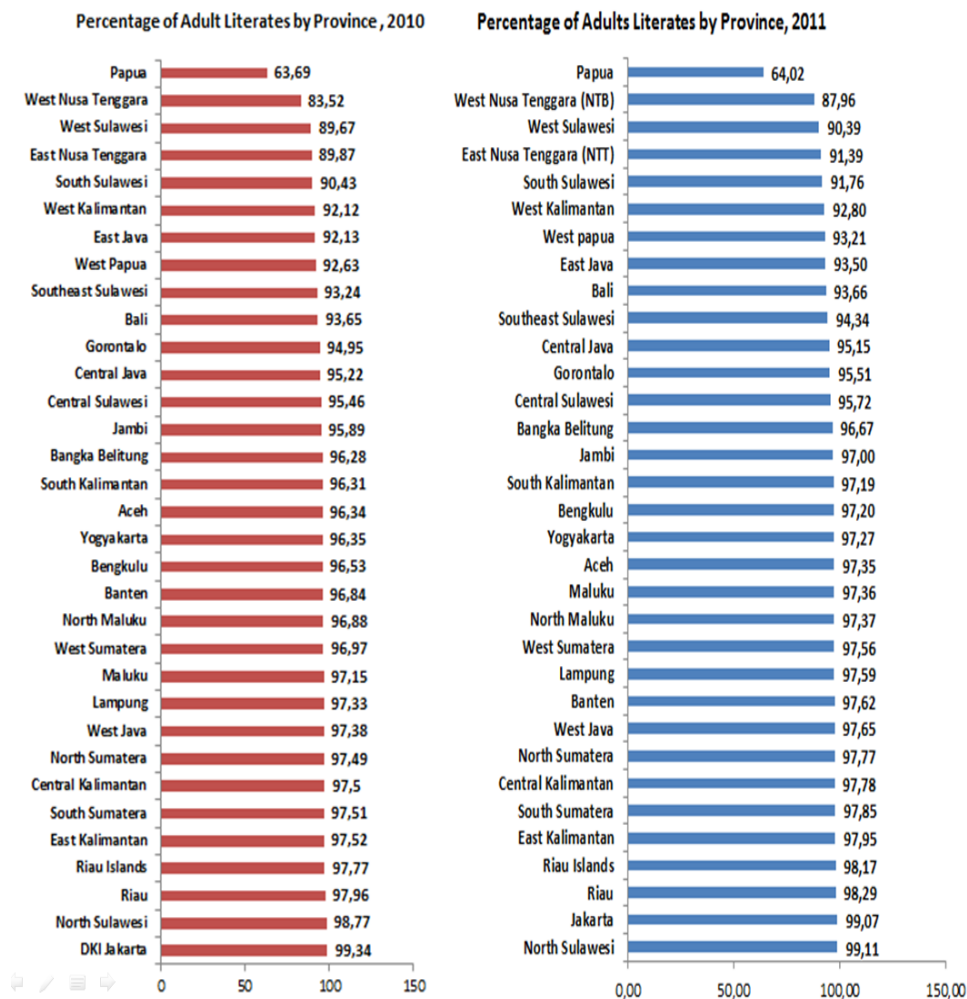
Figure-1 shows that there are four provinces whose illiteracy rate is the highest or above 10%, namely West Nusa Tenggara (16.48%), East Nusa Tenggara (10.13%), West Sulawesi (10.33%) and Papua (36.31%). In these four provinces, there is still quite a large number of young population (15–24 years). These four provinces will be prioritized action plan for the year 2013–2015.

There are seven provinces with illiteracy rate between 5.0% - 9.9%, namely Gorontalo (5.05%), Bali (6.35%), Southeast Sulawesi (6.76%), West Papua (7.37%), East Java (7.87%), West Kalimantan (7.88%), and South Sulawesi (9.57%) and twenty-two provinces having

illiteracy rate lower than the national average, while six provinces have the lowest illiteracy rate, namely DKI Jakarta (0.66%), North Sulawesi (1.23%), Riau (2.04%), Riau Islands (2.23%), East Kalimantan (2.48%) and South Sumatera (2.49%).

Figure-2 indicates that in 2010, there were four provinces of which their illiteracy rate was above 10%. The 4 provinces are Papua, West Sulawesi, East Nusa Tenggara and West Nusa Tenggara. However, as indicated by Figure 3, provinces with lower illiteracy rate decreased from four to two provinces in 2010 namely Papua and West Nusa Tenggara.

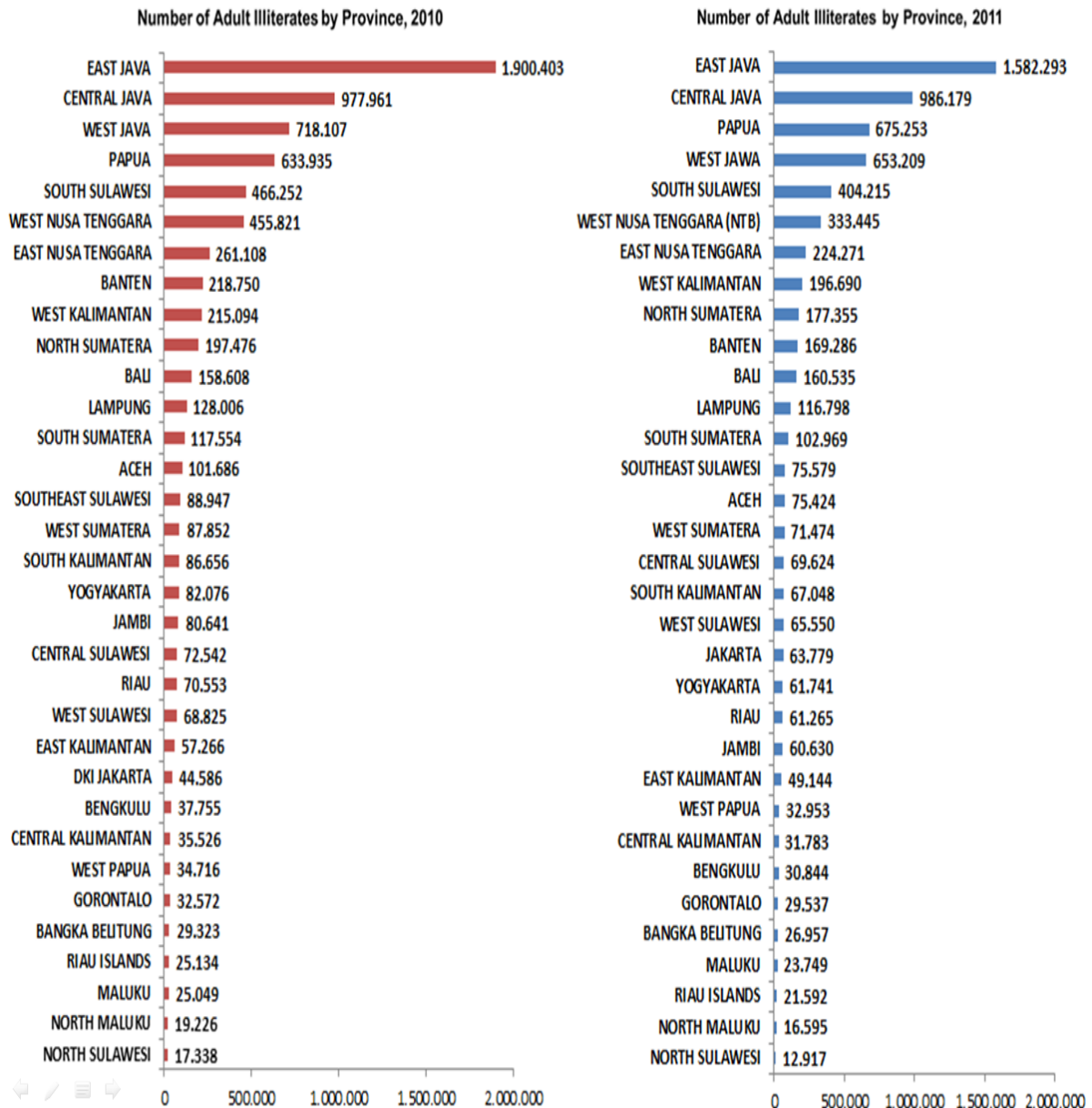
Figure-2 Percentage of Literacy Rate by Province



Source: National Statistics Bureau, 2010

It is important to note, however, that even though the literacy percentage of a province is high, it does not necessarily indicate that the number of illiterates in that province is low. The same goes for the opposite. In some cases, this is caused by the high population number living in that province. As a result, we can see there are 9 provinces with the number of illiterates over 200,000 people. The provinces are East Java, Central Java, West Java, Papua, South Sulawesi, West Nusa Tenggara, East Nusa Tenggara, Banten, and West Kalimantan. However, by 2011, the number of illiterates in Banten and West Kalimantan decreased, becoming less than 200,000 people.

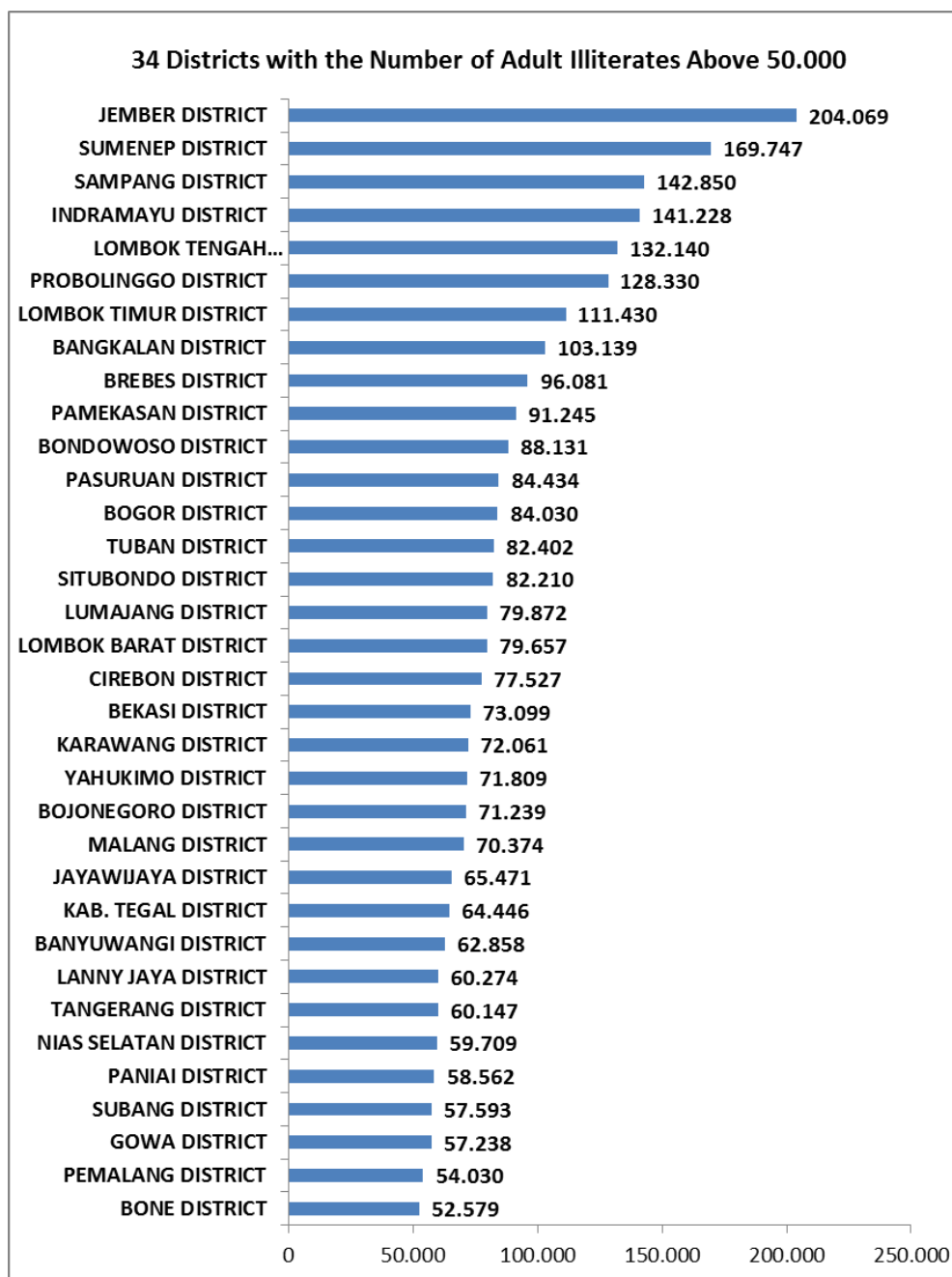
Figure-3 Number of Adult Illiteracy



Source: National Statistics Bureau, 2010

Similar with the provincial level, if we calculate the number of illiterates at district/city level, we have 34 districts with illiterate population over 50,000 people (see Figure-4). There are even two districts with illiterates over 150,000 people, namely Jember (204.1 thousand) and Sumenep (169.8 thousand).

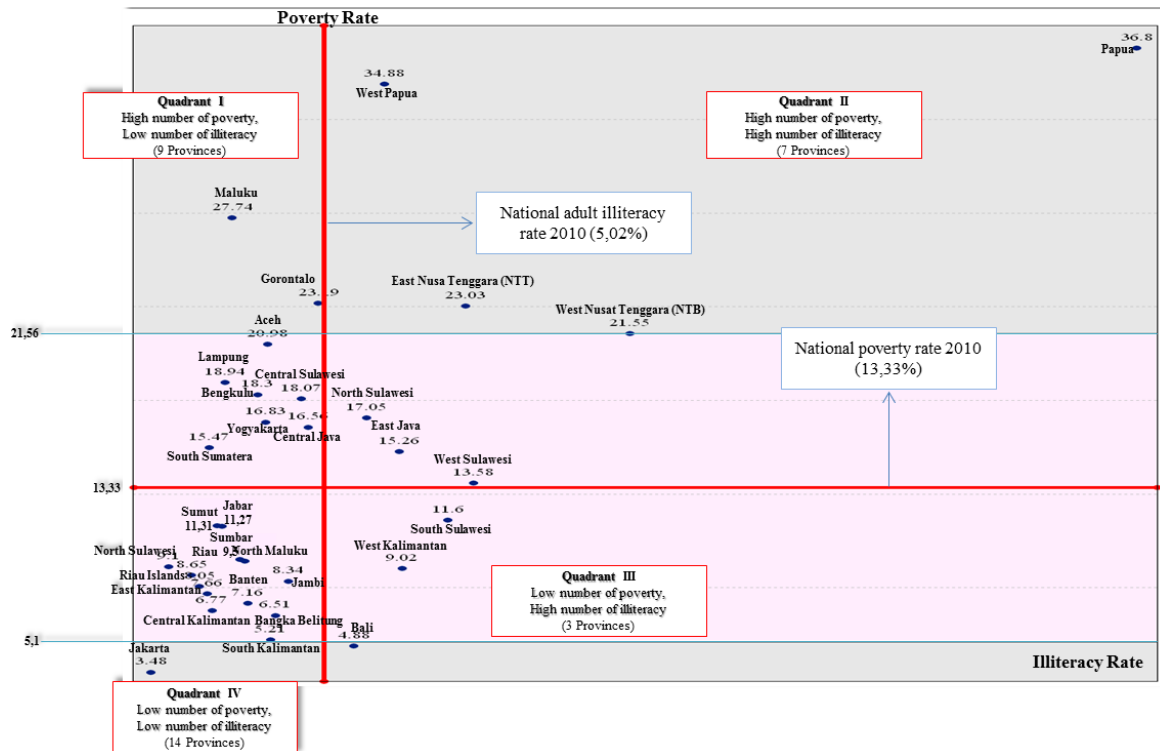
Figure-4 Number of Adult Illiteracy in 34 Districts with over 50,000 Illiterate Population



Source: National Statistics Bureau, 2010

There is also a close connection between illiteracy and poverty at all levels. The provinces with the lowest level of literacy are also normally the poorest economically. In these quadrants (see Figure-5), it can be seen that the spread of illiteracy rate has strong correlation to poverty rate. If there is a province with high number of illiterates, the province's number of poverty is also high or vice versa. Quadrant II shows worrying statistics since there are seven provinces with high number of illiteracy and high number of poverty, namely Papua, West Papua, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), North Sulawesi, East Java and West Sulawesi.

Figure-5 Relationship Pattern between Poverty and Illiteracy Rates by Province Based on Population Census 2010



Source: National Statistics Bureau, 2010

F. Problem, Challenges and Actions

Indonesia’s significant achievement in improving literacy obviously comes from great efforts for many years. The biggest obstacles when we launched the program mainly relate to the followings:

- 1) **Commitment:** Since the issuance of Presidential Instruction No. 5, 2005, almost all parties feel that illiteracy is a solved problem. Many people think that literacy is no longer a problem. In contrast, disparity among provinces remain high.
- 2) **Learners:** Most learners of literacy education are difficult to reach, relatively old in terms of age and strong in holding their old tradition and culture. They are also commonly marginalized groups, those living below the poverty line, who are illiterate, low-skilled, unemployed, and having other disadvantages due to not experiencing education in the first attempt at childhood
- 3) **Geographical condition:** Indonesia has regions that are geographically hard to reach because of infrastructure problem. There are mountaineous, archipelagic, border and remote areas such as Papua, West Nusa Tenggara, East Nusa Tenggara, and West Sulawesi.

In order to tackle the problems and challenges mentioned above, Indonesian Government carried out persuasive and non confrontative approaches in order to renegotiate the meaning of literacy by improving the quality of literacy which is started from family.

Reinforcement and breakthrough strategies are also taken in order to cope with today's rapid development and increasing demands. The breakthrough efforts that have been carried out are summarized under the label "5 Rs" as follows.

First, **redesigning** literacy competencies in order to cope with today's increasing demands. Second, **reliability** and validity of data to verify existing and sex-disaggregated illiterate adult population at all administrative levels. Third, **resource** sharing between national and provincial government based on a reliable and valid data of adult illiteracy in order to get the budget for literacy program doubled as a consequence of an acceleration in the literacy improvement. Fourth, **refocus** on the outreached to have sharing responsibilities for the literacy improvement; national government focusing on national, generic and inovative issues while provincial government focusing on specific areas in their respective provinces that have a high illiterate adult population. Fifth, **research**, evaluation and monitoring to develop, deliver and document a comprehensive information about literacy practices and improvement in culturally and contextually different areas.

G. Lesson Learned

- Synergy in the preparation and implementation of the program is of paramount importance. It was difficult to implement an integrated cross-sector program because each party had their own objectives and priorities for the own sector development work.
- It is important to involve the grassroots stakeholders on the development of the program design. Doing so will create clear participant-orientated objectives, which should hold precedence over other stakeholders' goals, and guide the planning process in a way that will ensure that the programme effectively serves its target participants.
- Financial transparency is vital to the program, in terms of creating meaningful evaluations, and encouraging participation and funding from other sectors.
- A more binding set of standards should be agreed upon for local authorities, some of which are not so effective in program implementation due to their high levels of bureaucracy, or due to their individual political agendas. Such an agreement should include effective mechanisms and community accountability.

H. Future Agenda

Indonesian Government's future plan is to reduce disparity among provinces to create free from illiteracy Indonesia. This is important so that Indonesia could avoid conflicts and hence, it will bring fair, peaceful and prosperous life as well as ability to face climate change. My point is that, in reducing disparity among provinces, we will directly focus on areas with high

adult illiteracy rate by administering Local Movement of Literacy Improvement. In addition, we will integrate literacy education with Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

The future agenda will also include the following programs.

No	Program
1	Increasing number of adult literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult basic literacy • Entrepreneurship Literacy • Building Capacity and Infrastructure • Institutionalized Community Learning Center and Other Non formal Institution
2	Increasing quality and relevance of learning opportunities for adult literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising Commitment and awareness of the benefit of adult literacy • Quality Improvement of teaching and learning • Reading habit development
3	Increasing number of adult basic literacy for Papua and other specific provinces, ethnic origin and remote areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Basic Literacy • Literacy based on mother tongue • Capacity building of preventive destructive behaviour
4	Increasing gender equality and equity, and women empowerment
5	Increasing capacity building for parenting education including preventive education of destructive behaviour and natural disaster
6	Monitoring and evaluation
7	Other Initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective Learning Hubs • Smart Houses