APFSD Youth Call to Action 2021:
Indonesia[1]

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated many vulnerabilities in Indonesia. Youth unemployment and disempowerment levels are becoming extremely high, which has a ripple effect on mental health as well. Fresh graduates are finding it particularly difficult to find jobs in the current economic situation. LGBTIQ+ persons and sex workers have also lost their jobs and are facing high discrimination, earning less income, and are unable to access HIV treatment and other public health services due to the reprioritisation of the health sector in dealing with the pandemic. A rise in sexual abuse cases coupled with lack of access to public health services and Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), has resulted in the number of child marriages also increasing. The situation is worsened by the current discussion on the Draft of the Penal Code, in which CSE is criminalised. In terms of education, there is limited access to the internet to support online schooling or working from home that has further created inequalities.

This pandemic has also influenced climate change and environmental problems. In regards to waste management, people at the individual level are still unaware of the importance of implementing 3R (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) and need to encourage the government to push for a better waste management system. Furthermore, the deforestation in one of Indonesia's provinces,Kalimantan, to create more palm tree plantations is triggering problems as all the minerals in the soil are being used up for palm trees and cannot be used to replant the forest. This is also connected to the land rights of the indigenous people as large companies are taking their land by force and using them unethically to damage the environment and destroy the community ecosystem. We should be using the opportunity right now to move from fossil fuel to renewable energy, and planning to counter sea pollution and ocean warming, as we are an archipelago with a larger sea area than land. Furthermore, methane and biogas created by the livestock industries is also a big problem.

COVID-19 has brought us an opportunity to increase the communities' awareness on sustainable living and other solutions in contributing to the SDGs which are covered in our recommendations.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from COVID-19

- Establish inter-organisational harmonisation and build sustainable partnerships between the government and CSOs by supporting locally rooted solutions to reach provincial populations (such as to support youth capacity building), while pushing for the inclusive digitalisation of our livelihoods with increased internet access.
- Continue capacity-building for youth -- including marginalised communities, in policy development, decision making processes, strategy, and implementation of targets, particularly in agriculture and food security, education, public health (e.g. sexual and reproductive health and rights, climate action and response, transportation and mobility, and other areas).
- Improve education literacy, pedagogy, and accessibility, particularly regarding online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Strengthen the national statistics system through improved questionnaires and methodologies.
- Provide social protection by giving food assistance and cash to marginalised populations, such as pregnant women, children, people with disabilities, and the elderly.

SRHR

- Provide and strengthen capacities for counselling and advocating on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) programmes and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services, especially in regional and national level syllabus.
- Increase awareness of CSE using youth friendly and innovative ways through locally based approaches, cartoons, internet-based platforms, and television channels.
- Pass the Elimination of Sexual Violence Bill (RUU-PKS)
- Build partnerships and intergenerational cooperation between different stakeholders in providing CSE to sustain the 2030 Agenda to provide universal access to SRHR.

Labour Force Participation

- Implement pre-work education programmes and campaigns to grow youths' skills and critical thinking before they join the workforce
- Create partnerships between entrepreneurs and the government to disseminate knowledge related to entrepreneurship that will target young people. This endeavor will consist of knowledge related to life skills, which includes entrepreneurial skills.
- Create sustainable and green jobs by involving all parties cooperation, including but not limited to, the private sector.
- Encourage the establishment of labor unions. With more unions, more advocacy can be done to push for a healthy working environment.
- Ensure the government's transparency and accountability for job incentives and training programmes to be accessible for all.

Climate Action

- Innovate through utilising technology to create an application to calculate our own personal carbon emissions.
- Ensure collaboration between the government, NGOs, local communities, and other stakeholders to create an eco-sustainable economic framework for the post-COVID-19 era.
- Advocate for policy changes regarding plastic waste, replantation, waste management, medical waste, organic waste, incentives for the mobilisation of eco-friendly projects, and increasing taxes for emission.
- Raise awareness on climate change through implementing green lifestyle, and save biodiversity by revitalisation and improving conservation efforts.
- Provide more space for youth to engage and become involved in the policy making recommendations through the creation of the National Youth Climate Council.