

Mother Tongue Based Curriculum for Primary Education in Indonesia
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This presentation outlines two pilot programs in developing and implementing mulok (local content curriculum) in Indonesia. In 2002 the government passed a law requiring a class period of mulok in addition to the national curriculum. The first initiative through SIL took place in Palu, the capital of Sulawesi in the Bolapapu and Lindu villages, with the aims of preserving local language, teaching local content in the mother tongue and improving student self-esteem and sense of cultural identity. Started in 2008, the program convened a language development committee for an orthography system, devised workshops on curriculum development, teacher guide creation, teacher training and program planning. The curriculum was implemented in 2nd grade classrooms starting July 2010. Despite the remote location and limited cell phone access, as well as difficulty in keeping to deadlines, the communities were happy with the development and received support from the local education department.

The second program took place in Poulle, Papua. Papua is ethnically and linguistically different from the rest of Indonesia. This particular case dealt with a small language group, only 500 speakers in two villages. Because of rapid assimilation into mainstream society, it has been a time of difficult social upheaval. And because they're such a small group, the youth have a low self-esteem and feel alienated from local customs. There's a large generation gap. The program helped create, most notably, a phonics primer and trained teachers and tutors to use them as well as employ alternative and engaging teaching strategies. Additionally, local stories and songs were used to teach traditions and habits and strengthen local identity. The community now feels encouraged that it is not too late to save their language and culture and a core group of young people have become interested in contributing. On the other hand, the schools in these villages lack proper supervision from local authorities and there are only three trained teachers between two villages.

The relative success of the programs has led to the conclusions that teaching materials should be relevant to the teacher and learner's daily lives, that the community should be involved in decision making from the start to ensure sustainability and, finally, that literacy should not be an isolated goal but rather a means to broader development.