

Indonesia Mengajar: A Breakthrough of qualified education equalization in Indonesia

As other developing countries, Indonesia is facing multidimensional problem which reflected by *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs). It has education development gap between Java and out of Java. Java Island is well-known not only as a center of national economic, but also center of excellence in education for decades. According the national education ministry data, it's recorded that rural lack of 66 percents and cities are oversupplying more than 68 percents of teachers.

Indonesia Mengajar (teaching Indonesia) or briefly named by IM is initiated by Paramadina University rector, Anies Baswedan in 2010 whose aim to equalize qualified young teachers throughout the archipelago. He was inspired by former Gadjah Mada University rector, Koesnadi Hardjasumantri whose PTM/*Pengiriman Tenaga Mahasiswa* (student power delivery) in 1950's by sending university graduates to the remote area to fulfill lack of teachers and created remote village-children to be smart and educated like them. Whereas IM, is hoped to decrease gap between Java and out of Java, as well as among cities and villages. It recruits best university graduates whose highest standard in leadership experience and academic achievement record. Due to come from any background, it also provides excellent seven week-education training which hoped to be qualified teacher for a year in remote villages.

Selected young teachers is hoped to inspire and motivate less lucky student and encouraged escalating the education quality. As Mohammad Nuh, minister of national education of Republic of Indonesia said in the opening program: *IM become a society's initiative model to support an effort to create qualified Indonesians. Its vision and mission is in line with*

national program to equalize education quality throughout the archipelago. It's similar with the Deputy President Boediono's support: "Dear all selected young teachers; we don't only see your one year-teaching, but also your steady role in the remote villages. We hope your contribution will give positive impact to improve progress"

Anies Baswedan: Inspiring Founder

He was born on May 7, 1969 on Kuningan West Java and finished childhood in Yogyakarta. He graduated from Faculty of Economics of Gadjah Madha University, reached master degree in University of Maryland and doctor degree from Northern Illinois University, United States of America. He got several scholarships such as Fulbright Scholarship, William P. Cole Fellowship, and ICF Scholarship as well as several awards likes Nakasone Award, NIU Alumni Award, Ministry of Education and Sport Award and many more.

After playing a role as university student senate in 1996's, he and fellows established *Center for Student and Community Development (CSCD)* in Yogyakarta. The institution developed youth training in the remote areas namely PPDT/*Program Pengembangan Pemuda Desa Tertinggal* (isolated village-youth development program) and wide spread motivation and life skill for about 50 villages in East Borneo, Central Java and other islands.

Encouraged by many experiences within inter groups interaction and social movement, his thought always different with the majority in viewing and resolving Indonesia's problems. He stated that, "*independence promise is making smart to nation life, thus it must be fulfilled to every citizen*". This reminds every young that well education and welfare are not only an aspiration, but it's a nation promise. Anies believed that "*education is an escalator to escalate poor-man position from isolation and dependence become progress and*

independence". It means that education is not only to making smart, but also as a tool to change socio-economic status. He imagines, how great of Indonesia if the richness paradigm is changed?

He argued, " *if we are asked about, what the richness of Indonesia is?, the majority people will answer that Indonesia's richness is natural resources likes oil, gas, gold, coal, tin, sea, or forest. This must be changed. It should be answered that our richness is Indonesia's human resources. Its Indonesia's biggest asset is human resources and it could only reached by qualified education.* In his opinion, teacher is a key factor to improve qualified education. According to him, since Indonesia's independence in 1945, the teacher's fate likes marginalized. Therefore, it's unsurprisingly more than 66 percents of schools in the remote areas lack of teachers. It's made by problems likes low-wage and less pride to be teacher. In fact, almost all Indonesia's independence heroes have ever been teacher such as Soekarno-Hatta (first president and its deputy).

One Year-Teaching, Inspiring Forever

Anies Baswedan and team have selected 50 young teachers whom placed in the elementary schools to different island in 2010 IM. The five regencies namely Bengkalis in Riau, Tulang Bawang in Lampung, Passer in East Borneo, Majene in West Celebes and Halmahera in North Moluccas archipelago. One of young teachers is Ayu Kartika Dewi who previously worked and dollar-paid in Singapore. She has graduated from Airlangga University Surabaya and reached 3.6-GPA and is now placed in South Halmahera which eight-hours trip by boat from Ternate city. She's generous to leave from luxury and comfort welfare in Singapore for the sake of Indonesia's education.

It's similar with Erwin Puspaningtyas Irjayanti who graduated from Bogor Agricultural University and has worked in the established bank with sufficient salary in Jakarta. She left career to pay homage for nations and is now placed in Majene, West Celebes. She was directly interested when firstly heard about *Indonesia Mengajar*. The similar spirit is reflected by Rahman Adi Pradana who got double-degree from Electronic Engineering, Bandung Institute of Technology and Economic Faculty, Padjajaran University. He left from multinational company in Jakarta for the sake of one year-teaching in South Halmahera. He stated that, "*this nation is very developed enough; it's time to give something to this beloved country*".

Those young teachers are now not only teaching in the elementary schools, but also giving smart society activities related with education and building network and advocacy of education in the remote rural areas. Due to their role, those young teachers would improve leadership skill which could integrate within various society characters throughout the archipelago and of course, become teacher which can inspire children in the remote rural; *One year-teaching, inspiring forever.*