

Fighting COVID-19 while Sustaining Collective Work Towards SDG and Better Local Cooperation



Photo source: [UNDP Bangladesh/Fahad Kaizer](#)

136 million people were infected and more than 2.94 million were killed. It has been a year since the first Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) was reported in Wuhan, China last November 2019. Since then, this pandemic has drastically changed the living order of the entire world's population. In Indonesia alone, as of March 12, 2021, approximately a year since the first case was declared in the country, nearly 1.57 million cases have been recorded and more than 42.5 thousand people have died.

The Indonesian government is working to deal with the impact of COVID-19 which disrupting the whole economy and social activities. This pandemic has exposed the consequences of the deepening systemic inequality beyond our expectation. However, amid a devastating crisis, there is space for bold decisions. In the past

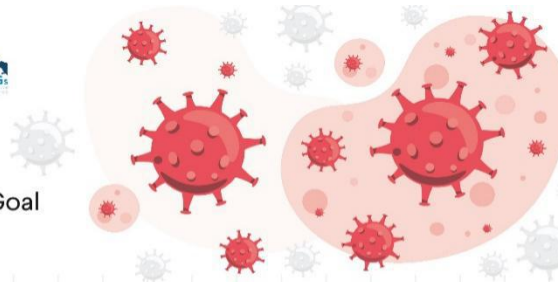
months, the world has seen policymaking that seemed impossible just a few months ago.

This pandemic has markedly changed almost the entire core of government activities, including the provision of basic services (education, health, and employment) to citizens. All of these things are very important for the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

UN ESCAP on Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2021 said, “The Asia-Pacific region is not on track to achieve any of the 17 SDGs by 2030. On its current trajectory, the region may achieve less than 10 per cent of the SDG targets.” It happened due to COVID-19 Pandemic that impacted almost all sustainable development goals efforts. Even so, COVID-19 has a huge impact on Goals 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), 14 (Life Below Water) and 15 (Life on Land). Based on the research conducted by UCLG ASPAC Localise SDGs team, it also shown how COVID-19 affecting the Sustainable Development Goals progress.



Correlation between COVID-19 Impact with Sustainable Development Goal Agendas Progress



	Income loss has resulted in communities and families becoming vulnerable to poverty.		Impacts on Goals 4, 5, 8, and 11 increase inequality.
	Disruption to food production and distribution.		Population in slum areas face an increased risk of being exposed to COVID-19 because of overcrowding and poor sanitation.
	Deadly effects on health.		Promote an opportunity to build recovery plans that will reverse current trends and change our consumption and production patterns
	Many schools are closed; distance learning is ineffective and inaccessible for some students.		Reduced commitment on climate actions; however, ecological footprint has been minimised due to less production and transportation use.
	Women's income has dropped. Increased violence against women. Women, as the majority of medical and social workers, are more vulnerable to COVID-19.		Drastic reduction in human activity may be a change for the ocean to recuperate
	Disruption to clean water supply and access has brought difficulties for communities to protect themselves from COVID-19.		Wildlife trafficking disrupts ecosystem and contributes to the spread of infectious diseases
	Lack of personnel has resulted in disruption to electricity access. This has weakened the responses and capacity of the healthcare system.		Communities in conflict areas are more at risk of suffering from COVID-19.
	Economic activities are disrupted. Income has been reduced. Reduction of working hours. Unemployment for certain types of jobs.		Recognising the importance of international cooperation on public health.
	Industry activities disrupted and causing huge regional economic loss and unemployment surge		

Source: Adopted from United Nation, 2020

Further Information

www.uclg-aspac.org & localisesdgs-indonesia.org

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Source: Localise SDG's Pocketbook Volume 1.

Indonesian cities promote better resilience and sustainability during a pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic forces governments around the world, including in Indonesia, to seek innovation and push government operating systems to achieve SDG targets. Using the business-as-usual approach is no longer an option.

The COVID-19 shocked multiple stakeholders in the city and created a paradigm shift in developing cities, particularly on ensuring the SDG targets achievement. Generally, there are 6 innovative approaches and best practices from Indonesia cities that possibly can be replicated by cities around the world. These are the social safety net, economic stimulus and incentives, basic services delivery improvement, local community empowerment, economic relaxation strategy, as well as advancing collaboration and information system.

Bengkulu City had a unique approach to social safety net by guaranteeing food security for the community through the utilization of idle land and yards as food-growing land. The city government collaborates with the Military District Command (Kodim), which is in line with the role of the Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI-AD) in supporting food security.

Bengkulu City also adopted a good practice on economic stimulus and incentives. Through the Regional Drinking Water Company, Bengkulu City freed the middle and lower class of society from water bills during the pandemic period. This incentive was given from March 2020 to February 2021. In order to ensure the delivery, the Bengkulu City government conducted a direct field survey in each household. There are at least 3000 customers in Bengkulu City (average water usage 30 m³) that received the incentive.

Several Indonesian city governments also improved their basic services delivery by improving and utilising telemedicine platforms. This idea was conducted due to the urgency in reaching the remote areas where health services are inaccessible. It is also useful to reduce the infection rate in black (uncontrolled infection rate) and red (high rate of infection) zone areas. Jambi City, Maluku Province, DKI Jakarta Province, and East Java Province are pioneers in mainstreaming this approach.

Another example of how Indonesian city/provincial governments thrive during the pandemic is reflected in how they can encourage collective work among communities. In Central Java Province, the governor encourages a community collaboration with "Jogo tonggo" program that focuses on the early identification, prevention, and reduction effort in facing COVID-19 spreading at the local level. They also monitor local activities that potentially contribute to the COVID-19 case surge.

Regarding economic relaxation, the best practice comes from Semarang City. In order to tackle the economic loss during the pandemic, the city government collaborated with an online platform, the Tumbasin.id, to provide daily citizens basic needs. Through this platform, citizens can easily connect with the local market trader and order their daily needs. The order is delivered to the citizens by utilizing the existing online transport system. By doing this, Semarang City fostered local economic activity to gradually improve the city's economic condition.

A best practice also comes from Bogor regarding collaboration and information system improvement. During the pandemic, Bogor City Government developed a crowdfunding platform to generate a source of funding to help people who have lost their income during the pandemic and were not registered as beneficiaries of the social safety net program from the central government, the provincial government, or the Bogor City Government itself. It expected to reach 90.379 households that have not registered to the social safety net program and help them to provide their basic needs. This platform also reconnected donors, and boosted the solidarity among the rich and the poor in the city, and helped the city regain its confidence in facing COVID-19.

These are some examples of how the Indonesian local governments thrived during the pandemic. It clearly demonstrated that nothing is impossible, particularly in ensuring the implementation of sustainable development goals agenda. The success of these initiatives was possible because local government worked with their stakeholders and can be considered in future development strategies.