

Next Generation

Indonesia

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Foreword

Indonesia's population Census in 2020 shows that the Millennial (25,87%) and Generation Z (27,94%) generations make up the largest part of Indonesia's population. The large number of youth is a great potential for the nation as youth development becomes a national priorities. In order to support the improvement of high quality and competitive human resources in Indonesia, we focus on the strengthening the capacity and building the character of Indonesia's youth. We want young Indonesians to actively participate in the development process not only as beneficiaries of program but also as government's equal partner – collaborators and innovators.

To measure youth development efficacy at both the national and sub national level, the Government of Indonesia has established the Youth Development Index (YDI). This index consists of 15 indicators that describe the improvement of youth quality across 5 domains: Education, Health and well-being, Opportunity and employment, Leadership and participation, and Gender and discrimination. As a multi-sectors issue, youth development requires strong collaboration from various stakeholders, including the non-government parties.

Data is crucial for an evidence-based policy approach. Data is used either as a baseline or a result description of youth policy implementation. We express our great appreciation for the British Council who has released the study report of Next Generation in Indonesia that gives an updated depiction of the lives of young people in Indonesia today. The findings from the research will provide a prominent input for us, particularly during the process of analysing Youth Strategic Issues for the next National Med-term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2025-2029 and National Long-term Development Plan (RPJPN) 2025-2045.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the British Council Indonesia, youth communities, and all parties who contribute in this study. This report will be an initial step to strengthening our commitment, coordination, and collaboration in order to escalate the youth quality of life as well as their participation in all development sector.

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Ministry of National Development Planning of the Republic of Indonesia

Jakarta, October 2022.

Foreword

Indonesia is on a path of sustained inclusive growth with an ambition to improve quality and inclusion in education and skills for its population of 270 million, 52% of whom are young people. The British Council works directly with young people to help them gain the skills, confidence and connections to transform their lives and shape a better world in partnership with the UK.

To gauge the pulse of young people in Indonesia, the British Council has conducted the Next Generation programme at a time when the country hosts the world through its presidency of G20. The Next Generation programme helps us better understand attitudes and aspirations and support better youth policy making and future programming.

The survey began during a very difficult time for Indonesia. A third wave of COVID had significantly impacted families across the country so not surprisingly this was the number one issue identified. As we emerged from the pandemic in 2022 with the G20 Indonesia presidency proudly promoting 'recover together, recover stronger', it's hard to believe quite how fast life has returned to normal. The Indonesian economy rebounded from the downturn and ended 2021 with output higher than pre-pandemic 2019, according to the Asian Development Bank (ADB, 2022).

Despite the COVID challenge, young people are optimistic about their futures. With a sense of pride and belief in their country contributes to this, strong economic forecasts back up this optimism with Indonesia expected to be the seventh largest economy by 2030 and an aspiration to be the fourth largest by 2045.

Yet, optimism is tempered by very real concerns over future opportunities for employment in an increasingly competitive environment. Are secondary and tertiary education pathways helping young people acquire the skills for the workplace? Is there enough help and guidance for people to set up and run their own business? The 'side hustle' culture of young people setting up microbusiness to make ends meet shows enterprise and initiative, but can this translate into a bigger opportunity?

With Indonesia being fully engaged in digital transformation and prioritising inclusion for all in the digital economy, digital access and safety is a strong theme through the report. Many young people whilst digitally literate are concerned about fake news and having the ability to fact check and challenge. Mental health, for so long a taboo subject, has also become a key issue for many because of the disconnect felt through the pandemic.

Indonesia as the current G20 president has hosted many working groups and summits across education, digital, and culture. The Next Generation research has worked alongside Y20, the Youth group which aims to influence policies and strategies of governments. A regular theme of Y20 and reflected in our findings and in the overall mission of Next Generation is how to strengthen on the impact of youth voice in policy development. As we see in this report, there is a clear demand for inclusive access and opportunities for youth groups to join discussions at the local and national level. Young people are calling for more mechanisms that ensure young people are at the table and are empowered to raise their concerns and ideas.

Throughout the topics discussed, we see that young women and men share broadly similar views across the spectrum of subjects discussed. Whilst Young people are not disinterested in politics, more work is needed to engage them. Additionally, although Climate change is an issue, concerns regarding education and employment take precedence.

At the British Council, we will use the insights shared in Next Generation to inform our own future programming. We will flag education and employment issues in policy dialogues and explore how to further develop a new 'young leaders' programme to help youth voice and policy impact policy. Conducting Next Generation Indonesia has allowed us a moment to stop, think and most importantly, listen and work with young people to explore how can we work together to create more a more sustainable future for the youth of Indonesia, through building connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK, Indonesia and countries worldwide.

Hugh Moffatt,

Director, British Council Indonesia

Executive summary

Background to the research

This report presents findings from mixed-method research exploring the socio-cultural contexts, attitudes, and aspirations of young Indonesians, as part of the British Council's global Next Generation research programme. The findings are a synthesis of a literature and cultural review; secondary analysis of the World Values Survey; a nationally representative quantitative Next Generation survey and multi-stage qualitative methods (online and face-to-face) with young people aged 16-35 across Indonesia - an audience which represents approximately 32 per cent of the population in Indonesia. This research series explores young people's daily lives and outlooks in countries with large youth populations undergoing significant change, with the aim of ensuring young people's voices are amplified and placed at the forefront of youth policy.

At the time of this research, educational quality, learning inequalities, concerns about political corruption, unemployment (exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic), and accelerated access to digital and media were all powerful influences on young people's attitudes and perceptions of their future. This research aimed to understand young people's views as they navigate this landscape and to shed light on the issues that matter to them most.

Research was commissioned by the British Council and conducted by independent youth research agency 2CV, with the help of a network of local partners¹ and with the input of the British Council Team and the Youth Task Force².

Summary of findings

Pride and optimism despite a lack of forward momentum

Young Indonesians are proud of their country. *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity) is more than a national motto, it is woven into the fabric of every-day life. When asked to describe their country in five words, young Indonesians largely use positive language: 'diverse' (20 per cent), 'beautiful' (29 per cent) and 'developed' (17 per cent). Indonesian youth spoke fondly of Indonesian culture, the central role of faith and tolerance in Indonesian life, and the importance of family and

community, above all else. Young Indonesians also feel optimistic about both their personal futures (65 per cent) and the future of their country (64 per cent think Indonesia will improve in the next five years). When asked to write letters to their current selves from an imagined future as a qualitative exercise, the overarching sentiment was that life would have improved.

However, despite this general optimism, young Indonesians are experiencing a lack of momentum, with half of young people expressing that life in Indonesia has not improved since their parents were the same age. This perceived lack of momentum is in part due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic, but also young people's increased exposure to a global world and a perception of how their country fares compared to its ASEAN neighbours. Young people are experiencing a range of issues, with COVID-19 (50 per cent), employment/finance (55 per cent), health (48 per cent) and education (42 per cent) chief among them. When asked which issues should be prioritised and improved in the future, education, employment opportunities, health and political corruption emerged as top priorities. Whilst young people also expressed concern about climate change (natural disaster was ranked as the sixth biggest concern affecting young people personally (21 per cent), this is overshadowed by more pressing every-day concerns around education and employment.

Young people are vocal about the structural support that they feel is needed in these areas to carve out a better future for the next generation. Young people see greater investment in infrastructure (physical and digital), education, better governance (free of corruption) and greater representation of youth voice as key to improving these issues.

Youth are balancing collectivist and individualist value systems

Young Indonesians are exposed to a range of influences that pave the way for them to hold collectivist and individualist value systems simultaneously. Influences that tend to pull young people more towards collectivist values include strong family relationships (which are central to youth identity); the Indonesian education system (which fosters a sense of pride in national

identity); and religion, which young people see as central to their daily lives. However, like young people in other Asian nations, young Indonesians are also exposed to an increasingly global world, a competitive employment landscape, high levels of migration and different worldviews (via digital and social media) that can push them more towards individualist value systems.

Young people's top values are 'Respect' (61 per cent) and 'Tolerance' (60 per cent). However, they acknowledge that the demands of every-day life can encourage individualism. 'Freedom' emerged as an important value to 41 per cent of young Indonesians, and we also saw more individualist values emerge when young people were asked to consider which values are most important to pass onto future generations. These top values are consistent among both young women and men within Indonesia with women placing even more value on respect and tolerance, alongside a higher emphasis on safety, open-mindedness, gender equality and religion.

Navigating this duality between collectivism and individualism is something young people navigate in many areas of their lives. Young people want to please their parents and make their communities proud, but also want freedom to pursue their own dreams. This plays out particularly strongly in young people's competing employment motivations. On the one hand, young people want to please and take care of their parents, but on the other hand, they are excited by entrepreneurial prospects and new opportunities that have presented themselves in the wake of accelerated access to digital services and technology.

Personal, social and environmental factors can both facilitate and inhibit youth voice

Young Indonesians define 'voice' as 1) having the agency to make decisions about important matters in life and 2) being able to exert influence on and be listened to by others. Whilst findings from the World Values Survey indicate that young Indonesians have a great deal of choice and a strong sense of autonomy³, this does not extend to all demographic groups and there are several social and environmental influences that curb young people's ability to exert influence and be listened to by those around them. The conditions that facilitate or inhibit youth voice comprise 'personal', 'social' and 'environmental' factors.

Personal factors: Certain demographic groups in Indonesia have limited ability to use their voice. These include members of the LGBTQ+ community, young people with disabilities, young women and young people from religious minority backgrounds. Whilst these groups experience different levels of stigma and discrimination, they all share a more limited ability to use their agency and exert influence.

Social factors: Influences in young people's social and cultural environments (parents, local communities, educational and work cultures) can act as both inhibitors and enablers of youth voice. In educational and work settings, hierarchical cultures and strong cultural norms that value respect and age hierarchies dominate, and young people sometimes feel silenced by teachers and employers. Similarly, respect for parents and elders can make young people hesitant to go against the status quo.

Within this challenging social environment, young Indonesians look to youth communities and social media to strengthen a sense of youth identity and amplify their voices. Forming communities of like-minded young people is common in Indonesia. Our Next Generation survey revealed that more than half of young people have engaged in at least one political or community activity in the past 12 months (66 per cent), with volunteering being particularly common (30 per cent). Similarly, social media platforms allow young people a space to experiment with different identities, show off group membership and promote their individuality.

¹ Qualitative partners include Illuminate, a strategic insights consultancy who supported us with the literature review, cultural analysis and online communities; and the Indonesia Youth Foundation, who supported on the face-to-face research by deploying their network of youth volunteers as peer researchers across the country. Quantitative partners include Myriad, a Social Research agency in Indonesia who undertook the face-to-face fieldwork and CINT, a global research panel who managed the online fieldwork

² A mixed panel of stakeholders from outside the British Council spanning government, education, arts, climate, digital skills, education and youth leadership.

³ 36 per cent of young Indonesians agreed that they have a great deal of choice, rating this 9 or 10 on a 10-point scale (compared to 28 per cent across the seven ASEAN markets included in the study). This was the joint highest rating given (equal to that given by Vietnamese youth).

Environmental factors: Young people's physical environments can limit and facilitate their opportunities to have a voice. Inequalities in access to and quality of education, uneven access to the internet and differences in opportunity in urban versus rural locations and Eastern versus Western parts of the country all impact young people's ability to develop their voice and have a say in what matters to them. Currently, young people in rural areas and Eastern parts of the country face more obstacles in access to and quality of education and digital infrastructure, which can limit their opportunities to make their voices heard.

Increased access to digital and media has amplified youth voice, but low digital literacy comes with some risks

The past decade has seen rapid digital growth in Indonesia, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, bringing the country up to levels more in line with ASEAN neighbours. This means that almost all Indonesian youth in our Next Generation survey said that they have access to some form of digital device (99 per cent).

This has opened unique opportunities to Indonesian youth. The prevalence of the internet and social media usage has created significant changes for young people, allowing them to:

- Express their voice and identity;
- Pursue entrepreneurial endeavours;
- Engage in activism around social and political issues;
- Obtain news and information in a new way.

Whilst older age groups (those over 25 years old) tend to use social media alongside other information sources (television, newspapers, etc.) younger age groups (those under 25 years old) rely on social media almost exclusively and trust it more than any other source of news or information. The difference across age groups in the Next Generation survey highlights the increasingly central role of social media in shaping how young Indonesians access and engage with news and media.

Whilst young people are highly engaged, they do not necessarily have the digital literacy to navigate this new space and are vulnerable to influence and 'fake news'. Indonesian youth often do not feel equipped to interrogate 'fake news' properly. Almost three quarters (70 per cent) of young people in our Next Generation survey (who have access to the internet) express concern around 'fake news' when using the internet.

Greater digital access has also been accompanied by a rise in cyber bullying, with 40 per cent of young people expressing concerns about this.

Young women and men in Indonesia have equal access to digital devices, however women are more likely to have concerns when it comes to using the internet and often feel more sceptical when it comes to the Indonesian media.

Young people had several suggestions for changes they would like to see:

- More support from educational institutions to understand and identify 'fake news' as young people lack the skills and tools to help them navigate online information;
- A push from government for greater equity in technological infrastructure, digital literacy and device access across the country;
- A government call for institutions to keep pace with the times – educational institutions and the formal employment sector are perceived to be behind the times in terms of technology uptake and innovation.

Education: the number one issue young people want to see improved

At the time of this research, significant changes to the educational curriculum were afoot in Indonesia with the *Merdeka Belajar – Kampus Merdeka* policy that aims to address long-standing issues with educational quality in the country. Whilst young people in this research had not felt the impact of these changes, they were optimistic about the future of education in their country, citing this as a top three issue that would improve in the next five years.

Young people place high value on receiving a formal education: it is seen as an essential component to strengthen character, imbue strong morals, and develop a uniquely Indonesian identity. However, less than half of our youth sample in our Next Generation survey agreed that their education has been valuable on a more practical level, whether it be to help them prepare well for general life (40 per cent) or for work (36 per cent), whilst just 39 per cent agree their education has helped their chances to get a job.

This points to a disconnect between the value young people place on education in the abstract – i.e. on education as a symbol of status and an institution that deserves respect – and the concrete benefits they are receiving from their education in reality.

The curriculum, practical skills development, teaching, teaching methods and facilities emerged as priority areas for improvement. Youth across Indonesia complained of detached or violent teachers, passive and theory-led teaching methods, large class sizes and a lack of resources and adequate facilities. Young people also noted the lack of uptake of technology in schools, both in terms of teaching methods and tools available to students. This can significantly impact how engaged youth are with their education. Lack of quality can lead young people to question the practical benefits of their education and can contribute to disengagement and in some cases, drop out.

Whilst policies are in place to minimise the costs of education across the country, financial constraints were still the main contributor to school drop out (34 per cent), particularly for women and young people in rural locations (43 per cent and 39 per cent respectively). Costs are also a key barrier to young people studying abroad.

Parental influence and pressure also play a large role in youth drop out. Given that Indonesian parents are typically the main decision makers in their children's lives, young people often drop out due to familial pressure to start earning and support their family. In our qualitative sessions, young people often expressed regret about their decision and welcomed opportunities to rejoin formal schooling.

Young people called for significant changes to their education system:

- Equal investment in education across Indonesia (particularly in rural areas and Eastern regions) to address quality and infrastructural issues;
- Improvements in teacher training and quality, particularly at lower levels of education;
- A better match between the skills taught in schools and those required by employers, particularly practical skills such as IT skills, financial and business literacy, and English language;
- Clearer links between educational institutions and employers to help young people with the transition between the two;
- Improvements in, and expansion of financial support programmes that help youth stay in (and re-enter) education;
- More scholarship opportunities for youth from lower socio-economic backgrounds to study abroad;
- More emphasis on nurturing creative talent and innovation in the classroom – for example,

encouraging skills like writing, music, graphic design;

- Greater adoption of technology in teaching methods – and a move away from overreliance on antiquated textbook and paper and pen methods.

Employment: lack of opportunities fosters an appetite for entrepreneurialism

A lack of employment opportunities emerged as the second biggest concern for young Indonesians (after COVID-19). High competition for jobs and a lack of opportunities (particularly in the formal sector) are key sources of stress and anxiety for young people and something they want to see addressed in the future. Our Next Generation survey revealed youth unemployment rates of 16 per cent (similar to official national statistics on youth unemployment in the country). Unemployment is worse for young people in rural areas, young people with disabilities and young women.

An uncertain employment landscape means young people experience competing motivations to find employment. Young people are propelled by a desire to make their parents proud and find 'stable' and 'secure' work in the formal sector (e.g. office jobs, civil service) that will come with a certain level of esteem and respect. However, at the same time, challenges such as nepotism, high competition, and a mismatch between skills taught in education and those required by the labour market make these ambitions difficult to fulfil. This challenge exists across educational levels, with young people who have completed higher education struggling to find formal employment. We found that 19 per cent of young people with a higher education degree who are working part-time or are unemployed state that this is due to a lack of job opportunities where they live.

A challenging employment landscape and high competition has also paved way for a highly pressurised work culture ('hustle culture') that encourages working long hours and multiple jobs. One in three young people stated that they need to work more than one job to earn enough to support themselves (32 per cent), with rural youth feeling this more acutely (35 per cent versus 29 per cent for urban youth), and almost one in five young people reported believing that 'hustle culture' is an effective way to progress in a career (17 per cent), with men and older age groups (25-29 and 30-35 year-old's) more likely to agree with this.

The above-mentioned challenges have inspired an interest in entrepreneurialism, with 57 per cent of our Next Generation survey participants expressing an interest in setting up their own business. Yet there is a nervousness about doing this, not only because of the pressure to make their families proud, but also the risk associated with starting a business. Less than half (44 per cent) of young people surveyed felt that setting up their own business was achievable, primarily due to lack of funds (29 per cent felt that there is a lack of funding for entrepreneurs) and over half (65 per cent) of young people felt that their education had not taught them the skills they need to be an entrepreneur.

Despite multiple challenges and barriers to employment, young people maintain a characteristically optimistic outlook for the future. As the next generation of workers, they want to be part of helping Indonesia to thrive – either through formal employment or as an entrepreneur – while also being afforded the opportunity to thrive themselves. Young people are aware that their hard work and faith can only get them so far and called for the following changes:

- Continued efforts from the government towards job creation, particularly in the formal sector;
- More support for entrepreneurialism from authorities and government at all levels, both in terms of training and financial support;
- A renewed focus on equal opportunities when it comes to employment, both in terms of regional development (by creating equal infrastructure and access to opportunities across all regions of the country) and cultural access, with young people calling for a cultural shift away from nepotism, sexism, ageism and ableism that still dominate many work environments.

Politics: political frustration, not apathy, dominates youth views

Young Indonesians' perceptions of the government are mixed; while a third believe the Indonesian government is effective, a third feel it is not. Corruption, collusion, and nepotism are issues young people feel are ingrained in the fabric of the Indonesian political system at national and local levels, and something young people urgently want to see addressed.

At first glance, young people appear apathetic towards politics, with little desire to increase their engagement, particularly those in rural areas and younger age groups. However, when exploring youth views in more

detail it became clear that young people feel frustration towards politics, not apathy. Four key themes emerged in our research:

Young people in Indonesia use social media to stay politically informed: Young people use social media in a range of ways, from sharing political news with friends, to using it as a platform for action and an outlet for their frustrations. In our Next Generation survey, those without access to the internet showed considerably lower political engagement (48 per cent were disengaged compared to 29 per cent of those with access). Over one in four young people mentioned that making political information easier to understand would increase their engagement (mentioned by 28 per cent of young people), particularly through social media (ranked as the top way to increase political engagement).

Young Indonesians admire political figures more than political parties: Despite low faith in the government among Indonesian youth, political figures emerged as key role models. Our Next Generation survey found that 17 per cent of young people felt they would be more politically engaged if there were more political figures to look up to (ranked fourth). Politicians who align with youth values are an effective way to increase engagement and trust; however, there is a risk that young people pay more attention to their character, rather than policy agenda.

Young people do not feel they have a legitimate voice to actively engage with politics: The political arena is a key area where limitations on youth voice are seen. As a result, many young people are left feeling that politics 'isn't for them', with some groups more affected than others; youth in rural areas, those with disabilities, and young women are particularly impacted.

Young people do not feel that political priorities align with their views: There was low awareness of government policies among our qualitative sample, with young people not feeling the tangible impact on their lives. Many young people felt not enough was done to address the impact of COVID-19 on young people, and that important areas, such as climate change and mental health, are not prioritised. Greater alignment with Indonesian youth is another powerful way to increase engagement; 23 per cent of our Next Generation survey stated they would increase their engagement if Indonesian politics reflected more of their personal views.

Despite scepticism around the current political system, young people are optimistic; our Next Generation survey found that a third feel the government is more effective than it was in the past. Young people believe that the next generation can disrupt the political status quo, ensure their views are better represented and bring about positive changes to the country. 59 per cent of young people are open to engaging with politics more and have ideas and suggestions on how it can be made easier for young people to get involved. However, to do this, young people must have greater clarity on how to enter the political sphere as a young person and called for the following changes:

- Greater enforcement of anti-corruption regulations and more severe consequences for those who get caught engaging in corruption, bribery and/or extortion;
- Increasing education and critical thinking skills around the policy agendas of political parties;
- Continuing use of social media as a tool to drive political engagement among young people;
- More efforts to increase the representation of young people, particularly marginalised groups, at local and national levels.

Health: positivity about health, but cultural and physical barriers to accessing services

Despite young people being generally positive about their current health (74 per cent according to WVS data), they do have concerns about the state of health in the country more broadly. 48 per cent of young people stated they have at least one or more concerns about health in Indonesia, making health the second biggest concern for young people after concerns about employment (55 per cent). Key health concerns include mental health (25 per cent), substance abuse (18 per cent with 21 per cent in rural areas), issues relating to smoking (13 per cent), early pregnancy (13 per cent, with 15 per cent in rural areas) and sexual health and disease (10 per cent).

There are both physical and cultural barriers to accessing healthcare services. Physical access to healthcare services is very uneven across Indonesia, and whilst our Next Generation participants felt that had good access to primary health care, access to more costly specialist care and medication presents an issue, especially for rural youth. Cultural barriers can hinder young people accessing health care, with conservative social, cultural, and religious norms around the topic of

sex meaning that youth across both urban and rural settings struggle to obtain accurate information regarding sexual reproductive health. Education around sex and sexual health is lacking in schools and young people can feel ill-equipped to talk about what they consider to be a 'taboo' subject.

Mental health emerged as the top health concern for youth (25 per cent). Mental health is a relatively new conversation, but a growing one, especially in urban areas. Changes in the mental health conversation can be attributed to three key influences:

- Increased education and exposure to mental health conversations via social media;
- An increasingly challenging social environment causing increased stress and pressure for young people;
- The on-set of COVID-19 making young people feel more isolated and aware of their own mental health.

Whilst awareness and conversations are growing among young people, stigma persists, and support is limited. This means many young people turn to the internet (and social media) for information and support, which can exacerbate the spread of misinformation and exacerbate symptoms for some (e.g. opening up about mental health but getting teased as a result). Mental health issues can also be accompanied by more maladaptive coping strategies, such as increased drug and alcohol use – an issue young people fear will get worse in the next five years.

Young people called for the following changes:

- Increased awareness of free/insured healthcare services for all young people;
- Increased education on sex and sexual health, specifically in schools (rather than relying on unregulated information and advice online);
- Increased education around the harms of substance abuse, alcohol and smoking and support to overcome these issues;
- Better mental health literacy and support, specifically in schools; and greater recognition from government authorities on mental health as a concern that needs addressing (and in turn addressing stigma).

Climate change: concerns about climate change are overshadowed by day-to-day worries like employment and education

Young people are concerned about climate change, with almost three in four choosing to protect the environment over economic growth when asked to choose⁴. However, on a day-to-day level, other issues (such as employment and education) feel more pressing. Climate change is currently of more concern to those with a higher level of education and those from higher socio-economic backgrounds, pointing to the role of education in raising awareness of and encouraging action on the issue, and suggesting that *scarcity* mindsets may play a role for young people in lower socio-economic groups who may have less headspace to worry about climate.

Findings from our Next Generation survey show that 21 per cent of young people feel they have been personally impacted by natural disasters, and they recognise the link between the climate and other areas of their lives, such as their financial security, access to food, water, and housing. Whilst young people understand that climate change is a global issue, the way they talked about its impact and solutions in our qualitative sessions suggests they conceive it to be (and experience it) more of a local issue with local solutions. This is likely because the varied geography and topography of Indonesia creates very different localised manifestations of climate change, which young people feel need to be tackled locally.

As a result, young people are looking to action from local governments as a priority. They called for:

- More coordination between local and national government - and between different local governments, to arrive at coordinated, but locally relevant solutions and regulations;
- Stricter regulations for businesses who are responsible for the devastating impacts on the environment, such as logging and pollution of rivers;
- Provision of better facilities to support the community with climate and conservation efforts;
- More support (financial aid, temporary housing, educational support, etc.) for communities that are currently most impacted by the impact of climate change;

- Educating the public through communication campaigns (including social media) on the gravity of the issue, and the specific actions they can take to help;
- Definitive action from education institutions on the issue. For example, making climate change part of the curriculum and encouraging opportunities for youth activism on climate within the school environment.

Audience and regional differences: similar views despite diversity and geographic spread

Despite its diversity and vast geography, young Indonesians were united on the top issues in the country and which areas should be prioritised. However, some consistent differences emerged:

Young women: Women tended to be more positive about the issues discussed in this report, despite experiencing a great number of challenges. The specific challenges that affect women more than men include mental health, gender inequality, sexual abuse/violence, and marriage and pregnancy at a young age. Women also face more barriers to employment due to established views of women's roles and capabilities. Women made up almost three quarters of unemployed youth in our Next Generation survey (73 per cent). Aside from these differences, it has been noted that for most of the topics discussed in this report, there were no substantial differences in opinions shared by young women and men.

Rural youth: Young people living in rural areas tend to experience more challenges in their lives, with greater concerns surrounding employment opportunities (almost one in four rural youth in our Next Generation survey were unemployed, compared to ten per cent in urban areas) with 23 per cent feeling that there are not enough job opportunities in their area. Other challenges felt more by those in rural areas include access to education, lack of financial security, natural disasters, and substance abuse, among others. In urban areas, the COVID-19 pandemic and work-life balance (either working long hours or having to work multiple jobs) are the biggest challenges. Those in rural areas are generally more optimistic about a range of these issues improving in the future.

East versus West: Similar top priorities come through for all regions (employment, health and education, etc.), however, young people in the East are less optimistic about these concerns 'getting better' in the future compared to their counterparts in the West. Uneven infrastructure development across the country means young people in Eastern areas of the country are less likely to have access to the internet compared to those in the West. Our Next Generation survey showed that young people in Eastern regions were less likely to feel that it is important to finish education (one in three compared to almost half in the West) and young people in the East were also more likely to feel that the education system is insufficiently equipping them for life and work - just 30 per cent felt that their education has prepared them well for working life (versus 38 per cent in the West) and only 32 per cent said that their education has helped them get a job (versus 40 per cent in the West).

Age: Younger age groups (16-19 year-olds) are significantly more positive about the future, whilst those in older age groups (25-35 year-olds) are disproportionately concerned about employment opportunities and financial security. When thinking about priorities for the future, older age groups prioritise economic improvements, whereas younger age groups are more concerned about social and political issues (e.g. ending political corruption, gender equality, sexual harassment), likely a combination of a generational shift in views on these issues but also the increased pressure older age groups are feeling to support themselves and others financially.

Disability status: Youth with disabilities are generally more concerned about health, including access to healthcare and mental health issues. There is also greater concern around employment and finances among young people who have physical disabilities than those with other disabilities or no disabilities. However, generally, youth with disabilities and those with no disabilities have the same top concerns, namely COVID-19, employment, education, and health.

Introduction and methodology

The British Council, as part of its worldwide Next Generation research programme, aims to amplify youth voices from different nations with a core similarity: a large youth population that will play a key role in the social, cultural, and economic future of the country. Indonesia, like many other Next Generation markets, has a ‘youth bulge’ demographic profile, with Indonesians under the age of 30 estimated to make up 46 per cent of the population by 2031, the fourth largest youth population in the world (UNFPA, 2014)⁵.

Spread across 17,000 islands, Indonesia is characterised by variety in every sense of the word. An archipelagic nation with a vast landmass, Indonesia comprises different ethnicities, ecologies, resource endowments, and economic activities that have paved the way for rich cultural diversity. With over 300 ethnic groups, over 700 languages, and six recognised religions (including Islam which is adhered to by roughly 90 per cent of the population), Indonesia is frequently touted as a beacon of tolerance, as characterised by its national motto: *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity).

Yet the country faces a unique set of challenges that, if not addressed, might challenge the sense of unity. Regional disparities in development patterns have led to wealth and opportunity inequalities that have tangible consequences for young people (Kurniawan, de Groot and Mulder, 2019)⁶. At the time of this research, young people expressed concerns about educational quality, learning inequalities, political corruption and vast unemployment (exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic). This research aimed to amplify youth voice as they navigate this challenging landscape and to shed light on the issues that matter to them most.

According to the Indonesia Statistics Bureau (2020)⁷, 52 per cent of Indonesia’s 270 million-strong population are young people (aged between 24-39 and 18-22 years old). With the two young generations (also known as Millennials and Gen Z) constituting a majority of the Indonesian population, Indonesian youth will shape the nation’s future. It is very important to understand youth attitudes and aspirations, including those from underprivileged backgrounds and differences by gender, as it can allow stakeholders such as the national government and other national and international

institutions to understand better how best to support youth voice; not least in realising a window of development opportunity through the demographic dividend.

Overall, young people are optimistic about their futures and the future of their country, with the majority feeling that the issues they face will improve in the next five years. Accelerated access to digital media has provided young people with new platforms to make their voices heard and has arguably amplified their role in determining what shape Indonesia’s future takes (Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung European Union, 2022)⁸. Understanding the changes young people hope to see and the role they want to take in effecting that change – now and in the future – is more important than ever.

Specifically, this research explored:

- **Daily life:** What are young people’s needs, hopes and challenges in daily life? Where do they go for information? What are their daily activities? What are their relationships like with friends, family, community and the wider political environment?
- **Values:** What factors influence the formation of young people’s value systems? What values do they hold dear and how does this play out in different areas of their lives?
- **Voice:** To what extent do young people feel able to make decisions about things that matter to them? Do they feel listened to, by their communities and Indonesian society? Can they effect change?
- **Key issues:** What are the biggest issues impacting young people today? What issues do they suspect will arise in the future? How do they experience these and what impact do they have on young people’s lives?
- **Support and solutions:** What do young people need and want from those around them and from wider Indonesian society to achieve their goals and ambitions?

Who are the young Indonesians in this report?

For the purposes of this research, ‘young people’ and ‘young Indonesians’ are defined as those who are 16 to 35 years old, currently living in Indonesia.

Spanning a distance equivalent to one-eighth of the earth’s circumference across 17,000 islands (6,000 of which are inhabited), we had to look at a wide and geographically dispersed audience to get a clear sense of young people across the country.

For the quantitative phase of the research, we spoke to 3,093 respondents in Indonesia aged 16-35 years old across the regions of Java, Kalimantan, Bali & Nusa Tenggara, Kepulauan Maluku, Sulawesi, Sumatera, and Papua (full details of the coverage across the 34 Provinces is included in Appendix 2). Our sample was recruited through both, face-to-face methods and via an online panel, with 50 per cent recruited through each method. To ensure that we reached participants in more remote, difficult-to-access regions of Indonesia, we partnered with Myriad Research (based in Indonesia) who conducted face-to-face interviews with 1,554 participants. We partnered with CINT (our online panel partner who manage a panel of respondents) to achieve our online sample of 1,539 interviews. Across both methodologies, we spoke to a representative mix of gender and age and had representative numbers of participants from each location. See Appendix 2 for full quantitative sample details.

While the quantitative data allowed us to get a clear picture of the state of play across the country, our qualitative sessions allowed us to fill in the gaps, gather more detail and bring the youth voice to life. We spoke to young people aged 16-35 across both urban and rural locations in nine provinces: West Java, East Java, North Sumatera, South Sulawesi, DKI Jakarta, East Nusa Tenggara, West Kalimantan, and Papua. Across these locations, we ensured a mix of genders, ethnicities, religions and socio-economic status. See Appendix 2 for full qualitative sample details.

What methods were used in this research?

Our approach was iterative and multi-method, with research taking place over three key stages:

1. Secondary research comprising a literature review and cultural analysis

Literature review: A comprehensive review of published sources, both peer-reviewed and grey literature, focussing on the social, political and economic space for young people in Indonesia, drawing on research from WHO, OECD, UNFPA, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, government data, academic journals, local media that focusses on youth; and Indonesian policy think tanks.

Cultural analysis: To supplement the desk research, we employed a semiotics approach to take a closer look at the cultural and social aspects of youth culture and how this is evolving. We analysed popular culture and media targeting youth, to identify key cultural codes and themes that resonate with young people. This approach provided an additional lens on how social and cultural aspects shape the way young people see the world and influence how they engage with media and technology.

These themes helped to inform our line of questioning in both the quantitative and qualitative research. Findings from the literature are also woven into this report to provide context to our primary research findings.

2. A nationally representative quantitative survey

A 20-minute online or face-to-face interview covering all aspects of their lives including attitudes, perceptions and behaviour when it comes to education, employment, digital and media, politics and their overall opportunities and aspirations along with issues and challenges they may be facing.

Before fieldwork commenced, we ran an initial piloting phase with a small group of respondents, alongside Myriad, the fieldwork agency responsible for conducting interviews. We then made amendments to the questionnaire based on specific feedback from respondents. Findings from this stage were used to inform the focus of the later qualitative stages.

5 UNFPA (2014). https://indonesia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/BUKU_Monograph_No2_Youth_in_Indonesia_ENG_05_Low-res.pdf

6 Kurniawan, de Groot and Mulder (2019). <https://rsaiconnect.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/rsp3.12160>

7 Indonesia Statistics Bureau (2020). <https://setkab.go.id/en/statistics-indonesia-releases-2020-census-results/>

8 Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung European Union (2022). <https://eu.boell.org/en/young-voices-indonesia>

3. Qualitative research

Following the nationally representative survey, we conducted primary qualitative research to dig into the quantitative findings in depth, add the ‘why’ behind the ‘what’, and capture rich, holistic data about how the issues we see in the statistics play out for Indonesian youth day-to-day. We employed two parallel research strands to achieve this:

a) Qualitative online communities:

With 40 young people in total, selected to represent a spread of youth demographics and contexts⁹. These young people took part in a range of digital tasks and activities across two weeks that spanned both private response, creative tasks and forum-based discussions. These included:

Week 1: Private tasks

(further detail provided in Appendix 2)

Task 1: Getting to know you

Task 2: Life in Indonesia

Task 3: Making a big decision

Task 4: My concerns and challenges

Task 5: Letter from my future self

Week 2: Forum discussion

Participants were presented with a series of provocative statements each day and invited to give their opinions and engage in debate with their peers on the platform. Statements covered the following topics: Politics, Values, Climate Change, Fake News and Mental Health.

Across two weeks, our exercises built up from more general discussion and ‘easier’ topics to those that were more personal or sensitive, so that youth could warm up and get comfortable, before tackling more difficult subject areas.

b) Participatory research: peer research with our Youth Research team (via our partnership with the Indonesia Youth Foundation (IYF))

2CV and the British Council believe there is real benefit in moving away from a model of asking questions and getting answers to one of true collaboration between all parties involved (research participants, beneficiaries, agencies and stakeholders) in attempting to solve a challenge. The need for this approach is obvious: those who are most affected by the inequalities or issues that many policymakers are trying to address, are often the most excluded from the decision-making processes

– and young people are no exception.

We used an approach that would allow youth participants to be active agents in the research process – from helping to inform lines of questioning to collecting and interpreting data.

We worked closely with the IYF to recruit a mix of youth volunteers (eight total) that represented a broad spectrum of youth experience across Indonesia (see Appendix 2 for details). These volunteers were onboarded and given thorough training by the 2CV team in qualitative research methods. These youth volunteers then went out into their communities and interviewed three young people each. This approach not only allowed us to reach a more marginalised, less digitally connected youth sample (that we could not reach via online methods), but importantly, it allowed us to engage in a valuable knowledge exchange with a diverse sample of young Indonesians who became our on-the-ground, peer researchers – our Youth Research Team (YRT). Full details of the YRT’s involvement can be found in Appendix 2.

When we refer to our *qualitative sessions* across this report, we are referring to insights from both the online community and the participatory research with the YRT. These were not intended to provide a representative qualitative evidence base or act as a stand-alone evidence base on the issues. Instead, it served as explanatory evidence for patterns identified in the quantitative research and to explore issues that are harder to pinpoint quantitatively (e.g. voice).

Our analysis approach across this piece of research was iterative, and the research team worked with the British Council and the Youth Task Force to evolve our questioning and approach. Analysis for all phases was thematic and our quantitative analysis focussed on identifying statistically significant patterns in the data, and on understanding regional and audience differences.

4. Secondary analysis of the World Values Survey, The Big Conversation Research toolkit and the Global Youth Perceptions Survey

Throughout this report, we have included data sourced from secondary sources where relevant. One source used widely is the World Values Survey: WVS (WVS, 2021)¹⁰. When re-analysing the WVS data, we focussed on how Indonesian youth (aged 16-29 years old) respond to key questions, in comparison to the other ASEAN markets captured within Wave 7. There are seven ASEAN markets included in this wave (Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam), however three were not included in the WVS (Brunei, Cambodia and Laos). Our Next Generation quantitative survey and forum discussion during the online community, incorporated questions from the British Council’s Big Conversation Research Toolkit (Bruter et al, 2021)¹¹. The Big Conversation is a British Council research programme exploring the shared values important to young people across the world. The questions included were adapted slightly to ensure that they would work within the confines of this study, taking into account the method, audience and research objectives. We have also included, where relevant, findings from the British Council’s Global Youth Perceptions Survey.

5. Stakeholder involvement in this research (the Youth Task Force)

To build engagement with the research throughout the process, and to ensure relevant people were feeding into the design of the research at the right points, we built in six discrete stakeholder engagement points across the research lifecycle, starting at the very beginning of the project (shortly after project kick-off), and continuing through to final findings reporting stage (key engagement points can be found in Appendix 2).

The stakeholders who participated in all the above-mentioned activities were drawn from a range of institutions, spanning government, education, arts, climate, digital skills, education and youth leadership (e.g. Ministry of National Development Planning, Executive Office of the President Republic Indonesia). A full list of representatives can be found in Appendix 2.

A note on research timings and COVID-19

The quantitative research took place in March 2022, whilst the qualitative research took place between June and July 2022. Indonesia was under various levels of COVID-19 restrictions across this time period, and young people were still recovering from the initial shock of country-wide lockdowns that had devastating effects on the economy, and in many cases, young people’s educational and employment opportunities. Research findings should be interpreted with this context in mind.

How to read this report

We start this report (Chapters 1 and 2) by outlining the values that shape young people’s world views and the factors in their wider social environment that shape their value formation. We then discuss how young people define ‘having a voice’ and how their ability to develop, hone and use their voices is shaped by a range of personal, social and environmental factors. We then discuss how the boom in digital infrastructure and access to technology and the internet has provided young people with new avenues to make their voices heard in Chapter 3.

In Chapter 4, we discuss young people’s overall perceptions of life in Indonesia and their views on the future. This is a scene-setting chapter that introduces the key challenges young people face now and in the future that are the focus of the rest of the report: Education, Employment, Politics, Health and Climate Change. Throughout, we pull out demographic differences among key audiences including gender, age, region, religion and disability alongside employment and education status. In Chapter 10, we outline ideas for change as outlined by the young people included in this research. We conclude this report by translating young people’s ideas into firm policy recommendations in the final chapter.

9 The qualitative sample included a mix of socio-economic status; education levels; employment situations; ages; urban/rural participants; ethnicities and religions

10 World Values Survey (2021). <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp>

11 Bruter et al. (2021). <https://www.britishcouncil.org/research-policy-insight/research-reports/the-big-conversation-pilot>



Chapter 1

Youth values

Values refer to deep-seated and underlying evaluations about what is important in people's lives and how they think the world should be. They act as a guiding principle for how people set goals, make decisions and behave (Schwartz, 2012)¹².

Given the critical role values play in helping to understand people's motivations, attitudes and behaviours, this chapter explores the factors that influence the formation of young Indonesians' value systems and the values that matter to them most. Whilst the importance of specific values may differ from person to person, we focus here on the personal values that are deemed most important to Indonesian youth overall.

This chapter considers data from both primary and secondary sources. This encompasses the primary data collected as part of the Next Generation study, both qualitative and quantitative, as well as re-analysis of data from the WVS (Wave 7) and sources from our literature review. As mentioned in the Introduction, questioning and conversations around values were designed and developed using the British Council's The Big Conversation Research Toolkit¹³.

1.1 What influences Indonesian youth values?

It is difficult to talk about values without first establishing the factors that influence Indonesian youth and contribute to the formation of their value systems. As we will see below, young people are exposed to a range of influences that have an impact on their value systems – and pave the way for young people often holding collectivist and individualist values simultaneously.

Our Next Generation survey and qualitative sessions revealed five key influences that shape young Indonesians' value systems:

- Family relationships (especially parents);
- The Indonesian education system;
- The employment landscape;
- Religion;
- Social media.

We discuss each of these in detail below.

1.1.1 Family relationships are central to young people's sense of self and happiness

Positive family relationships emerged as the top contributor to happiness (alongside 'financial security' and 'a job you love') in our Next Generation survey. Our qualitative conversations further highlighted the central role of family (particularly parents) in Indonesians' lives, with young people stressing the importance of respecting parents, putting family above all else and being conscious of how their behaviour impacts the family's reputation. A desire to support parents financially was a key motivator to continue education and pursue a stable employment. Young people felt that their parents exerted a huge influence on their value systems – with values like 'respect' and 'solidarity' being a formative part of young Indonesians' upbringing. In the WVS, 79 per cent of young Indonesians strongly agreed that one of their main goals in life was to make their parents proud (compared to an average of 67 per cent across the seven ASEAN markets included).

“The person I admire the most is my own mother because my mother is a tireless hard worker, because of her hard work, my sister and I can go to school and eat properly.” Male, 29, Java (Jakarta)

¹² Schwartz (2012). <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/10687025.pdf>

¹³ Bruter et al. (2021). <https://www.britishcouncil.org/research-policy-insight/research-reports/the-big-conversation-pilot>

“Hopefully in the future I can become a successful businessman and can be the backbone of the family to replace my mother.” Male, 18, East Nusa Tenggara (Kupang)

“The school environment has a role in forming young people’s characters... for example characters that are religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hard-working, creative, independent, democratic, curious with a national spirit and love for the homeland.” Female, 24, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)

1.1.2 Education fosters a sense of national identity and pride

Young people see formal (school) and informal (the community and their parents) education as critical to becoming a well-rounded individual with a strong character and firm sense of identity. Young people in our qualitative sessions stressed the importance of education in grounding someone in their national identity and encouraging national pride. For example, the national motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity) is a guiding principle for many young Indonesians, whilst others mentioned the importance of the founding philosophy of Indonesia (Pancasila) and its five guiding principles (monotheism, civilised humanity, national unity, deliberative democracy, and social justice) as forming an important part of Indonesian national identity.

1.1.3 A challenging employment landscape promotes competition

Our Next Generation survey revealed that, alongside family, ‘financial security’ and a ‘job you love’ are two of the biggest contributors to youth’s happiness, but the country is not creating enough quality opportunities to keep up with the demand, spurring many young people to leave their hometowns for bigger cities. Findings from our Next Generation survey show that seeking employment opportunities is the main reason young Indonesians leave home.

‘Hustle culture’ – working excessively in the belief that it is the only way to achieve success – is common in Indonesia. A study by The Finery Report (TFR, 2021)¹⁴, revealed that 84 per cent respondents thought that working overtime is a normal occurrence, while 70 per cent claimed that they routinely worked on weekends. More worrying is that 61 per cent claimed that they felt guilty when they do not put in extra hours at work. The importance placed on work by Indonesian youth is supported by the WVS, where 78 per cent of young Indonesians agreed that work should always come first, even if it means less spare time (the highest of all ASEAN markets surveyed, closely followed by Vietnam and Myanmar at 76 per cent and 75 per cent, respectively). This is compounded by the phenomenon of the ‘sandwich generation’; whereby many Indonesian youth pay for their parents’ and their siblings’ living costs (Jakarta Post, 2021)¹⁵. A SMERU research report (SMERU et al., 2020)¹⁶ showed that 78 per cent of senior

citizens were supported by working family members.

As we will see in more detail in Chapter 6 (Employment), young people are feeling the pressure of this challenging employment landscape on their relationships and happiness. There is an admission from youth that this competitive, all-consuming work environment can bring out ‘selfish’ behaviours in people, as they are motivated to progress their own opportunities and self-interests instead of those of the family or community. This is further compounded by high migration in and out of cities which can weaken family and community ties.

1.1.4 Religion is woven into the fabric of every-day life

Religion plays a huge role in the lives of young Indonesians. The Indonesian Constitution provides freedom of religion, with six official religions (Statista, 2019)¹⁷. The WVS shows that 98 per cent of Indonesians aged 16-29 said that their religion was very important in their life. This is the highest rating of all ASEAN markets included in the WVS, with the Philippines second in the importance that they place on religion (86 per cent said religion is very important in life). The importance of religion is further supported by findings from our Next Generation survey, which revealed that a strong sense of religion/faith is a top five contributor to happiness.

1.1.5 Accelerated use of social media has exposed young Indonesians to different cultures and value systems

Whilst internet access is not evenly distributed across the country, those who are connected are highly engaged (spending an average of six hours per day online) and young people especially are avid users of social media, with just under 200 million active users, most of them on mobile (World Bank, 2021a)¹⁸. The WVS tells us that 65 per cent of young Indonesians aged 16 to 29 use social media to access information daily, with only 17 per cent not currently accessing social media.

Social media plays an important role in helping young people feel connected, not only to their peers and families, but to a global community of young people. For example, young Indonesians described how platforms like TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter have exposed them to voices and influences outside their

culture, including elements of Western culture.

“I saw on TikTok that the education system in other countries is very different to here and it looks like students get to do a lot more engaging activities.” Female, 17, Java (Surabaya)

“Women in other countries now sometimes choose not to get married and have families. I know about this from social media” Female, 18, Java (Jakarta)

However, social media can also be a tool to bring young people closer to more conservative views. One example of this from the qualitative work is the rise of early-marriage discourse in the online space, and the number of Instagram accounts promoting ‘Indonesia without dating’. As a report from 2020 notes, Indonesia has witnessed the growth of online campaigns led by conservative Muslim youth promoting early marriage to prevent adultery and sex before marriage. Previously, the practice of early and child marriage was closely linked to rurality, poverty, patriarchal norms, honour, and low-level access to education. Today, emerging trends demonstrate that middle-class youth in urban areas are also turning to early marriage as a sign of piety (Nisa, 2020)¹⁹. In our Next Generation survey, marriage at a young age (21 per cent) and pregnancy at a young age (23 per cent) are key issues young people think will become more common in the next five years. This highlights the duality of social media as both a platform to move away from more conservative values, and as a tool to move towards them.

14 TFR (2021). <https://www.thefineryreport.com/articles/2021/2/25/hustle-culture-and-the-burnout-generation>

15 Jakarta Post (2021). <https://www.thejakartapost.com/indonesia/2021/11/28/millennials-hope-to-break-sandwich-generation-cycle.html>

16 SMERU et al. (2020). <https://www.tnp2k.go.id/download/83338Elderly%20Study%20-%20Secondary%20Data%20Analysis.pdf>

17 According to recent census data, around 87 per cent of Indonesians identify as Muslim, 10 per cent as Christian, 2 per cent as Hindu – Statista (2019). <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1113891/indonesia-share-of-population-by-religion/>

18 World Bank (2021a). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/07/28/ensuring-a-more-inclusive-future-for-indonesia-through-digital-technologies>

19 Nisa (2020). https://brill.com/view/journals/haww/20/1-2/article-p76_5.xml

1.2 How do these influences impact young people's value systems?

1.2.1 Young people are finding a balance between collectivist and individualist values

The five core influences mentioned above create a push and pull for young people between collectivist and individualist value systems.

In our Next Generation survey, we asked young people what values were most important to them (with the top values shown in Figure 1.2.1). Overall, Indonesian youth value Respect (61 per cent) and Tolerance (60 per cent) above all else, followed by Safety (52 per cent), Peace (52 per cent), Religion (51 per cent) and Solidarity (51 per cent). Whilst religion emerged as a top value in the Next Generation survey, our qualitative analysis revealed that it acts more as an important influencing factor on the top values. The fact that young Indonesians lean more towards collectivist (versus individualist) values is also supported by data from the Global Youth Perceptions Survey whereby 51 per cent 'Strongly / tend to agree that we should create a society which emphasises the social and collective provision of welfare' (collectivist) which is higher than the 26 per cent who 'Strongly / tend to agree that we should create a society where the individual is encouraged to look after him or herself' (individualist).

'Freedom' emerged as an important value to 41 per cent of young Indonesians. We also saw more individualist values emerge when young people were asked to consider which values are most important to pass onto future generations. Whilst they still place high value on collectivist values²⁰, young people also stressed the importance of values such as feelings of 'Responsibility' (42 per cent), and 'Independence' (26 per cent)²¹. The demands of every-day life (e.g. competitive work environments) can encourage individualism and a move away from more traditional religious values. A rise in social media access, high migration patterns in and out of cities and a competitive employment landscape were, according to young Indonesians in our qualitative sessions, the biggest contributors to this.

When looking at the top values deemed important by young Indonesian women and men, it is important to highlight that overall top values are ranked very similarly. However, young women are more likely to rate

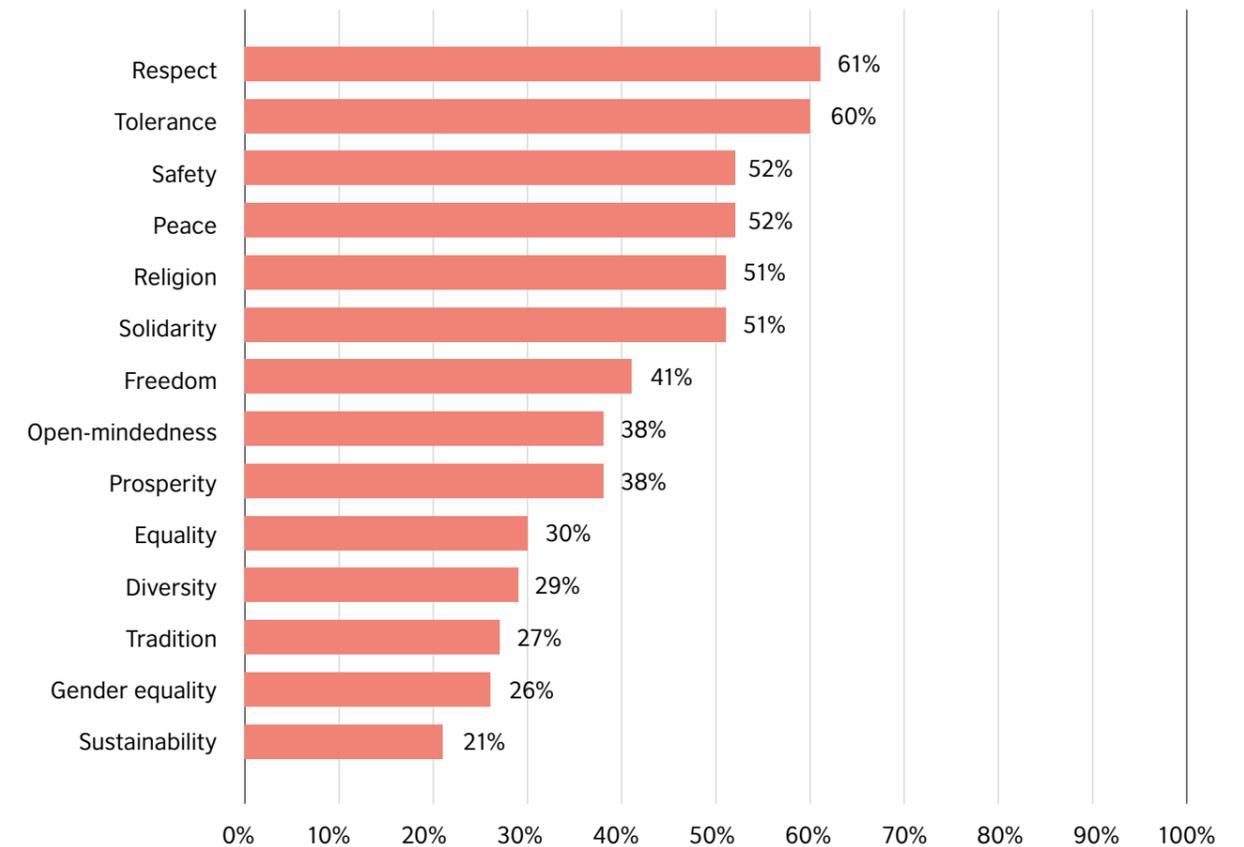
Tolerance (Women: 62 per cent; Men: 57 per cent), Respect (Women: 65 per cent; Men: 58 per cent), Religion (Women: 55 per cent; Men: 47 per cent), Safety (Women: 55 per cent; Men: 50 per cent), Open-mindedness (Women: 42 per cent; Men: 34 per cent) and Gender Equality (Women: 32 per cent; Men: 21 per cent), more highly.

Note, while 'sustainability' achieves the lowest importance score of all values at 21 per cent, this doesn't mean that this isn't important to young people. Rather it reflects that the other values are more central to their value systems. This is supported by the Global Youth Perceptions survey, in which young people mention climate change and the environment as one of the top three most important issues facing the world today (and is discussed in more detail in Chapter 9 on Climate Change).

Evidence of individualist values can also be seen when considering what young people consider most important to personal happiness. Financial security and having a job you love emerged as top priorities, whereas having your own family/children, having a close circle of friends/support network, and getting married were considered of less relative importance (ranked sixth, eighth, and ninth, respectively, with no significant differences between rural and urban areas).

This balancing act between embracing individualist values and holding onto collectivism is something that impacts young people across many areas of their lives. As we will see in the next chapter on Youth Voice, the centrality of respect and age hierarchies in Indonesian culture can sometimes stop young people from feeling empowered to use their voice and speak up about the issues that matter to them. However, young people are also finding new channels (youth communities and social media) to amplify their voices. We discuss this in detail in the next chapter.

Figure 1.2.1. Values that are important to Indonesian youth



Questions. E3. Below are some values that are important to some people, but may be unimportant to others, which of the below are important to you? Base: All respondents (3093)

²⁰ Respect/tolerance (40 per cent), hard work (39 per cent), religion/faith (32 per cent)

²¹ This is supported by the World Values Survey data. When asked about the five most important qualities that children can be encouraged to learn at home, the most important qualities to young Indonesians were Religious faith (80 per cent), Feeling of responsibility (76 per cent), Independence (53 per cent), Tolerance and respect for others (50 per cent) and Hard work (35 per cent)



Chapter 2

Youth voice

A topic as multi-faceted and complex as ‘youth voice’ lends itself best to qualitative research methods. As a result, the evidence in this chapter is primarily qualitative, drawn from our Online Community and from the YRT peer-to-peer interviews. Where relevant, we bring in additional data from our Literature Review (we rely on this especially when discussing ‘personal factors’ that contribute to youth voice to provide additional policy, cultural and historical context) and the Next Generation survey (to provide supporting evidence for our qualitative findings).

2.1 What does ‘having a voice’ mean to young people?

As with all Next Generation studies, a key aim of this research is to understand and amplify youth voice. For the young Indonesians in our qualitative sessions, having a voice meant 1) having the agency to make decisions about important matters in life and 2) being able to exert influence on and be listened to by others.

The conditions that facilitate or inhibit youth voice comprise ‘personal’, ‘social’ and ‘environmental’ factors. Together, these influence young people’s ability to develop, strengthen and use their voice (see Figure 2.1)

When asked about their levels of free choice and control over how their lives will turn out in the WVS, 36 per cent of young Indonesians agreed that they have a great deal of choice, rating this 9 or 10 on a 10-point scale (compared to 28 per cent across the seven ASEAN markets included in the study). This was the joint highest rating given (equal to that given by Vietnamese youth), indicating that young Indonesians have a relatively strong sense of autonomy and agency. However, as we will see in this chapter, this choice and control does not extend to all demographic groups. The second component of ‘voice’ – the ability to exert influence and be listened to by others – is something young people struggle with more, as they often do not feel listened to or able to exert influence on those around them. We explore this in more detail in the sections to follow.

2.2 What factors influence having a voice?

2.2.1 Personal factors: Not all young people have equal voice in Indonesia

Whilst young people maintain that ‘tolerance in diversity’ is important, they observe that this tolerance does not extend to all demographic groups. A range of cultural and historical factors contribute to the following groups facing varying challenges:

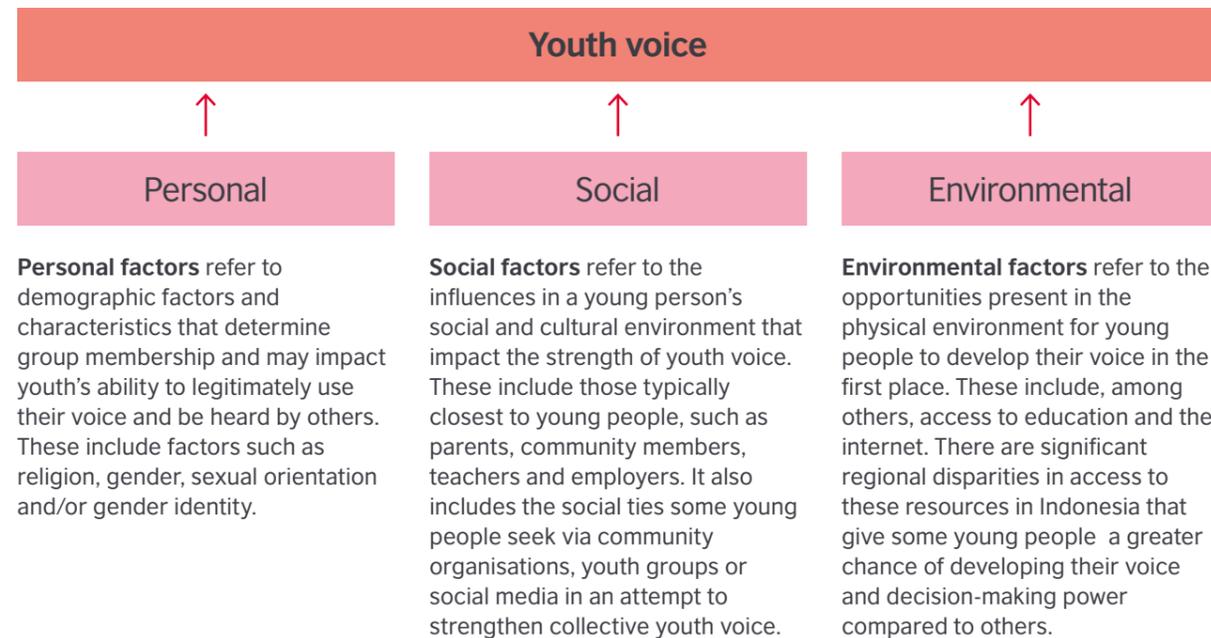
Women: Traditional gender norms surrounding the role of women are still prevalent in many parts and communities of the country and this is reflected in our data. In our Next Generation survey, 51 per cent of young people felt that women should prioritise having a family over a career and 52 per cent believed that men should be the sole economic providers in a family²².

These views have very real implications for the extent to which young women can make their voices heard in the workplace and beyond. Whilst women have equal access to education and are more likely than men to go into tertiary education, this is not reflected in employment rates (World Bank, 2020)²³. Similarly, less than half (44 per cent) of young people in our Next Generation survey agreed that women are as capable as men to work in senior positions. Women are more likely to agree with this statement (59 per cent versus 30 per cent of men), and 41 per cent disagree with this statement, suggesting that these gender norms are heavily internalised. Findings from our Next Generation survey also show that young women are less likely than their male counterparts to take part in political or community activities (37 per cent of women said they hadn’t taken part in any activities versus 32 per cent of men), further limiting their opportunities to use their voice.

²² Statements asked individually on a 3pt agreement scale of which respondents could agree with one, both or neither of these statements as they are not mutually exclusive

²³ World Bank Blogs (2020). <https://blogs.worldbank.org/eastasiapacific/gender-and-education-indonesia-progress-more-work-be-done>

Figure 2.1 Factors that influence youth voice



“When a woman is married, it is mandatory to take care of your husband and the household. Women must be very good at keeping her family and a career stable...but a husband won't always allow their wife to work at all.” Male, 23, North Sumatra (Medan)

“How do I spend time with my children? On weekends, I intentionally make time to play with them, and I occasionally invite them to play or eat out. Every time there is a school event, I make sure I can attend by taking a leave or permission from work first.” Female, 35, West Java (Bandung)

Young people with disabilities: According to a recent report by Save the Children (2021)²⁴ social stigma often prevents young people with disabilities from completing primary school. Whilst specialised training centres and schools for disabled children offer some vocational training, they have limited capacity, and lack the skilled workforce required to deliver the employability and technical skills needed to find employment²⁵. This makes it difficult for people with disabilities to find employment and live life to their full potential. Findings from our Next Generation survey show that young people with disabilities receive lower quality education (across key aspects such as teachers, the curriculum and teaching methods) compared to young people without disabilities, and are less likely to feel their education had adequately prepared them for life (36 per cent versus 43 per cent). Young people with disabilities are also less likely to see the value in completing secondary school education compared to their peers without disabilities (36 per cent versus 49 per cent). In our qualitative sessions, young people with disabilities were more likely to experience bullying from their peers and feel socially ostracised; all factors that inhibit these young people from contributing their voices to Indonesian society.

Religious minorities/those who do not practice a religion: Whilst most young people in our Next Generation survey and qualitative sessions stressed the importance of religious tolerance and spoke proudly of the fact that diversity is what makes Indonesia beautiful; there was an acknowledgement that in some areas, young people from religious minority backgrounds face discrimination. In our qualitative sessions, those from religious minority backgrounds²⁶ were more likely to believe that religious conservatism is a problem in their community, and that some people speak negatively about other religions because they consider their faith to be the most 'correct'. This issue appears to be particularly prominent on social media, where 'fake news' often targets religious minorities, which can lead to discrimination. In some instances, young people felt they had to silence or subdue their religious practices due to fear of intolerance from their communities. A significant minority (22 per cent) of young Indonesians in our Next Generation survey reported that freedom of religious speech is an area they want to see improve in the future.

“There are still many people around me who do not appreciate differences. Religion has been a problem for a long time. There was once a place of worship that vilified other religions (“Religion A is bad, our religion is better”) in front of its people near where I live. Of course I don't want to make a fuss and just know enough because I don't want to make a big problem.” Male, 17, Java (Jakarta)

“Individuals are more accepting that Indonesia doesn't only have one religion. We are different but still one. What does a rainbow mean if there is only one colour. Precisely with this difference, Indonesia becomes more beautiful.” Male, 17, Java (Jakarta)

“Fake news or hoaxes sometimes invite debate. It is better if there is news, do not accept it raw. The truth must be investigated first so that it does not become an ethnic (and religion) problem.” Female, 32, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)

24 Save the Children (2021). <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/preparing-youth-disabilities-indonesia-start-their-careers-making-workplaces-more-inclusive/>

25 *ibid.*

26 Religious Minorities are defined as 'Non Muslims' within the Next Generation Research, given the majority religion is Muslim (87 per cent)

LGBTQ+ communities:

We did not capture sexual orientation or gender identity in our Next Generation survey²⁷, but ensured inclusion of a small number of LGBTQ+ community members in the qualitative stages of our research. Whilst these young people were comfortable revealing their LGBTQ+ status within the anonymous confines of the research, none of these young people had come out to their friends and family, for fear of judgment. Since the anti-LGBTQ+ ‘moral panic’ in 2016, Human Rights Watch has reported a rise in discrimination and violence being committed against LGBTQ+ communities, including harassment, extortion, and denial of basic rights and services (Human Rights Watch, 2018)²⁸.

2.2.2 Social factors exert a strong influence on youth voice – and can act as facilitators or inhibitors

Influential people in young people’s social environments can act as both inhibitors and enablers of youth voice. In this section, we describe how parents, local communities, teachers and employers create spaces for young people to have a voice by creating nurturing and supportive environments for young people to grow but can also act as inhibitors of youth voice due to strong cultural norms that value respect and age hierarchies.

Within this challenging social environment, young Indonesians look to youth communities and social media to strengthen a sense of youth identity and amplify their voices.

Parents/community

As we saw in the Values chapter, showing parents/ community members respect is very important in many Asian cultures, and Indonesia is no exception. As with many other Next Generation markets (e.g. Myanmar and Vietnam), it is commonplace for young Indonesians to look to their parents for advice and permission before making important life decisions. Many young people have close and supportive relationships with their families that give them confidence and motivation to continue to do their best and pursue their dreams.

However, in some cases, it is noted that a desire to fit into family and community social norms can limit youth voice, as they try to accommodate the beliefs, values and priorities of family and community over their own. For example, in our qualitative discussions, young people told us that parental approval is key to most life

decisions and that even though they may not always agree with their parents, finding compromise for the harmony of the family is most important.

“In making decisions, we should always consult with the closest people to us, such as parents, our spouse or siblings” Female, 25, South Sulawesi (Makasar)

“You should always consider the opinions of your family no matter what, because family support is important” Female, 33, Java (Jakarta)

The emphasis placed on ‘respect’ with regards to family and community members can sometimes act as a disincentive for young people to disagree with or challenge the status quo in their communities (note that this is not unique to Indonesia but also common in other countries as highlighted in other Next Generation research)²⁹. In bigger communities, it is common to apply the concept of *musyawarah mufakat*: an open discussion session where everyone can voice their opinion with the aim that, in the end, a solution can be found that meets the needs of all. However, young people told us that when it comes to cross-generational debate, they tend to listen to and agree with their elders out of respect or *sungkan*.

“All decisions must be discussed with our parents and we must remember that all good things that happen to us are with the blessing of our parents” Female, 29, East Nusa Tenggara (Kupang)

“You should ask your parents or closest people in your community for their opinions and everyone should gather in the house to make suggestions” Male, 27, South Sulawesi (Makasar)

Educational culture (teachers)

Teachers play a critical role in developing young Indonesians’ confidence and sense of self at a formative age. Whilst some young people reported having good relationships with teachers, especially at university level, it was also quite common for young people in our qualitative sessions (especially in the cities of Medan and Jayapura) to note that they feel silenced by and

intimidated by their teachers. This can diminish a young person’s confidence to use their voice.

“Usually, what I know is that students who are often poorly treated by teachers will be mentally disturbed. The response is different for each child. Some children become quiet, or some children become a little aggressive.” Male, 23, North Sumatra (Medan)

“When studies were being held online, there were teachers who would often put down those students without access to the internet. They would say there was no use of college with parents at home. (This is) very bad and makes me have no respect for the teachers at my university” Male, 23, Papua (Jayapura)

“Sometimes the teacher hits the students, and sometimes the teacher doesn’t realise that they utter words that make these students small, for example, ‘Hey, you stupid child. Must study hard.’ Then the teacher will talk about us, stupid students, and every student’s mistake. This will make students feel inferior until they drop out of school.” Male, 26, Papua (Jayapura)

Young people also reported that teaching methods (particularly at primary and senior high school levels) often rely on rote memorisation and do not encourage students to be active participants in class, making young people passive and unmotivated to develop their own identity and voice. We discuss this in more detail in the Education chapter of this report.

Work culture

Young Indonesians stress the importance of employment and professional success in facilitating youth voice. Having a job and the accompanying financial security increases young people’s chances of garnering respect from those around them, which further legitimises their voice.

However, hierarchical working cultures are common in Indonesia (particularly in the formal sector) and young people state the importance of ‘climbing the ladder’ before being listened to or taken seriously by other

co-workers. A hierarchical (and often nepotistic) working culture can inadvertently silence youth voice, as many young Indonesians do not feel comfortable or empowered to speak up at their place of employment.

“I like that I am working at a job that is my passion. Sadly, I am not comfortable with my co-workers because they are flirtatious.” Female, 23, West Java (Bandung)

As we’ll see in the Employment chapter, many young people struggle to find employment and instead, are increasingly looking to self-employment to assert their voice and identity.

Social and religious communities

Forming communities of like-minded young people is common in Indonesia. Our Next Generation survey revealed that more than half of young people have engaged in at least one political or community activity in the past 12 months (66 per cent) as shown in figure 2.2.2 below, although engagement varies across different demographics and is higher among urban youth and males. According to research by the SMERU Research Institute (2019), at the national and regional levels, youth and adolescents have a high participation rate in social and community activities (82 per cent), such as youth organisations (Karang Taruna), Local Integrated Healthcare Centres (Posyandu) and Religious Study (Pengajian). However, this research found that many youths claim membership to these organisations and activities (often to appease their parents’ expectations), but levels of active participation are exceptionally low (only around seven per cent attendance with only six per cent actively sharing opinions), according to the Youth Development Index (SMERU, 2019).³⁰

More active youth engagement is common in the volunteering space, with results from our Next Generation survey showing that 30 per cent have volunteered in some capacity in the last 12 months (this increases to 35 per cent in urban areas). Volunteering is also more common for men, with 33 per cent having volunteered in the last 12 months (compared to 27 per cent of women). Other research has found that many young people volunteer when natural disasters occur, especially in rural areas where it is harder to get necessities. For example, young people went to Palu and Donggala after the earthquake in 2018, raised money, bought necessities, and conducted trauma healing (Sindo, 2019). Most recently, at the beginning of

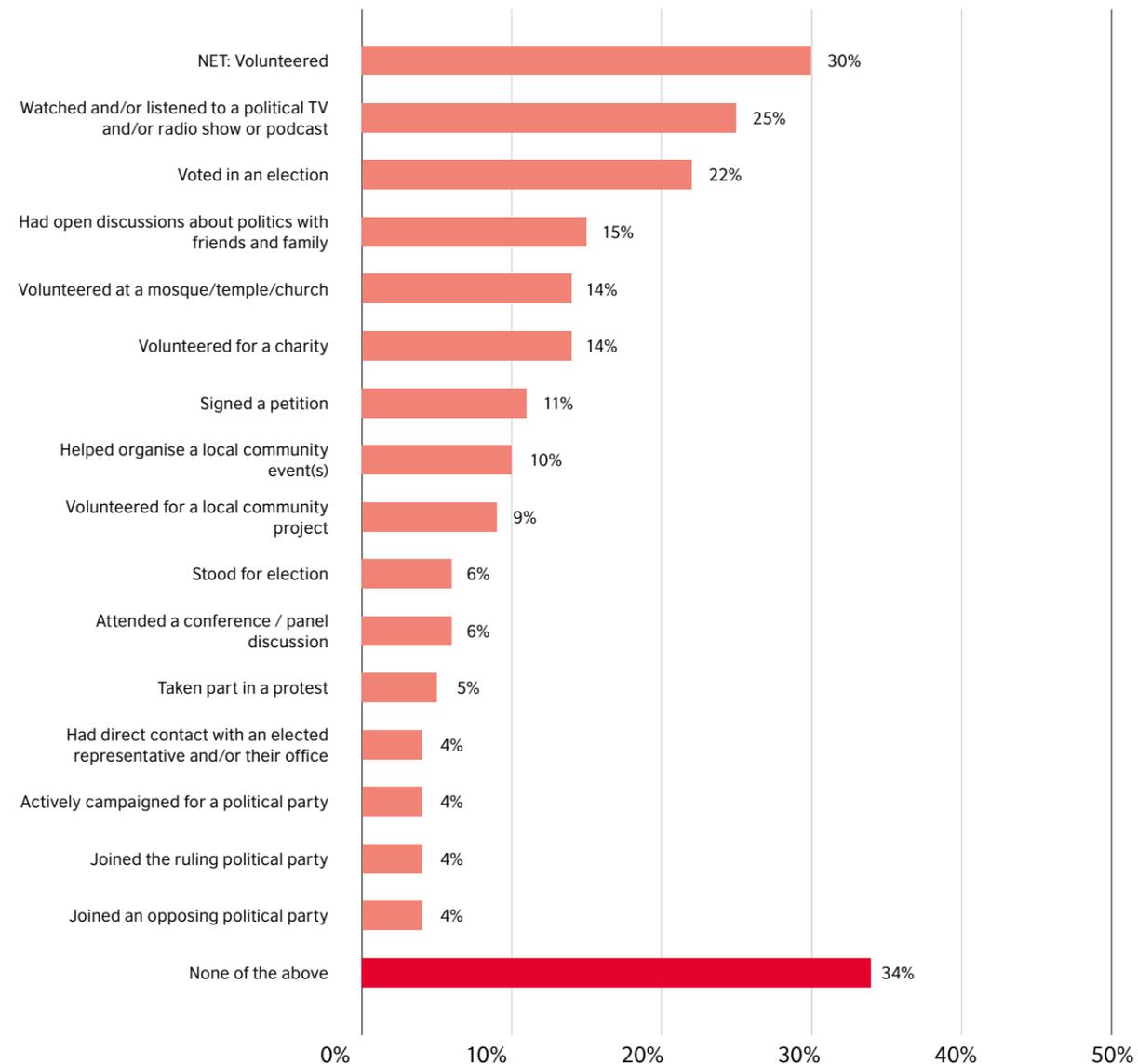
27 This question was deemed as too sensitive given the current political and cultural climate

28 Human Rights Watch (2018). <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/07/01/indonesia-anti-lgbt-crackdown-fuels-health-crisis>

29 Similar limits to youth voice were found in Next Generation Ethiopia, Myanmar and Nigeria

30 SMERU (2019). <https://smeru.or.id/en/research/youth-development-index-policy-brief-and-national-strategy-youth-entrepreneurship-document>

Figure 2.2.2. Engagement in political and community activities in the previous 12 months



Questions: F2. Which of the following activities have you taken part in, in the last 12 months?
 Base: All respondents (3093)

the COVID-19 pandemic, young people organised hand washing sinks and took turns cleaning them, an initiative spearheaded by a local youth organisation in Cukurgondang village (East Java) (Liputan6, 2020)³¹.

This type of community involvement helps young people hone their identity and teaches them important soft skills, including communications and collaboration. Our qualitative conversations with young people indicate that they see these activities as a way to find purpose, form bonds with other like-minded people and importantly, to have a voice in influencing the causes that matter to them most.

Social media

As we saw in the Values chapter, young Indonesians are heavily reliant on social media for a range of activities, as they consume, create and share content. Social media platforms allow young people a space to experiment with different identities, show off group membership and promote their individuality. In our qualitative conversations, social media emerged as a key platform for young people to find their voice and talk about the issues that matter to them, including topics that are harder to talk about with parents and friends (e.g. mental health, politics and religion). Social media is so popular, in fact, that young people have coined a term for the need to be up-to-date and trendy on social media – ‘*Ingin eksis*’ – literally meaning ‘to exist’.

In some cases, social media has also created new sources of income for young people (particularly in urban areas) as they do live streams, perform, sell goods or promote their small businesses. This is a way for some young people to circumvent the competitive and nepotistic employment environments that are common in Indonesia. It allows them to forge paths that rely only on themselves and their own creativity, which can feel empowering for those who succeed.

2.2.3 Environmental factors and regional disparities inhibit young people’s ability to develop their voice.

Young people’s physical environments can limit and facilitate their opportunities to have a voice. Regional disparities in the country have huge implications for young people’s educational and employment opportunities, as well as their access to services, each

of which in turn have implications for young people’s opportunities to use their voice. We discuss how these inequalities play out in detail in subsequent chapters, but provide a short summary here of how these differences in access can limit youth voice:

Access to education: As we’ll see in the Education chapter, inequalities in access to and quality of education limit young people’s ability to develop their voice and limit their employment opportunities in the future. Challenges with education tend to be more pronounced for young people in Eastern and rural parts of the country, with young people more likely to feel their education is not adequately preparing them for work.

Access to the internet: Whilst device ownership is high across the country, internet access is unevenly distributed across regions, with a regional pattern that favours Western parts of the country. Young people who do not have access to the internet tend to fall behind in education (particularly the case at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic) and also have less opportunity to use social media to access news, create and share content.

Access limitations based on location: Findings from our Next Generation survey showed that young people in urban locations tend to have more access to resources and communities that support youth voice. For example, there was more engagement across political and community activities (such as volunteering for a local community project, helping with a community event, etc.) for young people in urban areas, suggesting that opportunities for engagement are more limited or less socially acceptable for young people in rural areas. In our Next Generation survey, those in rural areas are more likely to say that they have been negatively affected by sexual or reproductive disease, substance abuse, and pregnancy at a young age.

In the next chapter (Chapter 3) we discuss how increased digital access is providing new opportunities for youth voice by changing the ways young people communicate, access education and seek out employment opportunities. However, we also highlight how these experiences are not shared equally across the country, with young Indonesians in rural areas most affected by lack of access.

31 Liputan6.com (2020). <https://surabaya.liputan6.com/read/4227773/kreasi-tempat-cuci-tangan-di-jawa-timur-cegah-corona-COVID-19>



Chapter 3

Digital and media

We start this chapter by discussing Indonesia's 'digital revolution', the pace of which was accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to young people in our Next Generation research, access to the internet and digital devices has changed the way they learn, communicate, and make money. As discussed in Chapter 2 on Youth Voice, digital media has also played a role in giving young people a space to explore their identities, be part of groups and promote their individuality. However, as we will discuss, equity of access and opportunity is impeded by lack of infrastructure, with rural locations disproportionately affected. Lack of pylons and broadband infrastructure means that advancements in digital access (such as online education, entertainment, and e-commerce opportunities) are not benefitting everyone equally. As well as issues with access, this explosion of digital use in Indonesia has brought with it a myriad of social challenges. Whilst young women have equal access to digital devices, they are more likely to have concerns when it comes to using the internet, and often feel more sceptical when it comes to Indonesian media. In this chapter, we will explore in detail what this unequal access and increasing social challenges have meant for young people navigating the online world.

3.1 A digital revolution

Indonesia has seen an exponential growth in technology adoption over the last decade. Compared to other Southeast Asian countries, Indonesia has historically been relatively slow in its tech adoption. However, driven by broad smartphone adoption, a booming middle class and the onset of COVID-19 (Council on Foreign Relations, 2021)³², Indonesians now have one of the highest levels of tech (notably smartphone) ownership in the world, with estimates showing 199.2 million smartphone users in 2021 (Statista, 2022b)³³. This means that currently, Indonesia is the fourth largest

smartphone market worldwide after China, India, and the United States (Ibid.)³⁴.

As a result of this increase in technology ownership in Indonesia, access to and use of the internet has boomed, with statistics estimating that in 2020, approximately 191 million people were accessing the internet in Indonesia and this figure is expected to grow to about 240 million by 2025 (Statista, 2022c)³⁵.

For young Indonesians, increased internet access has led to avid consumption of social media. Sites such as YouTube, WhatsApp and Twitter dominate, with Jakarta being dubbed 'Twitter City' – more tweets being sent from the capital than anywhere else in the world (Carter-Lau, 2013)³⁶. On average, Indonesians spend around six hours a day online, with younger and more educated demographics being the most digitally engaged. Intensity of internet engagement is highest for the 16-25 year-old age group, which on average spends 9.7 hours a day online (World Bank, 2021a)³⁷.

This has been further bolstered by the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw swift advances in the way digital media is used in society. Confined at home due to mobility restrictions, Indonesians switched to the internet for their entertainment and social needs, driving sharp growth in the usage of digital media (music and video streaming) and communications applications (World Bank, 2021c)³⁸. However, despite these quick and intensive advancements in digital media in Indonesia, the pandemic has compounded the issue of unequal access, due to issues in technology infrastructure across Indonesia (World Bank, 2021a)³⁹. The rollout of broadband and 4G infrastructure has been slow and uneven, with issues of unavailability of specific bands, limited regulatory clarity on infrastructure sharing and lack of competition, especially in the provision of fixed broadband services. These factors are the main drivers of limited access to good quality internet in Indonesia (World Bank, 2021c)⁴⁰.

32 Council on Foreign Relations (2021). <https://www.cfr.org/blog/why-indonesias-youth-hold-key-its-tech-sector-progress>

33 Statista (2022b). <https://www.statista.com/statistics/266729/smartphone-users-in-indonesia/>

34 Ibid.

35 Statista (2022c). <https://www.statista.com/statistics/254456/number-of-internet-users-in-indonesia/>

36 Carter-Lau (2013). <https://ondeviceresearch.com/blog/indonesia-social-media-capital-world>

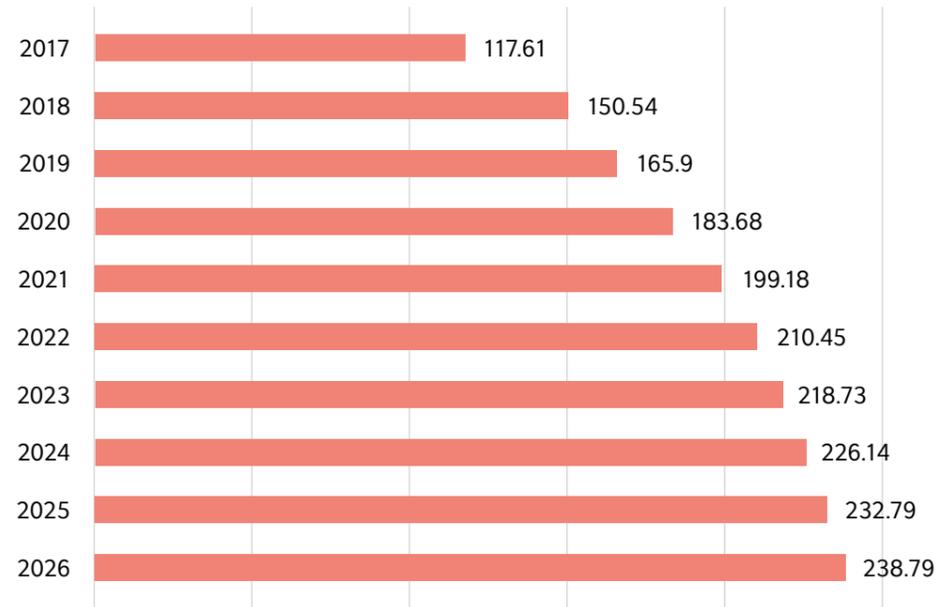
37 World Bank (2021a). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/indonesia/publication/beyond-unicorns-harnessing-digital-technologies-for-inclusion-in-indonesia>

38 World Bank (2021c). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/indonesia/publication/beyond-unicorns-harnessing-digital-technologies-for-inclusion-in-indonesia>

39 World Bank (2021a). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/07/28/ensuring-a-more-inclusive-future-for-indonesia-through-digital-technologies>

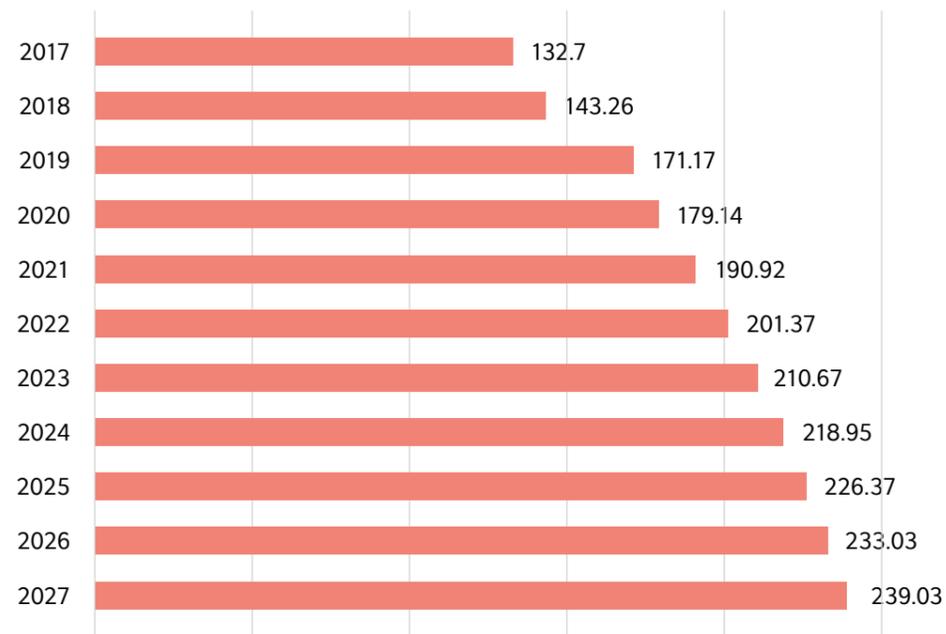
40 World Bank (2021c). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/indonesia/publication/beyond-unicorns-harnessing-digital-technologies-for-inclusion-in-indonesia>

Figure 3.1.1 Smartphone usage



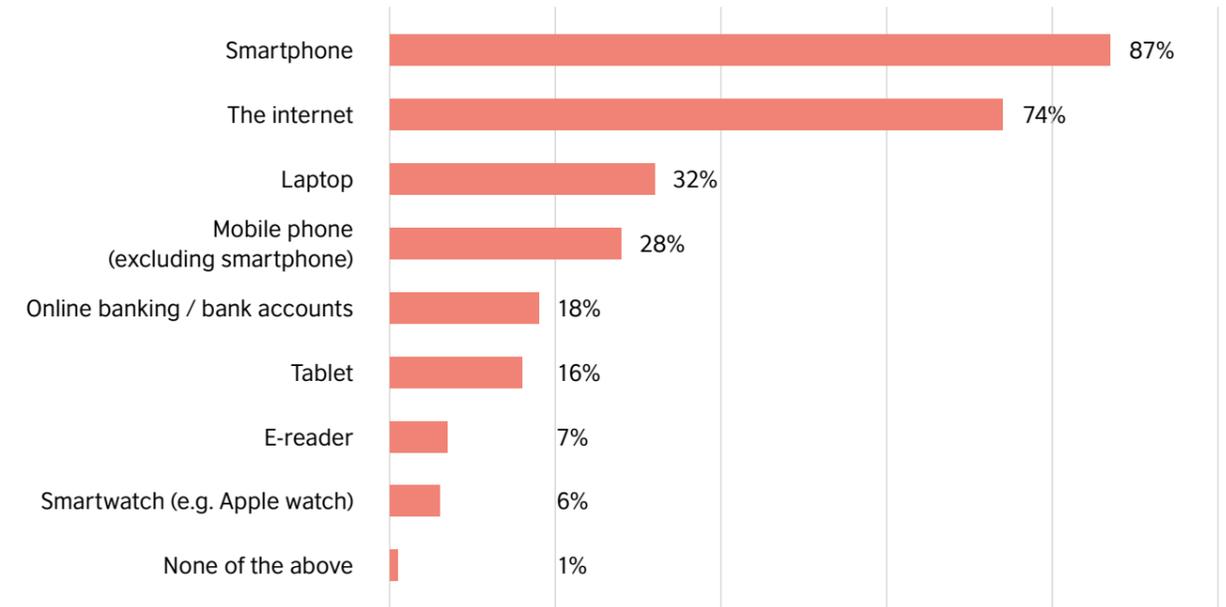
Source: Statista
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/266729/smartphone-users-in-indonesia/>

Figure 3.1.2 Internet usage



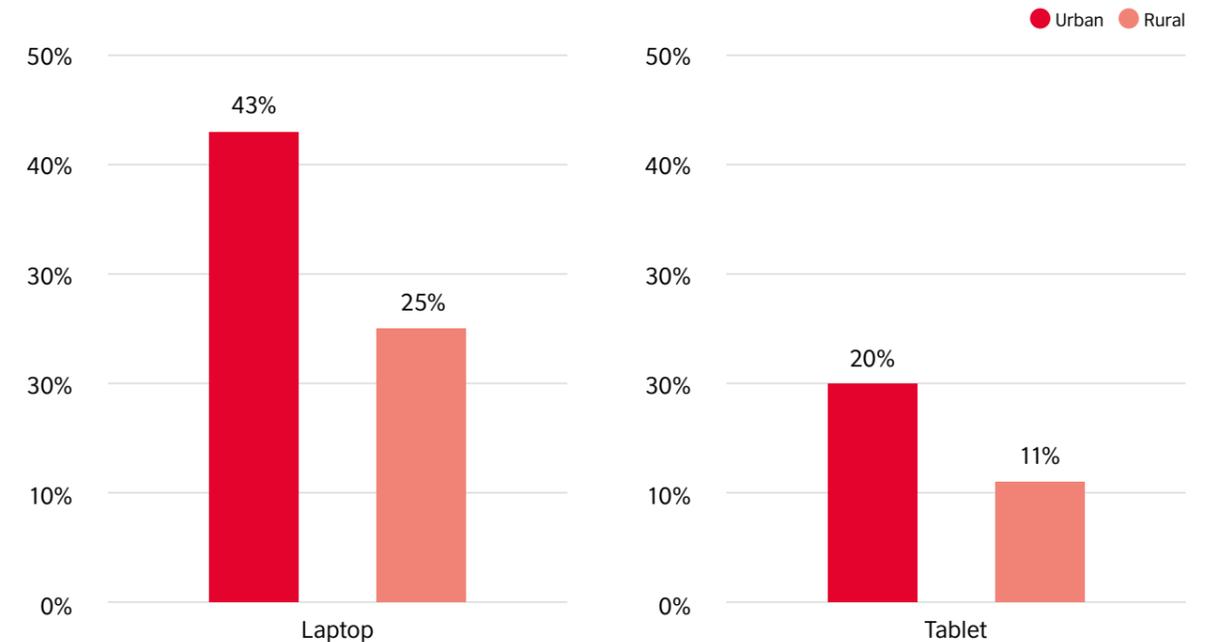
Source: Statista
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/254456/number-of-internet-users-in-indonesia/#:~:text=In%202020%2C%20approximately%20191%20million,about%20240%20million%20by%202025.&text=With%20over%20171%20million%20internet,stood%20at%20around%2070%20percent.>

Figure 3.2.1 Access to digital devices/services (face-to-face sample only)

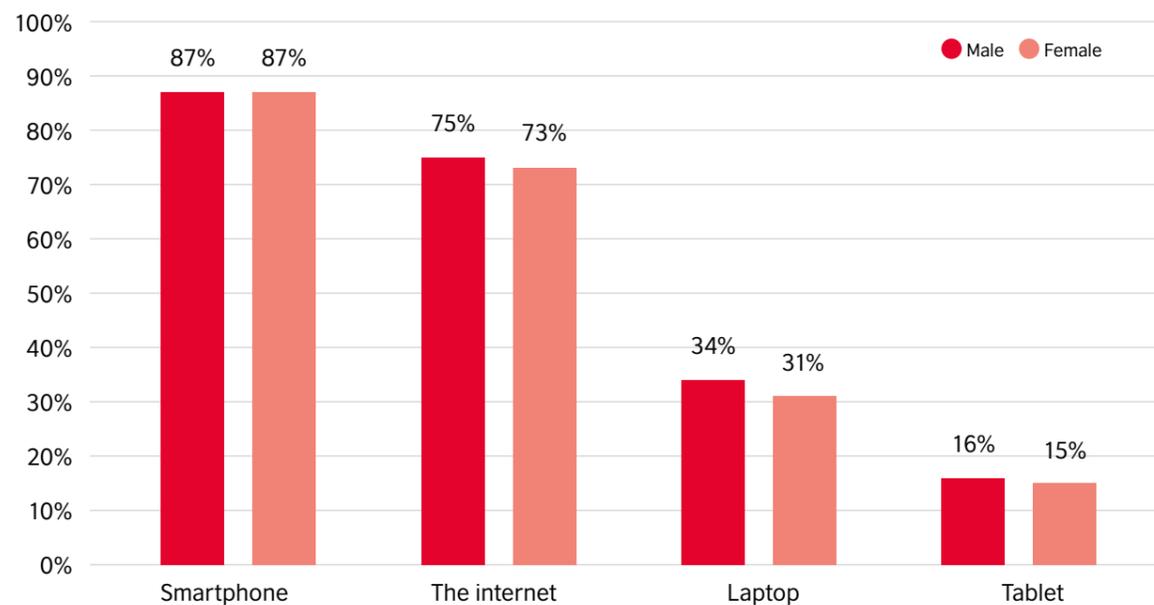


Questions. H1. Which of the below digital devices and/or services do you have access to? You do not have to use these, or own them personally, just have them available to you should you want to use them?
 Base: All Face-to-face respondents (1554)

Figure 3.2.2 Access to digital devices/services by location (face-to-face sample only)



Questions. H1. Which of the below digital devices and/or services do you have access to? You do not have to use these, or own them personally, just have them available to you should you want to use them?
 Base: All Face-to-face respondents Urban (623) Rural (900) Sulawesi (124)

Figure 3.2.3 Access to digital devices/services by gender (face-to-face sample only)

Questions. H1. Which of the below digital devices and/or services do you have access to? You do not have to use these, or own them personally, just have them available to you should you want to use them?
Base: All Face-to-face respondents Male (797) Female (757)

3.2 High levels of device ownership, but lack of infrastructure means internet access is unequal

Responses to our Next Generation survey reflected this rapid increase in technology and digital adoption, with almost all our sample stating that they have access to some form of digital device (99 per cent). Please note, for analysis on device access and usage we used our face-to-face sample only (i.e. online respondents were excluded from this analysis). This is because respondents who completed the survey online have access to a device by virtue of the methodology, and this is not representative of Indonesian youth as a whole. When it comes to the device itself, smartphone ownership dominates, with 87 per cent of young people having access (general parity across urban and rural youth; 88 per cent of urban and 86 per cent of rural youth), however those in Eastern Indonesia are more limited in terms of smartphone access compared to those in Western Indonesia (74 per cent versus 90 per cent).

Beyond access to smartphones, however, access to other digital devices is generally limited. Only a third of Indonesian youth have access to a laptop (32 per cent) and 16 per cent have access to tablets.

Regional disparities exist when it comes to laptop and tablet access, those in rural areas are less likely to have access (25 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively) compared to those in urban areas (43 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively).

Digital device access across genders is largely consistent, 87 per cent of young women have access to a smartphone which is in line with young men (87 per cent). The same can be said for laptop access (31 per cent of young women and 34 per cent of young men have access) and tablets (15 per cent for female youth and 16 per cent for male youth). Internet access shows similar parity between genders (73 per cent of young women have access to the internet compared to 75 per cent of young men).

3.2.1 Unequal internet and broadband access is impeding equal opportunities for young people

Despite heavy smartphone ownership amongst Indonesian youth and a growing digital economy, inclusivity and opportunities are not equal. Whilst three in four young people in our survey (using our sample of face-to-face respondents only) are currently able to access the internet (74 per cent), ease of access within this group varies. A significant portion of those who have access to the internet state that the ease of access varies (19 per cent). From our qualitative research, issues with access revolve around two key issues: slow connectivity due to network overcrowding; and lack of broadband access due to infrastructure (pylons).

This is particularly true of rural youth (25 per cent compared to 13 per cent of urban youth), with those living in Bali & Nusa Tenggara (28 per cent) and Sumatra (21 per cent) most likely to say that their access to the internet varies due to lagging developments in infrastructure and connectivity access.

“Internet access in my area is still inadequate due to the dense population and the small number of signal towers. For daily internet use, it’s fine for doing assignments or just watching entertainment on YouTube or other social media. There are difficulties, namely, the facilities provided are difficult to reach and the distance of the tower is far from the house so it’s difficult to have a signal.”
Female, 23, Java (Jakarta)

As well as varying ease of access, there are still a quarter of Indonesian youth who do not have access to the internet (26 per cent), with this affecting those in rural areas more than those in urban areas (29 per cent versus 24 per cent). Those in the East are also more greatly limited by internet access (62 per cent having access) than those in the West (77 per cent). This is supported by a report by the World Bank in 2021 which states that Bali and Sumatra still have the highest number of Indonesians not connected to the internet (World Bank, 2021a)⁴¹. Those of a lower socioeconomic group (SEG) see similar limitations in their access to the internet as well; almost one in three of those of a low or mid SEG don’t have access (30 per cent) compared to just 17 per cent of those of high SEG.

This is primarily down to uneven infrastructure development across the country, meaning digital access and growth opportunities are not necessarily benefiting everyone. A study by World Bank (ibid.)⁴² further attested to the fact that the inequality in access to digital services “mirrors existing dimensions of inequality” seen across groups, regions and income classes. As noted above, limited regulations on infrastructure development, lack of broadband competition to drive growth and issues with affordability are the main issues that impede universalising access to the internet throughout Indonesia (ibid.)⁴³.

For those who do not have internet access, around a third (30 per cent) feel that this lack of access impacts them negatively. This is felt most acutely by those in education (34 per cent), those in younger age groups (41 per cent of those aged 16-19) and those living in urban areas (38 per cent), all of whom are more likely to feel that a lack of access negatively impacts their lives.

41 World Bank (2021a). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/indonesia/publication/beyond-unicorns-harnessing-digital-technologies-for-inclusion-in-indonesia>

42 *ibid.*

43 *ibid.*

3.3 Digital growth has changed the way young people consume and share information

3.3.1 Social media is the most used and trusted source for news and information

Social media is by far the most used media channel, heavily relied upon by young Indonesians when looking for news and information. 77 per cent of young people in our Next Generation survey state that they use social media for this purpose, which, when comparing to other key media sources, such as television (58 per cent) and friends and family (53 per cent), is high.

Social media is also the most trusted media source of information for young Indonesians (67 per cent), whilst young women are significantly more likely to trust social media than young men (women: 70 per cent, men: 65 per cent) it is still the most trusted source of information for both groups. This heavy reliance on social media for news could in part be down to the fact that trust in Indonesian media is somewhat muted, with most saying they only have ‘some’ trust in the media (71 per cent). Younger people express lower levels of trust in Indonesian media, being more likely to say they have ‘some trust’ in the media than older people (76 per cent for 16–19 year-olds, versus 69 per cent for 25-29 year-olds and 68 per cent for 30-35 year-olds), as opposed to have “a lot of trust” (which skews to older youth). Young men are more likely to have ‘a lot of trust’ in Indonesian media (26 per cent compared to 23 per cent among young women), indicating that scepticism is slightly higher amongst young women in Indonesia. Those living in urban areas are also more cynical, as detailed in figure 3.3.1.2 below.

Whilst social media is the most trusted source, there are some key differences that exist in relation to how other sources are used alongside this when consuming news and current affairs. Young people in rural areas are more likely to look to informal sources for information on news and current affairs than those in urban areas. 55 per cent look to friends and family (versus 50 per cent), with a further 27 per cent using religious/ community members (versus 16 per cent) and 20 per cent turning to members of the local community (versus 14 per cent). Older participants (25 years old and over) have a stronger propensity to use more ‘traditional’ sources such as television (64 per cent), local newspapers (17 per cent) or the radio (11 per cent) alongside social media (76 per cent). In contrast,

younger participants place a higher reliance on social media (79 per cent), with far fewer using these more ‘traditional’ sources (50 per cent television, nine per cent local newspapers, six per cent radio). Figure 3.3.1.3 shows this in further detail.

The difference seen across age groups in the Next Generation survey highlights the increasingly central role of social media in shaping how young Indonesians access and engage with news and media.

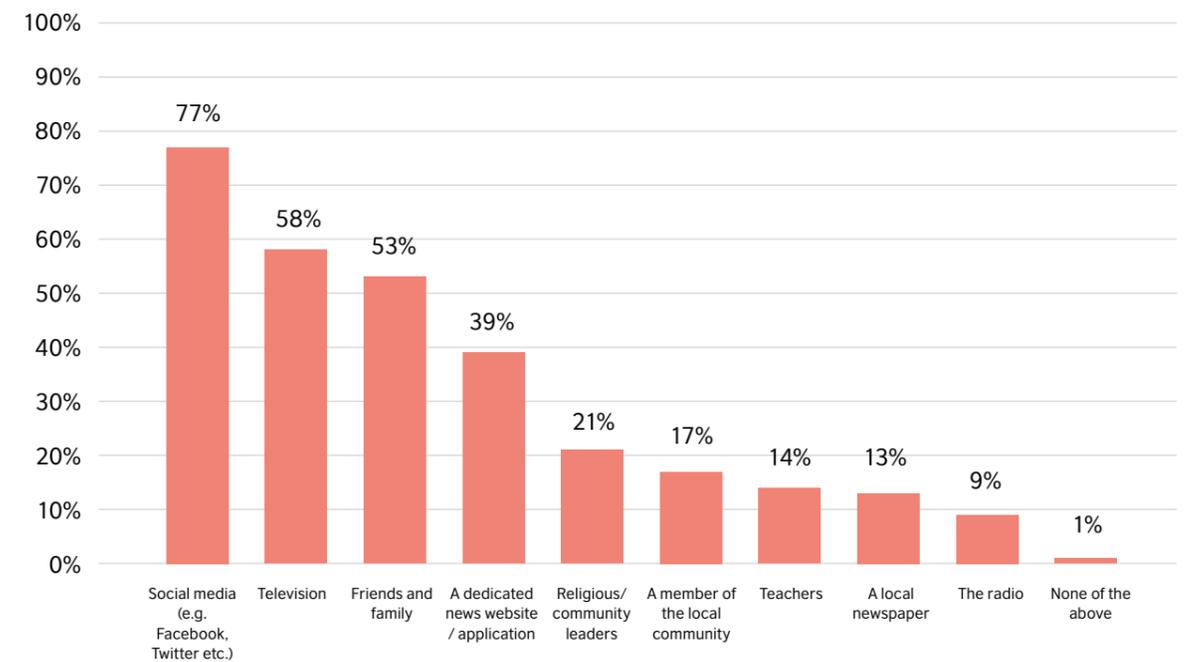
“Young people now are more switched on compared to a few years back. Maybe it is because of the development of the times, and advancements in technology too, where social media is now even more... What’s the word?... Influential.” Male, 25, West Java (Bandung)

This was also reflected among young people in our qualitative sample who thought that having access to a spectrum of opinions online via social media felt more trustworthy than other sources where ‘selfish’ or political agendas could dominate. In particular, there is some scepticism around state-owned media which highlights the distrust young people have in politics and politicians more generally, especially with concerns around nepotism and corruption (as discussed in detail in the Politics chapter).

“I like to be able to read lots of opinions online, it’s interesting to get a range of views and access news stories written by people my age and from my background.” Female, 23, Java (Jakarta)

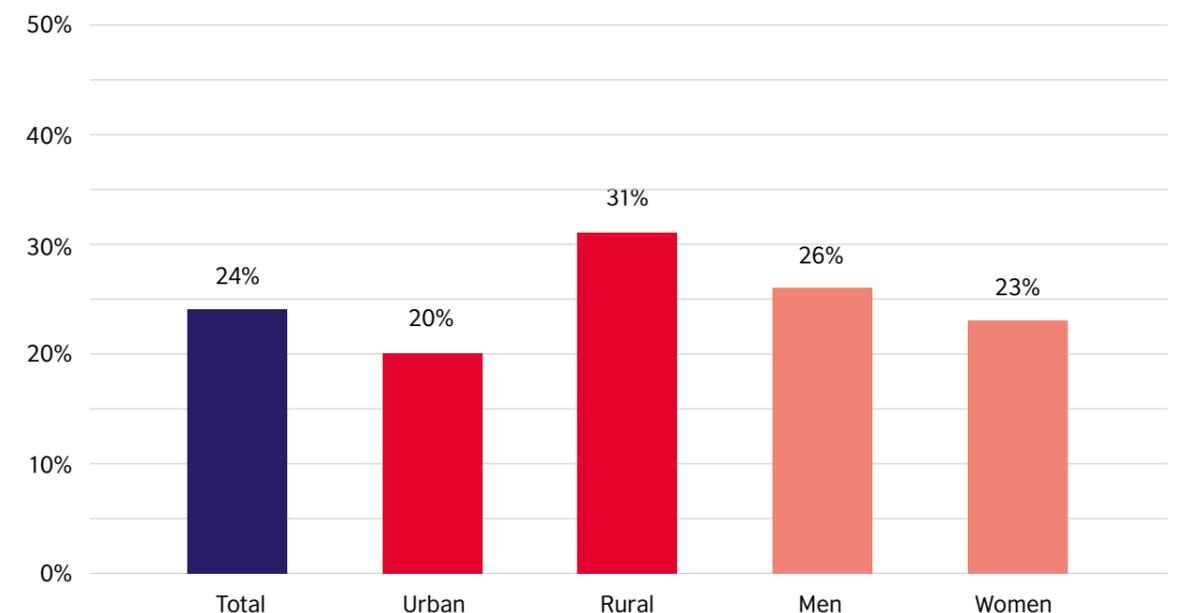
“I like to read online news sites such as Kompas as I feel their news is more trustworthy. I also like to read comments from other people on news stories.” Female, 19, West Java (Bandung)

Figure 3.3.1.1 Sources used for news and current affairs



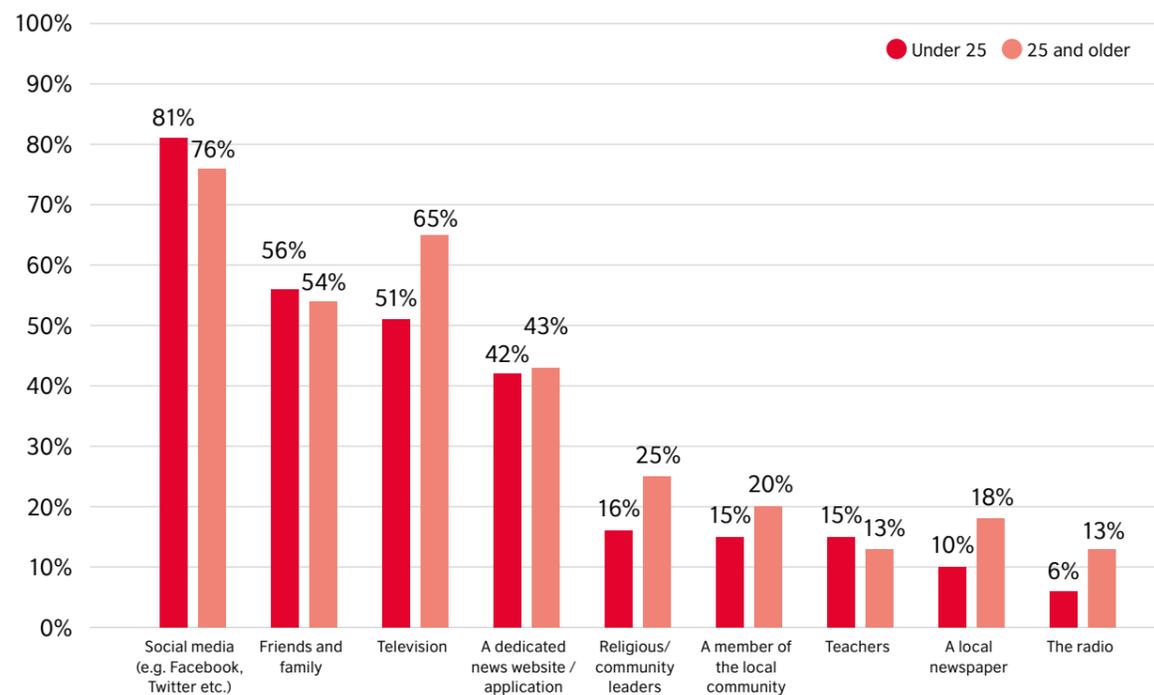
Questions. H2. When finding out about news and current affairs, where do you go to get your information? Base: All respondents (3093)

Figure 3.3.1.2 Those having ‘a lot of trust’ in Indonesian media



Questions. H6. And what level of trust do you have in the Indonesian media? Base: All respondents (3093) Urban areas (1834) Rural areas (1179) Men (1498) Women (1497)

Figure 3.3.1.3 Sources used for news and current affairs by age



Questions. H2. When finding out about news and current affairs, where do you go to get your information?
 Base: Respondents under 25 (1454) Respondents 25 and over (1639)

3.4 Young people are experiencing Indonesia’s booming digital economy

Indonesia now has one of the fastest growing digital economies in Southeast Asia (World Bank, 2021b)⁴⁴. This has opened up a new way for young people to make money and operate businesses.

From our qualitative discussions, young people are making the most of social media, by sourcing inspiration for business ideas online, creating their own e-commerce sites or harnessing social media to promote their businesses.

“I use Instagram to research business ideas and how I can make money.”
 Female, 29, West Java (Bandung)

“I don’t have problems starting a business because I have experience of online business using social media.”
 Male, 25, West Java (Bandung)

With the challenges faced in the employment sector, the World Economic Forum (2019)⁴⁵ suggests that the desire to be an entrepreneur may be driven more by necessity than dreams of big business, as people feel they have no other option but to work for themselves. We found evidence of this in our qualitative sample also, where young people often start a business as a ‘means to an end’, rather than creating their dream business.

“Yeah, I have a lot of friends, or people that I know, who at a young age, have already created small businesses like online stores. But it’s not like they have a steady job out of it. Other than that, there are those who are still at university, and also those who have another job in addition to their own business.” Male, 21, Maluku (Ambon)

3.5 This rapid digital growth and reliance on the internet has brought with it its own set of challenges

Among the young people we spoke to who currently have internet access, almost all of them expressed that they have specific concerns when it comes to using the internet (93 per cent) which we explore in more detail below.

3.5.1 Young people do not always feel equipped to interrogate ‘fake news’

As we have discussed, young Indonesians rely heavily on social media for their news and information, with younger age groups using social media almost exclusively. However, this trend means that proliferation of ‘fake news’ is a big issue, with 70 per cent of the young people we spoke to (with internet access) expressing concern about this.

Our qualitative sessions revealed that fake news has had a direct impact on many of our participants, and many of them feel ill-equipped to critically interrogate the news they are consuming. This is of particular concern on social media where ‘share’ functions (on sites such as Twitter and Facebook) are accelerating the spread of information. Our qualitative conversations with young people revealed that the number of likes/shares/re-tweets can in some cases (especially for those in rural areas and those lower education levels) hold more weight and power than the reliability or validity of the source. The power and speed of the spread of fake news became particularly evident for our qualitative participants during COVID-19 when rumours spread online and encouraged people to try unsafe home remedies to stop the spread of disease.

“All generations, I think, still believe in fake news, both the young and the old. Usually, young people get fake news from social media, and parents get fake news from WhatsApp groups.” Male, 17, Java (Jakarta)

“At the time of COVID-19, what often became hoax news was drinking eucalyptus oil to avoid getting infected with COVID.”
 Female, 24, Java (Surabaya)

“Old people tend to receive a lot of hoax news that is forwarded from social media. Worse, they assume that the information is valid. How to reduce it, we as the younger generation must teach how the information can be trusted. One of them is to look for sources of information from official websites/news. Not via WhatsApp or other social media.” Female, 33, Java (Jakarta)

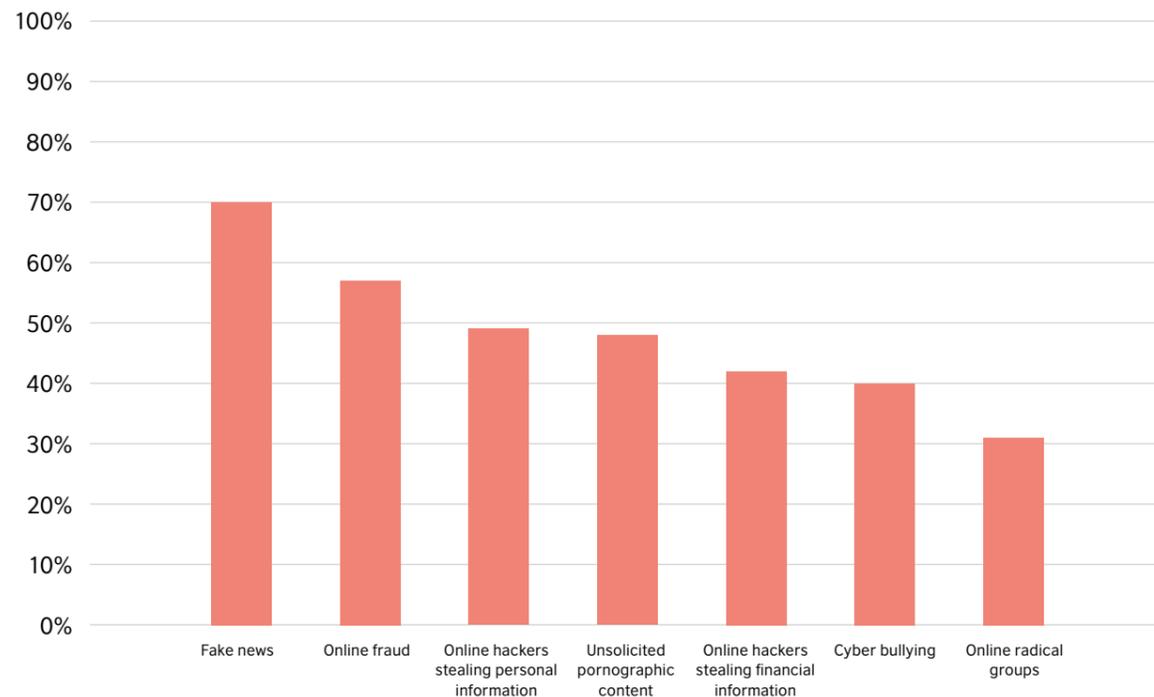
There is some indication that young people with higher education levels are more critical of the validity of their news sources. However, young people agreed that ‘fake news’ is so prolific, it is common for everyone to fall prey to it from time to time.

“I compare the news from other websites and social media. I am selective with my news, and it needs to be verified. For example, they have a press conference or corruption news that is broadcasted directly from the official website.”
 Male, 30, West Java (Bandung)

44 World Bank (2021b). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/indonesia/publication/pathways-to-middle-class-jobs-in-indonesia>

45 World Economic Forum (2019). <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/08/indonesia-young-people-entrepreneur/>

Figure 3.5.1 Concerns when using the internet



Questions. H7. When online using the internet, are you concerned about any of the following?
 Base: Respondents who have access to the internet (2292)

3.5.2 The internet can feel like an unsafe space for Indonesian youth

Whilst 'fake news' is the primary concern for young Indonesians online, other concerns around online safety came through strongly, each affecting almost half of Indonesian youth who have access to the internet. Our Next Generation survey found that access to unsolicited pornographic content is a concern for almost half of Indonesian youth who use the internet (48 per cent), especially for women (52 per cent versus 45 per cent of men). Furthermore, concerns around protecting information online are common, with worries around hackers stealing personal (49 per cent) or financial information (42 per cent).

3.5.3 Online bullying is a worrying trend

Two in five young people in our Next Generation survey were concerned about online bullying (40 per cent). This was significantly higher amongst the young Indonesian women who were surveyed (42 per cent) in comparison to men (37 per cent). This is supported by other research by UNICEF which estimated that almost half of Indonesian youth aged 14-24 (45 per cent) have been victims of cyber bullying (UNICEF, 2020b)⁴⁶.

From our qualitative sample, young people told us that cyber bullying mainly occurs when people 'overshare' online and 'show off' their own self-image. Young people feel this is quite common as there is a strong trend of showing your ideal 'image' online and showcasing a 'filtered' and 'trendy' version of yourself, seeking likes and comments, which can lead to ridicule and jealousy.

“People would bully her (a friend) for her looks and people would make fun of her skin colour being too dark, maybe because they were jealous of her.” Male, 21, Maluku (Ambon)

Despite online bullying being an issue that many young people have directly or indirectly experienced, many from our qualitative sample felt that they are left on their own to deal with the consequences. Young people felt that they are not sure who they would turn to for help, except for advice from friends and family. There is a sense from young people that the government doesn't do enough to stop online harassment, and stricter laws and penalties should be in place to hold perpetrators accountable.

“I deleted the bullies' comments and made my account private. I wish people thought more about others' feelings” Male, 21, South Sumatra (Palembang)

“The government isn't very responsive in dealing with online bullying” Male, 25, West Java (Bandung)

For some, concerns around cyber bullying when using the internet are heightened. Young women (42 per cent), younger age groups (48 per cent of 16-19 year-olds), those in urban areas (45 per cent), those in Java and Sulawesi (both 44 per cent), and those with disabilities (50 per cent) express the strongest concerns around cyber bullying.

46 UNICEF (2020b). https://www.unicef.org/indonesia/media/5606/file/Bullying_per_cent20in_per_cent20Indonesia.pdf



Chapter 4

Overall perceptions of life in Indonesia and views on the future

This chapter sets out the context of young people's lives in Indonesia: how they perceive day-to-day life, current challenges, and hopes and expectations for the future. It highlights the key issues that feel important to young people – each of which will be discussed in greater detail, in subsequent chapters of this report.

4.1 There are mixed feelings about whether life in Indonesia has improved compared to the previous generation, however there is positivity about the future of the country and its young people

Figure 4.1 shows young people's perceptions of the future of Indonesia, perceptions of their personal future, and perceptions of whether Indonesia has improved or not since their parents were the same age.

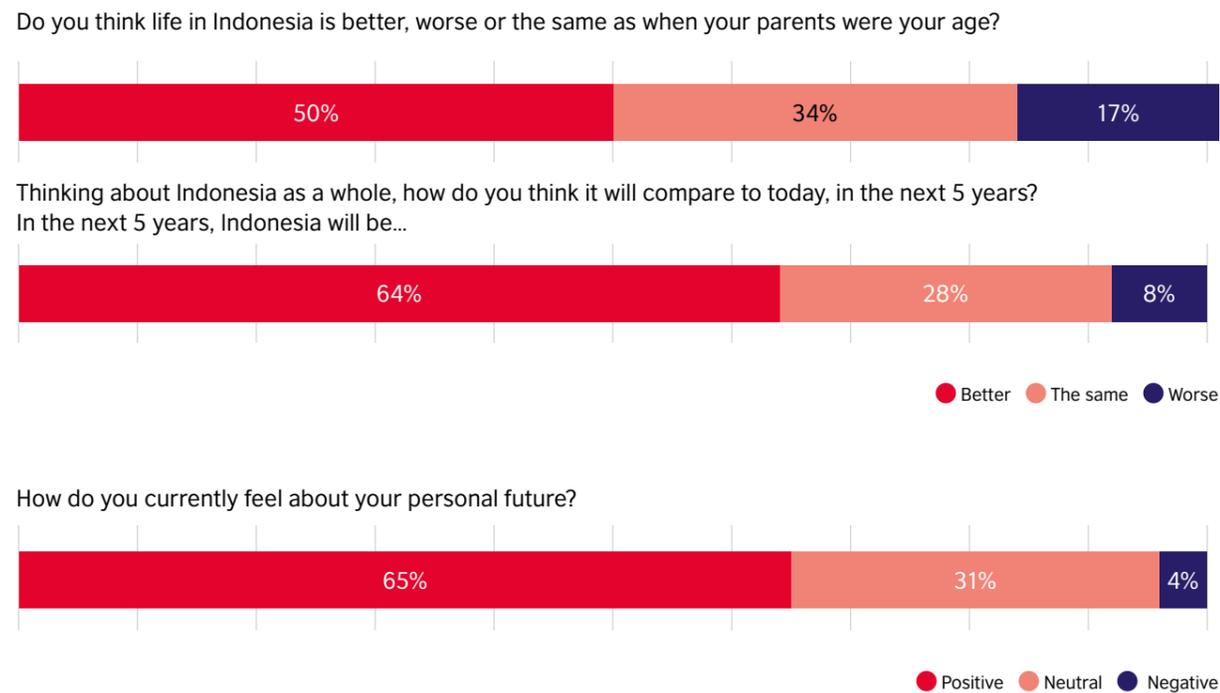
Overall, young people are positive about the future of their country, and this positivity extends to their perceptions of their personal futures. This was echoed in our qualitative conversations with young people. When asked to write a letter to their 'future selves' five years from now, most young people felt confident that the country and their personal prospects would improve.

“In five years, I will have a better career than today. For the community, I will get to know more people from all walks of life. I will make changes to my skills, for example, the use of accounting systems.” Female, 25, North Sumatra (Medan)

“In five years I will have achieved my goal to complete my study on time, and dream of having my own business and achieving success. The way I achieve it is, of course, with high spirits and hard work and never giving up. The process is part of life. Of course, thanks to the prayers of parents and family who always give advice and input.” Male, 26, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)

“Dear myself, be excited, keep trying, pray, chase all your dreams and big dreams, and rest assured that you can do it. Nothing is impossible. It's never too late to start.” Female, 35, West Java (Bandung)

Figure 4.1. Perceptions of Indonesia currently and perceptions of the future



Questions. C1. Do you think life in Indonesia is better, worse or the same as when your parents were your age?; C2. Thinking about Indonesia as a whole, how do you think it will compare to today, in the next 5 years? . In the next 5 years, Indonesia will be...?; D1 How do you currently feel about your personal future? Base: All respondents (3093)

Indonesian youths' optimism about the future despite facing numerous challenges has been documented in other research⁴⁷. There is also a greater sense of positivity about the future of Indonesia among women than men (66 per cent are optimistic about the future, compared to 61 per cent of men). However, despite this optimism, half of youth in our Next Generation survey felt that life in Indonesia has not improved since their parents were the same age, highlighting a lack of momentum or perceived change in recent times. This lack of perceived momentum could be due, in part, to the challenges young people were facing at the time of the research, as the Indonesian economy slowly recovers from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.2 Young people are proud of their country and see themselves as Indonesian – more than global – citizens

This mixture of positive and slightly more muted sentiment was evident when we asked our Next Generation survey participants to spontaneously describe Indonesia (Figure 4.2.). Among the top five most common descriptions of Indonesia, were 'beautiful' (29 per cent), 'diverse' (20 per cent), 'developed' (17 per cent), and 'tolerant' (16 per cent). However, there were also mentions of political corruption (15 per cent) indicating that this association is strong for young Indonesians, something we discuss in greater detail in Chapter 7.

Figure 4.2. Spontaneous perceptions of Indonesia



Question. G1. How would you describe Indonesia in five words? Base: All respondents (3093)

Young people are proud of their country and their Indonesian identity. For many, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity) is more than just a national motto, it is a way of life. In our qualitative sessions, young people spoke with pride about the diversity in their country, the central role of faith in Indonesian life, and the importance of family and community above all else. This may help explain why, in contrast to their counterparts in other countries, young Indonesians are less likely to see themselves as global citizens. The global Gallup-UNICEF (2021) study found that only 18 per cent of the 15-24 year-olds surveyed in Indonesia said they identify most with being a part of the world, compared to 39 per cent of young people globally.

This is supported by responses from our Next Generation qualitative sessions; when asked to imagine where they would be in five years, most young people

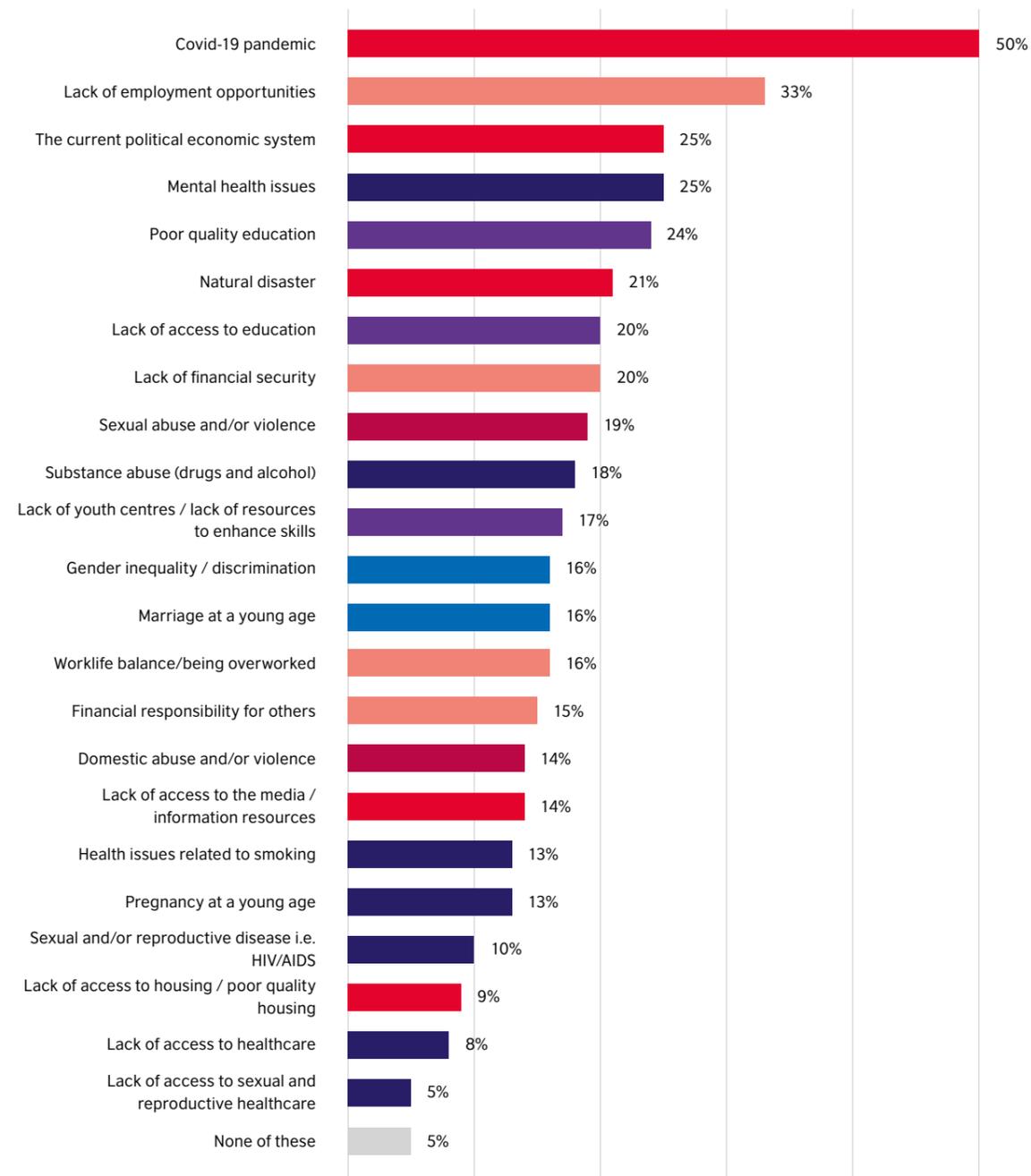
reported they would still be living in their hometown, or perhaps would have moved to the nearest big city. Being close to family and being part of a tight-knit community are key reasons young people want to stay close to home.

4.3 Currently, the biggest concern for Indonesian youth is the COVID-19 pandemic, along with concerns around employment, health and education

There are a several key issues and challenges facing Indonesian youth. Figure 4.3 shows the hierarchy of current concerns and challenges. As we will see, COVID-19 is an issue that has touched multiple areas of

47 UNICEF (2021a). <https://www.unicef.org/indonesia/press-releases/indonesia-vast-majority-young-people-believe-world-becoming-better-place-yet>

Figure 4.3. Current issues and challenges facing youth in Indonesia

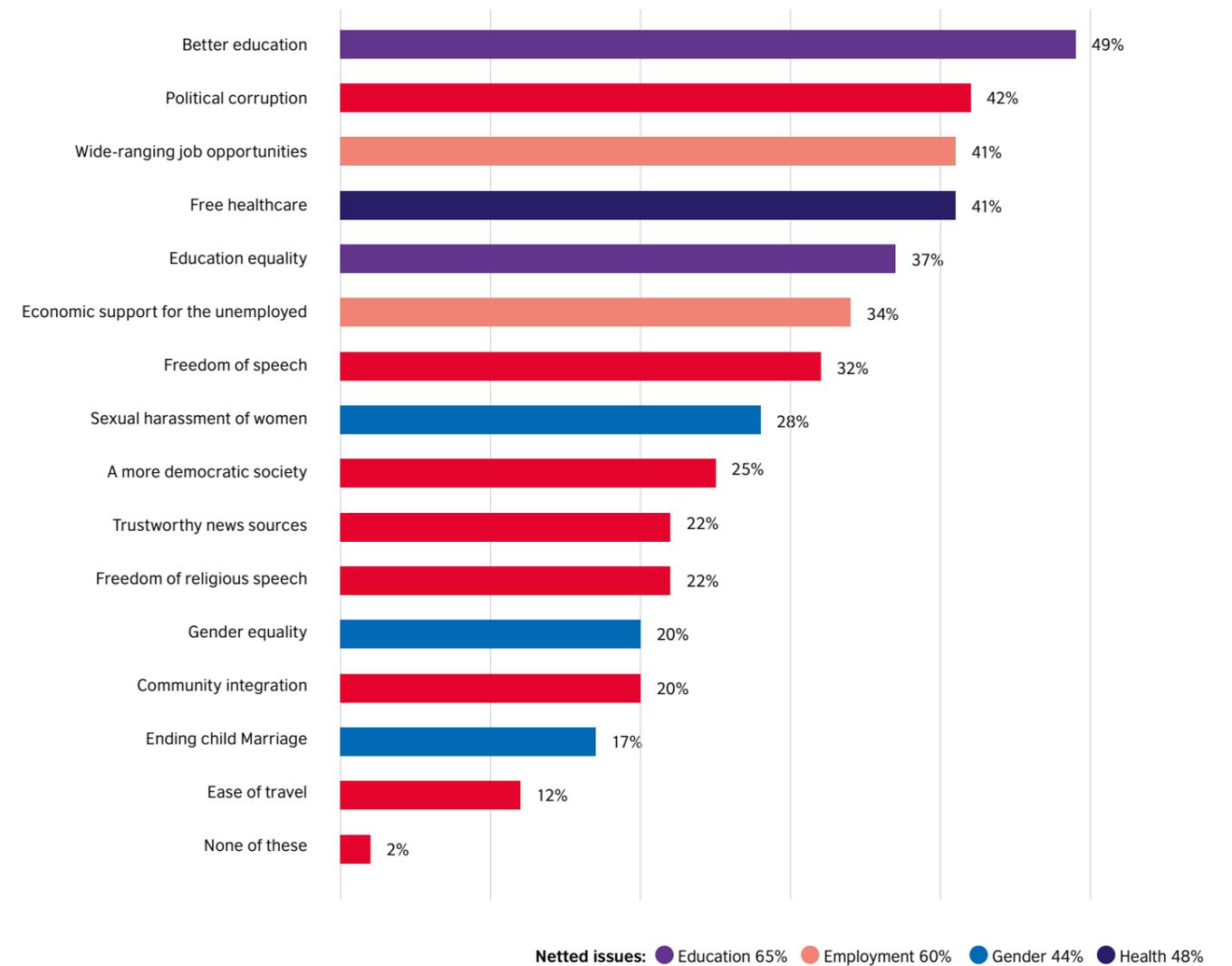


Netted issues: Employment/Finance 55% Health 48% Education 42% Gender 31% Violence 25%

Question. C3. Looking back from now and over the past 5 years, which, if any, of the below challenges would you say have had a negative effect on you personally? Base: All respondents (3093)

*Netted scores are calculated based on respondents selecting at least one statement from that category (note that anything not included in a Net is coloured in pink)

Figure 4.4. Issues that Indonesian youth would like to be improved in the future



Netted issues: Education 65% Employment 60% Gender 44% Health 48%

Question. E6. Below are some social issues that have been mentioned by others as something that they would like to be improved in their country, which of the following would you like to see addressed and improved in Indonesia? Base: All respondents (3093)

*Netted scores are calculated based on respondents selecting at least one statement from that category (note that anything not included in a Net is coloured in pink)

Indonesian life, from health to education to employment. Rather than having a separate chapter on this issue, we weave in the impact of COVID-19 across all chapters in this report.

4.4 Despite general positivity about the future, Indonesian youth have clear priorities for improvement in their country, linked closely to the challenges highlighted above

Figure 4.4 shows the priority areas that young people want to see improved in their country.

Improving **educational experiences** is a key priority for the future. In Chapter 5, we discuss young people's experiences of the current education system, and the changes they would like to see to create a better educational experience.

The current **political and economic system** is the second biggest issue that youth would like to see improve in the future (42 per cent). In Chapter 7, we discuss youth views on the current political system and their levels of engagement with politics and highlight the importance of youth involvement in shaping the future of Indonesia.

Employment opportunities are another key concern for youth, and one that has been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. In Chapter 6, we discuss youth views on the current employment landscape and the support they feel they need to succeed in their careers.

Whilst employment and education are the main concerns in the country, there are also concerns surrounding **health** (Chapter 8), with mental health, smoking, and substance abuse being the key health concerns currently. A large number (41 per cent) of young people want access to free healthcare in the future, further highlighting that this is a priority issue to tackle.

When looking at the netted issues, gender-related issues are something that young people want to see improved, including gender equality, child marriage and the sexual harassment of women. Our data shows that this is more of a priority for women (47 per cent compared to 38 per cent amongst men), highlighting potential opportunities for awareness raising and advocacy amongst young men in Indonesia on gender issues. Additionally, and as noted below, youth in Indonesia have different views on whether gender-

related issues will improve in the future. This is discussed in more detail below.

4.5 Perceptions of whether specific issues will improve in the coming years are mixed

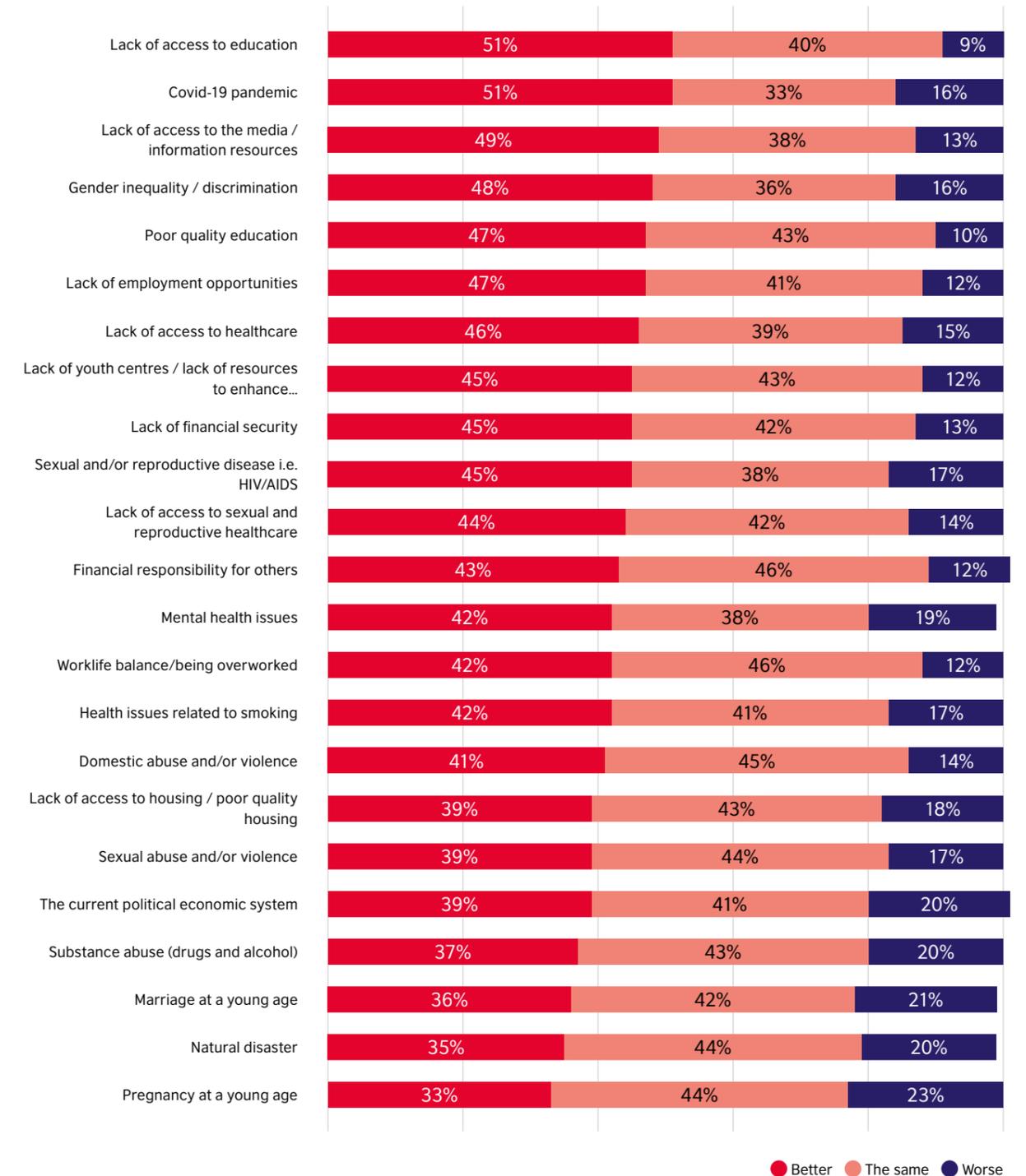
Overall, there is some positivity that a large proportion of the issues currently facing youth in Indonesia will improve in the next five years, with substantially fewer thinking these issues will become more prevalent or get worse. Figure 4.5 shows young people's perceptions of whether a range of issues will improve, stay the same, or worsen in the next five years. As can be seen below, there are some issues where youth are expecting a level of stagnation, highlighting that more action is needed to foster more positive outcomes for young Indonesians.

The top five issues that youth think will improve in the next five years are access to education (51 per cent), the COVID-19 pandemic (51 per cent), access to media and information (49 per cent), gender inequality/discrimination (48 per cent), quality of education (47 per cent) and lack of employment opportunities (47 per cent).

Of more concern is that one-fifth to one-quarter of Indonesian youth feel that **pregnancy and marriage at young age, the current political system, substance abuse, and natural disasters** will get worse in the coming years. 'Natural disaster' is important to call out in relation to climate change as this is also the sixth biggest individual concern affecting young people personally (21 per cent)⁴⁸.

We structure the rest of this report according to the key issues that felt important to all Indonesian youth and pull out key gender, regional, urban/rural and any other demographical differences as and when they occur. However, there are some re-occurring patterns in the data that are worth pointing out here and bearing in mind while reading the rest of the report:

Figure 4.5. Perceptions of whether issues will improve, stay the same, or get worse in the next five years



Question. D2. Do you think opportunities in Indonesia in the below areas will get better, worse or stay the same in the next 5 years?
Base: All respondents (3093)

48 More details about who this affects different groups of youth are discussed in the Climate Change chapter.

4.6 Women are experiencing more challenges in their lives currently and are aware of what needs to change to achieve a better life, but remain optimistic about the future

Our Next Generation survey found that women, overall, are more positive about what the future holds for Indonesia, despite experiencing a greater number of challenges currently. As suggested previously, these specific challenges include mental health, gender inequality, sexual abuse/violence, and marriage and pregnancy at a young age, all of which disproportionately affect women compared to men.

There is also a greater desire among women to see these improve in the next five years. Specifically, women are more likely to want to see future improvements regarding concerns such as poor education, gender inequality, sexual harassment of women, and ending child marriage. This highlights that women are still experiencing the impact of negative gender norms and inequality. The experience of gender inequality takes many forms, and we highlight how it is experienced across key issues in the chapters to follow.

However, there is more of a sense of optimism surrounding these issues among women. For instance, women are more optimistic about access to education, access to media/information, quality of education, health issues related to smoking, and sexual abuse and/or violence improving in the next five years. This shows that although more needs to be done for women specifically, women are feeling more positive that things will change in the future.

4.7 Youth in rural areas experience more challenges, yet are more optimistic about the future, while those in the East are least optimistic that things will improve, compared to those in the West

In our Next Generation survey, young people living in rural areas tend to experience more challenges in their lives, with greater concerns surrounding employment opportunities, access to education, lack of financial security, natural disasters, and substance abuse, among others. In urban areas, the COVID-19 pandemic and work-life balance (either working long hours or having to work multiple jobs) are the biggest challenges. Encouragingly, those in rural areas are generally more optimistic about a range of these issues improving in the future.

Comparing young Indonesians in the East and West of the country, similar top priorities come through for all regions: employment, health and education. However, young people in the East are least optimistic about these concerns 'getting better' in the future, particularly for the most prominent concerns such as COVID-19, quality of and access to education, and other issues including lack of access to the media, lack of access to sexual and reproductive healthcare and marriage at a young age. We see in subsequent chapters how these regional differences play out in more detail.

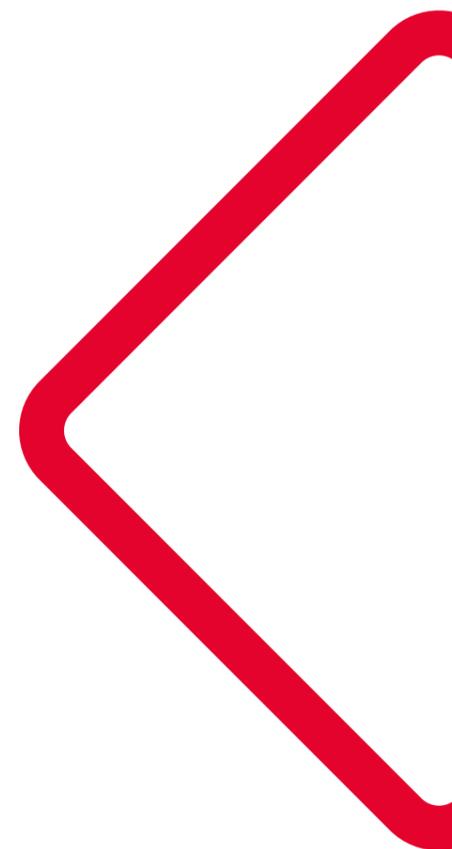
4.8 The eldest youth in Indonesia are feeling the financial impact of a lack of employment opportunities, whereas social issues, particularly around gender equality, are becoming more important to younger Indonesian youth

There are several differences in the way different age groups experience life in Indonesia. For instance, 25-35 year-olds are disproportionately concerned about employment opportunities, with 25-29 year-olds also experiencing a lack of financial security in their lives, likely due to life stage. There are also greater rates of substance abuse among 25-35 year-olds, which may be a result of some of these acute stressors they experience in their lives. This may also affect their perception of the future, as it is the 16-19 year-olds who are significantly more positive about the future (echoed in our qualitative findings).

These differences in experiences of current issues are mirrored in what different age groups would like to see improved in the future. Generally, 25-35 year-olds express a greater desire to improve job opportunities, economic support for the unemployed, and access to free healthcare, reflecting their experiences of lack of employment opportunities and financial security. Whereas, 16-19 year-olds are particularly concerned about social issues, such as stopping sexual harassment of women, and improving gender equality. The focus on sexual harassment and gender equality may also represent a generational shift in attitudes toward women. In the Politics chapter, we explore differences in political engagement in more detail by age as we see that engagement in politics is lower among the youngest age group.

4.9 Young people with disabilities have similar priorities as other young Indonesians i.e. the impact of COVID-19, employment, education and health

Youth with disabilities are generally more concerned about health, including access to healthcare and mental health issues. There is also greater concern around employment and finances among youth who have physical disabilities than those with other disabilities or no disabilities. However, generally, youth with disabilities and those with no disabilities have the same top concerns, namely COVID-19, employment, education, and health. Where there are significant differences in the experiences or views of youth with disabilities, these are highlighted in subsequent chapters.





Chapter 5 Education

We start this chapter by providing a brief overview of the Indonesian education system. At the time of this research, sweeping policy changes were afoot across primary, secondary, and tertiary education levels, with new policies aiming to address some long-standing challenges, including learning inequalities and student learning levels.

At the time of writing, young people had not yet felt the impact of these new policies, but our research suggests that these changes were timely given the current view among Indonesian youth that the educational system requires a significant overhaul. Whilst education is a key issue young people want to see improved, they also believe that access to and quality of education will improve in the next five years, suggesting that young people are aware of policy changes and feel confident these will have a positive impact.

Overall, young people reported issues with the curriculum, facilities, teachers, and teaching methods that mean young people do not feel their education prepares them well for work or life. Where relevant, we draw out key audience and regional differences in youth views and experience.

5.1 Policy context: a period of education reform

Indonesia has made significant strides in education, including substantial improvements in enrolment. Decentralisation and increased spending have seen student enrolment increase by more than 31 per cent at the primary and secondary education levels since 2002 (World Bank, 2020)⁴⁹. The country has also made progress in gender equality in education, with the proportion of males and females roughly equal in 2020, though important variations exist at the subnational level (ibid)⁵⁰.

Despite these improvements, student learning levels and learning inequality remain major challenges, with most students failing to meet the national learning targets Indonesia has set itself. Research by the World Bank in 2020 found that: on average, students did not meet the passing score for the Grade 12 National Exam; 70 per cent of children could not demonstrate basic

literacy on the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018; and disadvantaged students, such as those who are poor, living in remote areas or with disabilities, are often behind their peers in the same grade (ibid.)⁵¹. A separate study in 2017 found that about 16 per cent of 25-64 year-olds in Indonesia had attained tertiary education, well below the OECD average of 44 per cent (OECD, 2019)⁵². Even though the number of out-of-school young people shows a declining trend each year, the per centage in rural areas is still higher than urban areas, where, despite government assistance, young people still drop out, largely due to inability to pay school fees and to relieve financial pressures on their families.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed inequalities in the education system, with only young people in urban centres from higher SEG backgrounds having the network coverage, equipment, and support required for remote learning. A 2021 study found that, after one year of school closures, children in early grades had, on average, lost the equivalent of five to six months of learning and in some cases up to 15 months (INOVASI, 2021)⁵³. The results further highlighted the disproportionate impacts of the pandemic on marginalised children.

Significant changes to the education system have been made in response to these challenges. A series of sweeping reforms known as the *Merdeka Belajar – Kampus Merdeka (MBKM)* or ‘Freedom to Learn-Independent Campus’ were launched in 2020-2021. For primary and secondary education levels, these changes involve: replacing national exams with more ‘character-based’ assessments and a renewed focus on literacy and numeracy competencies; granting schools greater autonomy in assessing learning outcomes; easing administrative burdens on teachers by simplifying the curriculum; and expanding the regional zoning system to minimise educational inequalities, particularly for students in remote areas (Purwanti, 2021)⁵⁴. The ‘Independent Campus’ portion of this policy focuses on higher education institutions and on supporting graduates’ employability by linking them to the job market. For example, students should now be able to study for three semesters outside their study program either by taking other courses or gaining work

49 World Bank (2020). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/indonesia/publication/the-promise-of-education-in-indonesia>

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid.

52 OECD (2019). https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/EAG2019_CN_IDN.pdf

53 This study was conducted by the Innovation for Indonesia’s School Children (INOVASI) programme, in partnership with Indonesia’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (MoECRT) and the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). INOVASI (2021). <https://devpolicy.org/COVID-19-and-education-reform-in-indonesia-20220525/>

54 Purwanti (2021). <https://www.atlantis-press.com/proceedings/icosihess-20/125951376>

experience. (Faculty of Agricultural Technology, Universitas Brawijaya, 2021)⁵⁵

At the time of this research, this policy was still in the early stages of implementation and its effects had not been felt by the young people in our sample. The policy has also been responded to with scepticism by some educators, as this is not the first time a new Minister of Education and Culture has enforced sweeping changes to the school curriculum, most recently in 2013 (Mukminin et al., 2019)⁵⁶. To date, it is unclear how many institutions have taken these reforms on board and how young people are experiencing these.

Yet, as we will see in this chapter, changes to the curriculum are timely, with young people voicing concerns with the quality of the current education system: from teaching, learning resources and a lack of preparation for working life; to facilities, infrastructure and funding.

5.2 Education is the number one issue young people want to see improved

Findings from our Next Generation survey showed that ‘better education’ is the number one issue that young people agree needs improvement in Indonesia (49 per cent), and this was reflected in our qualitative discussions. However, access to and quality of education are both in the top five issues young people believe will improve in the next five years (51 per cent and 47 per cent), suggesting there is movement in the right direction. We outline young people’s experiences and the key challenges they face in detail below.

5.2.1 Young people value education, but it is not preparing them well for life or work

As we saw in Chapter 1 on Values, young people place high value on receiving a formal education. It is an essential component to strengthen their character, learn strong morals, and ground themselves in Indonesian identity. However, less than half of our youth sample in our Next Generation survey agreed that their education has been valuable on a more practical level, whether it be to help them prepare well for general life (40 per cent) or for work (36 per cent), whilst just 39 per cent agree their education has helped their chances to get a job. Young women are more likely to feel that their education has prepared them for general life (43 per

cent versus 38 per cent for young men) however this is still less than half.

This suggests a disconnect between the *value* young people place on education in the abstract – i.e. on education as a symbol of status and an institution that deserves respect and the concrete *benefits* they are receiving from their education in reality.

“When you enter school, you are taught that education will lead us to success in the future.” Female, 23, Java (Jakarta)

“Searching for a job as a senior high school graduate is not easy and I’m sceptical that school prepares us for working life. The most important thing school should do is prepare us for work life and give us life skills.” Male, 21, South Sumatra (Palembang)

5.2.2 Valuable skills are felt to be missing from the current curriculum, particularly at lower and senior high school levels

Whilst young people in our qualitative sample acknowledged the necessity of education for employment in Indonesia, with a high school diploma mandatory for a lot of low-middle income work (such as in fast-food restaurants or cashier positions), they struggled to see how their education was equipping them with the right hard and soft skills to thrive in a working environment. This sentiment was particularly strong for those in lower levels of education, who consistently rated all elements of their education lower than those at university level. Young people expressed a range of gaps they want to see addressed:

Information Technology (IT) skills: Young people see a booming tech industry all around them, but feel their current education seems to ignore this in both the teaching methods (which often do not incorporate technology and still rely on pen-paper and textbooks) and the skills they are taught, which at present do not include digital literacy. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic forcing schools to embrace technology, young people reported that adoption of these tools was patchy and that most teachers have reverted to non-digital methods, rather than embracing innovation.

Financial literacy and business skills: A competitive employment landscape has seen an increase in young people starting their own businesses. However, young people feel they lack the practical skills to set up successful and profitable businesses. These include: financial literacy (how to get a loan, understanding interest, profit margins, etc.), marketing (how to attract customers, set themselves apart from competitors) and time management and resourcing.

Practical skills to aid the transition from education into work: Young people report feeling ill-prepared for the transition from a school to work environment. Practical skills such as CV writing, how to apply for jobs, and interviewing skills are all valuable skills that young people feel they are lacking when they leave school. Additionally, skills like problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication are all deemed valuable in a work environment and missing from young people’s current educational experiences.

Greater emphasis on social sciences and creative subjects: Some young people feel the Indonesian education system gives unequal weight and importance to subjects like science and mathematics at the expense of more creative competencies such as art, languages, and social sciences. While elements of Indonesia’s push to develop the creative economy are touching higher education levels – such as BCL, a collaboration between Indonesian Creative Industries body, BEKRAF and national universities (The British Council: Indonesia Country Report, 2019)⁵⁷ – young people would like to see more of these subjects incorporated into the curriculum at lower levels.

English: Learning the English language is attractive to Indonesian youth, with almost half (47 per cent) of our Next Generation survey stating that they would be interested in learning it, especially as they feel this skill will be beneficial in a business environment. Whilst English is currently taught at most schools, the quality of teaching varies greatly.

“We must consider the needs of today’s era, especially now where computer science is needed.” Male, 19, Papua (Jayapura)

“We get taught only formal subjects at school such as English, Maths and Biology but these don’t teach us how to deal with the problems we face outside of school.” Female, 19, Maluku (Ambon)

“Educational output should not just be about degrees but also how to develop a good mindset and problem solving.” Male, 30, West Java (Bandung)

Young people in our qualitative sessions acknowledged that elements of these desired practical skills are part of vocational education that already exists in Indonesia. Youth we spoke to voiced the benefit of vocational training as an alternative to traditional schooling and how rates of enrolment have grown over the last decade, given the push by the government to help alleviate skilled labour shortages (World Education News and Reviews, 2019)⁵⁸. The practical educational benefit of vocational training suggests that it would be particularly useful in instances where youth have limited funds to continue more academic education, or want an education that can offer them a better chance of a job afterwards. However, our qualitative sessions revealed that there is still a stigma attached to vocational training, which means it is not always seen to be a viable alternative.

Positively, there are signs that young people in higher education feel better about the quality of education and the skills they are receiving compared to those in lower levels. For example, young people currently in higher education rated the curriculum and teaching materials directionally higher than those in senior high school, with those in higher education rating these elements ‘good’ (curriculum 58 per cent, teaching materials 61 per cent, compared to 54 per cent and 56 per cent respectively for those in senior high school). This was reflected in our qualitative findings, with universities offering more opportunities for learning and advancement beyond the classroom environment. For example, young people mentioned youth clubs and campus organisations that allowed them to develop their voice and critical thinking skills.

55 Faculty of Agricultural Technology, Universitas Brawijaya (2021). <https://tp.ub.ac.id/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/MBKM-HANDBOOK-FAT-UB-2020.pdf>

56 Mukminin et al. (2019). <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1220070.pdf>

57 British Council: Developing Creative Economies in ODA Countries, Indonesia Country Report (2019).

58 World Education News and Reviews (2019). <https://wenr.wes.org/2019/03/education-in-indonesia-2>

“During my studies at the University of Indonesia, I gained a lot of experience through participating in many activities outside of the classroom and in campus-level organisations. I got many benefits in skills and relationships I developed. I feel that I can apply these benefits in the world of work to apply in my current job.”
Male, 22, North Sumatra (Medan)

5.2.3 Teaching quality and inadequate facilities are big issues, impacting young people’s confidence and likelihood to continue their education

Teacher training in Indonesia is a lengthy process that requires at least four years of training, obtaining a teacher certificate and demonstrating a range of professional and social competencies (ibid)⁵⁹. Not many universities offer teacher training (especially in rural and remote areas) which means that many move to larger cities for training and to teach. To deal with this shortage, local governments and schools often recruit *honorary* teachers – a term for non-permanent teachers seconded to schools to address teacher shortages. Many of these teachers are paid low wages, do not have the requisite training or specialism in their field, and suffer from weak job protection. The poor pay associated with teaching (especially for the high numbers of *honorary* teachers) means that many teachers work multiple jobs (often at night) to make ends meet.

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic expedited a modernisation of educational infrastructure, many schools and teachers were unable to cope with or lacked the technical skills required to adapt to the rapid change to an online learning environment, resulting in students falling behind and/or becoming disengaged. In our Next Generation survey, a third (33 per cent) reported that a ‘lack of education/schooling’ due to COVID-19 has impacted their life personally.

All the above translates into an unpleasant learning experience for many young Indonesians. Whilst young people in our Next Generation survey perceived teachers, teaching methods and teaching materials to be ‘good’ at a general level, around a third felt these to be ‘fair’ or ‘poor’ (32 per cent, 45 per cent, and 42 per cent, respectively) showing there is room for improvement. Young people in our qualitative sessions

described a range of challenges:

- **Large class sizes and little individual attention:** Young people described being in class with 30-40 other students, with teachers struggling to maintain discipline or oversight. This means students receive very little individual attention and that teaching methods are not tailored to individual needs;
- **Unmotivated teachers and over-reliance on independent learning:** Large class sizes combined with tiredness from working multiple jobs, limit teachers’ ability to use more creative or interactive teaching methods. Young people reported an overreliance on rote memorisation and independent learning, leading to boredom and frustration;
- **Verbal and physical abuse:** Large class sizes can intensify issues with discipline, and some young people recounted experiences of teachers resorting to verbal and in extreme cases, physical violence to maintain their authority. This was especially prevalent in cities like Medan and Jayapura, and among young men. These experiences have considerable adverse impacts on young people’s confidence and mental wellbeing;
- **Inconsistent teaching standards across different schools:** A lack of qualified teachers and a high need for teaching staff means the quality of teaching can be inconsistent across different schools. This can create issues for young people as they move between schools for different education levels (e.g. primary to secondary), with some already being at a disadvantage relative to their peers. These discrepancies mean that children may fall behind at a young age, and struggle to catch up and re-engage.

“The requirements for entering elementary school are that the child must be able to read, write and count, while children at kindergarten age weren’t (fully) prepared for that” Female, 35, West Java (Bandung)

Despite these challenges, young people acknowledged that issues are not solely down to teachers, but that inadequate teaching facilities also play a role. In our Next Generation survey, over a third rated the school facilities (e.g. classrooms and quality of equipment) as ‘fair’ (38 per cent) and a further eight per cent as ‘poor’. In our qualitative sessions, young people complained about lack of space to accommodate the numbers of students and a lack of adoption of quality school equipment and technology. For example, young people talked about some schools lacking access to science equipment and lacking basic technology infrastructure such as computer labs.

“But teachers can’t be blamed either because it all depends on the existing school facilities to support them. The schools here don’t support the facilities in them.” Male, 31, East Nusa Tenggara (Nangahale)

“The low quality of education is due to the fact that the educational facilities and infrastructure themselves are still not sufficient. Especially in the suburbs.” Female, 33, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)

These challenges can make young people question the value of their education. In our Next Generation survey, over a third of those who dropped out of school stated they made the personal choice to leave (36 per cent), with a lack of adequate facilities and poor teaching experiences consistently cited as a key reason for drop-out among young people in our qualitative sessions.

5.3 Family pressures and financial limitations are key contributors to drop-out, especially in rural areas

Given the importance of family values, young people in our qualitative sessions were heavily influenced by the views of parents and extended family (as well as peers) when considering whether to stay in education. A third of our quantitative sample agreed that parents should make the decisions about their children’s education (31 per cent). Parental influence was more common among those who identify as Muslim (33 per cent) compared to minority religions (23 per cent). Women (34 per cent) and older age groups (34 per cent of 25–29 year-olds and 37 per cent of 30-35 year-olds) are also more likely to agree that their parents should make the decision on their child’s education. Parents are also more likely to make the decision for their child to leave school in rural areas (12 per cent versus five per cent in urban areas), with 37 per cent of young people believing that parents should make the decisions about their children’s education compared to 27 per cent of urban youth.

Of those in our Next Generation survey who dropped out of education before senior high school, one in three cited low household income as their reason for leaving education (34 per cent), and a further ten per cent cited a need to start working. This is despite public schools being free and government initiatives introduced to tackle finance-related school drop-out – for example, the school zoning system established in 2018 which aimed to reduce the cost of school transportation (Riyanti et al., 2020)⁶⁰ and the Smart Indonesia Program (*Kartu Indonesia Pintar*, KIP, which aims to help youth and their families with the cost of education – The National Team for the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction, 2022)⁶¹. Women and youth in rural areas still feel this financial burden more strongly, with 43 per cent of female youth who dropped out of education before high school citing ‘low household income’ as the reason, compared to 27 per cent of males; and 39 per cent of rural youth citing low income compared to 23 per cent of those in urban areas.

This was echoed in our qualitative work, where financial circumstances were cited as a primary reason among those who had dropped out. Young people spoke of the inability to carry on their education when their family

⁶⁰ Riyanti et al. (2020). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344093319_Zoning_System_of_Education_in_Indonesia_Challenges_and_Their_Future

⁶¹ National Team for the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction (2022). <https://www.tnp2k.go.id/program/smart-indonesia-card>

could no longer afford the associated costs (transport, resources etc.) of school. They also referenced a pressure to find work to assist their family financially or help support their siblings. Our sessions also revealed that inefficiencies in the KIP programme mean that it doesn't always help all young people, especially as parents are able to withdraw the money and may choose to spend it on other things. This combined with low awareness of financial help in rural areas suggests that there is still work to be done to make sure all young people can benefit from these programmes.

“Carrying on my education felt impossible with the cost of it and my family not having the money for me to continue.” Female, 19, East Kalimantan (Melak)

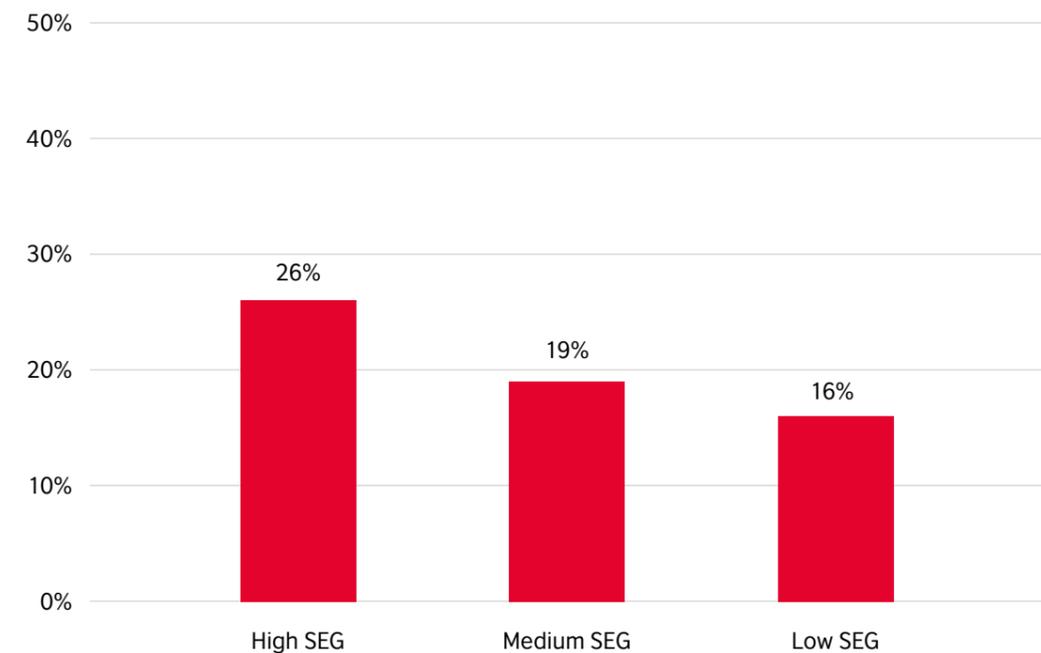
“I didn't get much support from my family to continue education because my parents wanted me to apply for a job instead of university to help my family's financial situation as I am the first child.” Male, 21, Maluku (Ambon)

5.4 Financial limitations also impact higher education and study-abroad opportunities

Indonesia contributes a significant number of international students abroad, estimated at 13.9 thousand in Australia alone (Statista, 2022)⁶², with numbers growing since the Indonesian government's scholarship programme (The Indonesian Endowment fund for Education, LPDP) was established in 2012. Indonesia is a key market of focus for international student recruitment, due to the size of the youth population and the support and funding put in place by the Indonesian government (ICEF Monitor, 2019a)⁶³. The top study-abroad destination countries are Australia, Malaysia and the US, followed by Japan and the UK (Statista, 2022)⁶⁴ – with Asian destinations frequently considered due to their affordability and proximity.

Education abroad often requires self-funding, meaning that educational mobility is often limited by this extra financial burden. 90 per cent of those who are studying abroad are paying for the education themselves, meaning just ten per cent have received grants or scholarships from the Indonesian Government, universities or companies (ICEF Monitor, 2019b)⁶⁵. In our Next Generation survey, one in five Indonesian youth showed an active interest in studying abroad, however, this is concentrated in those of a higher socio-economic grade (as shown in figure 5.4). Lower levels of interest among young people from lower SEG backgrounds are likely driven by lower levels of income, and therefore a limited ability to fund international study.

Figure 5.4. Interest in studying abroad by socio-economic group (SEG)



Questions. B7. Which of the below statements about school and education do you agree with?
Base: High SEG (1205) Medium SEG (1250) Low SEG (498)

5.5 Young people in Eastern parts of the country experience more issues with education, leading to higher levels of disengagement and drop-out

In our qualitative sessions, young people from Eastern provinces (such as Papua and Kupang) reported feeling the impact of educational underfunding in their areas. They also complained about a lack of suitable facilities (e.g. run-down buildings, lack of classroom space), poor teaching quality and a lack of resources (e.g. computers) more than their counterparts in Western regions. Whilst most young Indonesians value education, consistently poor experiences and a perceived lack of care for young people's wellbeing can, over time, undermine faith in its importance.

In our Next Generation survey, just over one in three young people in Eastern areas of Indonesia said that it

is important to finish secondary school, compared to almost half of those in Western Indonesia (35 per cent versus 46 per cent). Young women were just as likely to say this when compared to young men in Eastern provinces (35 per cent versus 35 per cent), whilst in Western provinces there was a greater difference, with young women more likely to feel this (49 per cent) compared to young men (44 per cent). Those in the East were also more likely to feel that the education system is insufficiently equipping them for life and work - just 30 per cent felt that their education has prepared them well for working life (versus 38 per cent in the West) and only 32 per cent said that their education has helped them get a job (versus 40 per cent in the West).

62 Statista (2022a). <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1272467/indonesia-tertiary-level-students-by-country-of-destination/>
 63 ICEF Monitor (2019a). <https://monitor.icef.com/2019/09/recruiting-from-indonesia-in-a-context-of-increased-competition/#:~:text=All%20this%20points%20to%20the,are%20also%20actively%20recruiting%20Indonesians.>
 64 Statista (2022a). <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1272467/indonesia-tertiary-level-students-by-country-of-destination/>
 65 ICEF Monitor (2019b). <https://monitor.icef.com/2019/02/indonesian-outbound-continues-to-grow-with-emphasis-on-regional-destinations/>

“The school in my village has inadequate facilities for the students. They go to school and study with limited learning materials, poor school facilities, and the means of transportation are still very poor.” Female, 20, East Nusa Tenggara (Kupang)

“Education in Papua, especially in Kaimana still needs improvement, there are schools there that lack infrastructure like computers and Wifi network. The teachers are also not amazing, they’re pretty moderate...I don’t know why education is lesser in comparison to other regions in Indonesia.” Male, 21, Papua (Kaimana)

“Dropout in my area is very common... there are kids who don’t have enough of an interest to go to school. They’re affected by the environment around them that is full of people who have no education.” Male, 20, Papua (Kaimana)

5.6 Those who drop out often welcome opportunities to rejoin the education system

Of those who dropped out of school, many young people in our qualitative sessions regretted their decision and expressed a desire to return to education if they had the opportunity.

Filial schools are an initiative that allows disadvantaged young people (e.g. street children) to return to education having dropped out of school (Cahyani et al., 2021)⁶⁶. These schools exist to uphold the UN sustainable development universal value ‘Leave No One Behind’ and that every child is able to have a quality education, with schools ranging from primary/ elementary level to senior high school (Zulinto et al. 2021)⁶⁷. Those in our sample who attended filial schools (in Palembang) to continue their education after dropping out, spoke of a better quality of schooling with attentive teachers and mandatory presence in classes. One participant had such a positive experience that they started actively encouraging students in their community to return to school.

“I pioneered returning to school! I went around my neighbourhood and invited friends and young people to join me back at school...”

“...My teachers when I went back to school all supported me, I loved my teachers in this school because they not only gave me many insights and knowledge, but they paid attention to me. If I didn’t go to school they would call my parents...”

“I will always remember them because they helped me so much all the way until I graduated.” Male, 20, South Sumatra (Palembang)

66 Cahyani et al. (2021). <https://www.researchgate.net/deref/https%3A%2F%2Fdoi.org%2F10.29037%2Fdigitalpress.47393>

67 Zulinto et al. (2021). <https://jurnal.iicet.org/index.php/jppi/article/view/1180/895>



Chapter 6

Employment

In this chapter, we discuss the current employment landscape for young people in Indonesia. At the time of this research, the impact of COVID-19 was still on young people's minds, and many young people were juggling multiple financial and emotional pressures in an increasingly competitive landscape. Against a challenging employment backdrop, youth interest in entrepreneurship is high, but support and clear routes into this world are felt to be lacking; young people are often torn between their desires to follow their own passions or to follow paths their families will support.

6.1 The current employment landscape

Indonesia has rapidly industrialised and urbanised since the 1960s, but the last decade has seen swift infrastructural development that has shifted employment patterns (OECD, 2020)⁶⁸. Indonesia produced an average of 2.4 million new jobs each year between 2009-2019, with the employment rate reaching a two-decade high in 2019 (World Bank, 2021b)⁶⁹. While agriculture remains a source of employment, particularly in rural areas, the services sector has propelled employment growth given the reliance on tourism for many areas (Employment and Skills Strategies Indonesia, 2020). The government's focus on infrastructural development also means that there are more available roles related to this (e.g. construction, services and retail).

Indonesia felt the force of COVID-19 with more than one in two households seeing at least one household member become unemployed (UNICEF, 2020a)⁷⁰. Despite unemployment rates among young people slowly declining, they remain particularly high, standing at just over 16 per cent in 2021 (Statista, 2021)⁷¹.

While more formal forms of employment have expanded in recent years, Indonesia still has high rates of informal employment. Almost half of workers in Indonesia work within the informal sector and do not hold employee

contracts (OECD, 2020)⁷². This figure shows little sign of reduction as Indonesia continues to struggle with the number of formal employment opportunities (defined as permanent positions that include benefits) available and the impact of COVID-19 continues to be felt. Furthermore, a lack of middle-class jobs is also hindering educated young people who aspire to provide a higher standard of living for their family. Finding work that matches their qualifications is problematic, suggesting that levels of informal employment will persist (World Bank, 2021).

Given there is little opportunity in the formal sector, youth interest in becoming entrepreneurs is high (World Economic Forum, 2019)⁷³. However, research indicates considerable barriers to success, due to a lack of: entrepreneurship competencies and education; experience; resources; networks and family support. Moreover, there is a lack of incubators or spaces to grow businesses, an inequitable distribution of young entrepreneurs across regions, and a lack of policy support from authorities and government at all levels (UNDP, 2020)⁷⁴. Despite these challenges, the younger generation is making a considerable dent in the start-up space, specifically in e-commerce with companies such as Gojek and Tokopedia officially achieving 'unicorn' status.

6.2 Young people have conflicting employment motivations: they want stability and to make their parents proud, but are also drawn to more entrepreneurial endeavours

As we saw in Chapter 1 (Youth Values), young people experience a constant push-pull between collectivist and individualist values and this same tension plays out in their employment motivations.

On the one hand, young people are hugely motivated by a desire to make their parents proud and making

68 OECD (2020). <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/1f8c39b2-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/1f8c39b2-en#:text=In%20recent%20years%2C%20regular%20wage,rose%20to%2040.8%25%20in%202019>.

69 World Bank (2021b). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/indonesia/publication/pathways-to-middle-class-jobs-in-indonesia>

70 UNICEF (2020a). <https://www.unicef.org/indonesia/media/13106/file/Socio-Economic%20Impact%20of%20COVID-19%20on%20Households%20in%20Indonesia.pdf>

71 Statista (2021). <https://www.statista.com/statistics/812110/youth-unemployment-rate-in-indonesia/>

72 OECD (2020). <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/1f8c39b2-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/1f8c39b2-en#:text=In%20recent%20years%2C%20regular%20wage,rose%20to%2040.8%25%20in%202019>.

73 World Economic Forum (2019). <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/08/indonesia-young-people-entrepreneur/>

74 UNDP (2020). <https://www.undp.org/indonesia/publications/undp-annual-report-2020>

enough money to support the family. Often, this means going into more ‘traditional’ roles like the civil service or finding an office job. However, systemic barriers such as nepotism and high competition make it increasingly difficult for young people to thrive in these environments.

On the other hand, young people are also motivated by new and different career paths in the technology and creative sectors and in the entrepreneurial space. Whilst family support for these roles is comparatively limited, our qualitative evidence suggests that these are areas many young people feel passionately about.

6.2.1 Youth seek stability to be able to support their families and make their parents proud

The most salient practical pressure for youth is the need to earn money not only for themselves, but also for their parents. Young people today feel the burden of being the sandwich generation: an obligation to support their own family and their parents or siblings at the same time (Jakarta Post, 2021)⁷⁵.

This additional financial responsibility means it is common for young people to: 1) work multiple jobs – one in three young people saying that they need to work more than one job to earn enough to support themselves (32 per cent), with rural youth feeling this more acutely (35 per cent versus 29 per cent for urban youth), with young men also more likely to feel this (38 per cent) compared to women (25 per cent); and 2) work alongside their education (26 per cent were in both education and employment). The latter phenomenon is particularly the case for urban youth who are more likely to be working alongside their studies (34 per cent versus 14 per cent of rural youth), while rural youth are generally more likely to be working entirely from an earlier age (41 per cent of rural youth are employed and not in education versus 33 per cent of urban youth).

“I work in a service centre but I also get money from being a driver or helping my neighbour.” Male, 21, South Sumatra (Palembang)

The need to financially prosper is amplified by a dominant ‘hustle culture’ in Indonesia (Saya Cinta Indonesia News, 2021)⁷⁶. This can mean that youth are driven to work continuously long hours (not returning to education) and multiple jobs to provide for their family and attain the lifestyle they desire. Almost one in five of our Next Generation survey believe that ‘hustle culture’ is an effective way to progress in a career (17 per cent), with men more likely to agree with this (20 per cent versus 14 per cent of women); and 25-29 and 30-35 year-olds feeling more pressure to conform to this culture (19 and 18 per cent, respectively).

“The most important thing, no matter what the job is, is for it to be a job I feel good about doing, and one that has a good salary.” Male, 20, Papua (Jayapura)

In addition to wanting to support parents financially, finding employment that makes parents proud is a big motivator. These are typically ‘traditional’ careers in government or private companies that bring a certain level of financial security. When asked what sectors they are interested in, young people in our Next Generation survey report a high interest in construction (18 per cent), the most desired sector of all those asked⁷⁷. This is likely driven by the government’s recent five-year infrastructure development plan, which will bring in numerous jobs and bring the all-important security young people and their families seek (OECD, 2015)⁷⁸.

“You need to make sure that the opinions of your family and parents are considered because having family support for what you do is important.” Female, 33, Java (Jakarta)

6.2.2 Young people are also excited by alternative career prospects in the start-up space and tech sectors

Whilst young people want to make their parents proud, research by Nilan et al. (2016)⁷⁹ evidenced a strong generational gap in the career aspirations of parents and their children, with only four per cent of young people aspiring to be in a similar career as their parents. According to the Ministry of Industry (2018)⁸⁰, the creative industry in Indonesia is growing, with many young people gravitating towards more creative industries and the information and technology sector. This is mirrored by some of the most desired sectors stated by young people in our Next Generation survey; Information and Communication (16 per cent, the second most desired sector) and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (13 per cent, the seventh most desired sector). According to young people, these nascent sectors are dominated by young people and therefore less bogged down by the hierarchies and nepotism that dominate more traditional career paths.

Below, we detail the barriers young people face when trying to enter more traditional forms of formal employment and how these can push young people into considering alternative/more entrepreneurial routes into employment out of desire or necessity.

“Finding work is a little more complicated, especially if you are looking for a job that matches your passion.” Female, 24, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)

“My dream is to start my own clothing brand because it’s my passion and hobby.” Male, 25, West Java (Bandung)

6.3 Youth face multiple barriers when looking for employment

While 90 per cent of young people in formal employment from our Next Generation survey stated that they were ‘satisfied’ with their job, our qualitative work revealed a more complicated picture. Young people expressed multiple obstacles to finding employment: competition, nepotism, and lack of job opportunities. Against this backdrop, many young people are just grateful to have work, but many have higher and different aspirations. We explore each of these obstacles in more detail below.

6.3.1 Youth struggle to find work in an increasingly competitive job market

Demand for jobs outweighs opportunities across the country. This means employers hold power and can afford to be selective, often only picking candidates who have both qualifications and experience. Young people recognise the need to equip themselves with more skills and experience to be considered for positions, and (as discussed in the previous chapter on Education) feel there is often a mismatch between the skills they received in their education and the skills required in the workplace. Our Next Generation survey found that 17 per cent of those in part-time work and 17 per cent of those who are unemployed, are so because they do not have the relevant qualifications for the job that they want. This is particularly true for men where 21 per cent are working part-time for this reason and 22 per cent are unemployed due to a lack of relevant qualifications (versus 12 per cent and 13 per cent for women).

“The number of people who need work is more than the number of jobs available... Many young people become unemployed because there are few jobs even though they already have degrees. Therefore, sometimes there are people whose work does not match their title.” Male, 17, Java (Jakarta)

75 Jakarta Post (2021). <https://www.thejakartapost.com/indonesia/2021/11/28/millennials-hope-to-break-sandwich-generation-cycle.html>

76 Saya Cinta Indonesia News (2021). <https://sayacintaindonesia.com/hustle-culture-millennials-toxic-life-style/>

77 Construction was followed by Information and Communication (16 per cent) and Public Administration and Defence or Education (both 15 per cent).

78 OECD (2015). <https://www.oecd.org/policy-briefs/indonesia-investment-upgrading-infrastructure.pdf>

79 Nilan et al.(2016). Contemporary Indonesian youth transitions: trends and inequalities.

80 Ministry of Industry Indonesia (2018)

6.3.2 Migration due to a lack of job opportunities is common

The geographical nature of Indonesia as a collection of islands means internal migration has always been high as people move to find prosperity (Migration Policy Institute, 2018)⁸¹. It is still common for young people to move to find work today; in our Next Generation survey this was the top reason among those who moved province or within province (47 per cent). We heard from our qualitative sessions that despite higher living costs associated with bigger cities, they are seen to offer the most job prospects, a higher pay bracket and more diverse job opportunities.

“Many of my friends leave their hometowns and work in big cities and return home with results so that other young people start to follow their work patterns and migrate due to an absence of job vacancies in their area.” Female, 26, East Nusa Tenggara (Kupang)

However, even in bigger cities, demand for jobs often exceeds opportunities, and many young people who had migrated for this purpose report disappointment. For many, life in bigger cities was also accompanied by poorer mental health, as young people adjust to life away from home and their support network.

“People shouldn’t rush and decide to go to a big city like here because we don’t necessarily have the jobs.” Female, 32, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)

“Many people are looking for work in big cities but success is a process and takes a longer time. There is a need to adapt to the new environment like the lifestyle and daily life in a new city.” Female, 24, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)

6.3.3 Young people bear the brunt of persisting nepotism

Whilst young people in both urban and rural areas reported issues with nepotism, the issue appears to be more prevalent and visible in rural, more tight-knit communities. In our qualitative sessions, young people often felt despondent about finding formal employment without personal connections. This can make more traditional, formal roles less appealing to some young people, pushing them into more entrepreneurial endeavours and new ways of making money.

“Those with important positions in the company prioritise family over people with the same skills and background. I have experienced this. [This is why] young people migrate by looking for work outside the area. It is for our survival.” Female, 29, East Nusa Tenggara (Kupang)

The WVS data supported this finding. Young people were asked whether success was due to ‘hard work’ or ‘luck and connections’. While one in two young people mentioned hard work as important, almost one in five young people mentioned luck and connections as key to success in life (18 per cent scored this 8-10 on a 10-point scale), showing this is experienced by a sizeable minority.

6.4 Indonesian youth have an entrepreneurial spirit (though this can be more out of necessity than desire) but feel support is limited

Many young Indonesians see entrepreneurialism as a way out of limited job opportunities and a competitive job market. Social media and the rise of the internet has also shown young people that a different way is possible, with many looking up to young entrepreneurs who use these platforms to share tips and promote their successes. This appetite for entrepreneurialism is evidenced in our Next Generation survey where over half of those surveyed expressed an interest in setting up their own business (57 per cent), with older youth particularly interested in this (62 per cent among 25–29 year-olds and 60 per cent among 30-35 year-olds) alongside rural youth (61 per cent versus 55 per cent of urban youth). There was no substantial difference between young men and women expressing this interest (56 per cent versus 59 per cent). Young people in our Next Generation survey also find successful entrepreneurs visible and inspiring; 50 per cent agreed with the statement ‘there are lots of young successful entrepreneurs to aspire to/learn from’.

“My dream is to become a successful entrepreneur supplying my ice-cream to coffee shops and small shops. I really like the process but I know that I need to be patient and confront challenges of starting a business head on.” Female, 29, West Java (Bandung)

In our qualitative sessions, young people expressed nervousness about lacking the right skills to succeed in their entrepreneurial endeavours (as discussed in Chapter 5 on Education). This nervousness was echoed in our Next Generation survey, with only one in three Indonesian youth feeling that their education had taught them the skills they need to be an entrepreneur should they wish (35 per cent), meaning that 65 per cent felt they did not have the skills they needed. Youth also acknowledged the financial risk associated with setting up their own businesses, particularly considering continuing uncertainty around the pandemic. Despite this lack of confidence, many young people are already demonstrating entrepreneurial skills through various ‘side hustles’, such as selling good, crafts or mobile phone credit to earn money on the side.

“Since COVID-19, many businesses have not been as successful because people have reduced their interactions outside of home, in the end hopefully most will recover.” Female, 25, North Sumatra (Medan)

“I want to start my own café but I’m not very good at saving and don’t have financial problems. I don’t think it’s very common for young people in my area to be an entrepreneur though because they don’t know about finances and knowledge of running a business.” Male, 20, South Sumatra (Palembang)

Despite high levels of interest, less than half (44 per cent) of those surveyed felt that setting up their own business was achievable, predominantly due to a lack of funds (29 per cent felt that there is a lack of funding for entrepreneurs). Youth in our qualitative sessions noted the need to support entrepreneurial young people with funding, skills and training to allow them to prosper.

“The government should be more active in holding workshops or training that support young people’s skills so they can create their own business so there is a more creative and diverse range of businesses.” Female, 33, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)

“I hope that the government can provide more employment opportunities for young people by running courses so that more young people can create their own jobs.” Female, 29, East Nusa Tenggara (Kupang)

6.5 Youth across Indonesia feel the threat of unemployment, but some feel it more than others

As mentioned at the beginning of this Chapter, the multiple barriers to employment faced by Indonesian youth means that they are experiencing high levels of unemployment. Our Next Generation survey echoed similar results to official national statistics in seeing 16 per cent of youth stating that they were unemployed (and not in education).

6.5.1. Traditional gender roles make it harder for young women to find employment

Women face further barriers to employment due to established views of women's roles and capabilities. Women made up almost three quarters of unemployed youth in our Next Generation survey (73 per cent). While progress has been made to ensure that this is not due to limited access to education (World Bank Blogs, 2020)⁸², the perception that women should look after their family rather than work is still pervasive (32 per cent of those surveyed in our Next Generation survey stated that they were unemployed due to a need to look after their children (versus three per cent of men stating this); or worked part-time for the same reason (24 per cent).

“I don't really have a dream job now as I dedicate so much of my life to my baby.”
Female, 19, Maluku (Ambon)

These traditional views extend to attitudes towards women having a career, demonstrating the conflict women face between pursuing their own desires and following social norms. Less than half of Indonesian youth agree that women should be able to get married and have a career (45 per cent).

“A female friend of mine once said that they want to focus on their career first and at the age of 26 or 27 think about marriage. In my opinion, the reality is, in general, in that age range, women already have very established careers...men are often reluctant to marry women who have a brilliant career that is higher than him...So, in my opinion, if a woman places her career above all else, then she is likely to be unmarried at 30.” Male, 23, North Sumatra (Medan)

6.5.2 Rural youth feel this threat most acutely

Of those surveyed in our Next Generation survey, rural youth are more likely to be unemployed (and not in education); almost one in four (24 per cent) are unemployed compared to only ten per cent in urban areas. One explanation for higher rates of unemployment in rural areas may be attributable to limited opportunity, with almost a quarter feeling that there are not enough job opportunities where they live (23 per cent versus 14 per cent of urban youth).

“The types of jobs around me are pretty moderate...but they're not the kinds of jobs that lift up people's quality of life, they're mediocre.” Male, 21, Maluku (Ambon)

Rural youth are significantly more likely to be in informal employment (40 per cent in comparison to 23 per cent of urban youth), where work is typically casual or irregular with no regular wage or benefits. The disparity in educational infrastructure between urban and rural regions, discussed in Chapter 5 on Education, means rural youth can also be more limited in the jobs they can apply for and need to turn to informal employment just to earn a living.

“I want to work in a convenience store like Alfamidi or Indomaret but they only hire people who have finished high school so I'm not eligible to apply. I help my mother-in-law as a cashier in her shop so I can earn my own money.” Female, 19, Maluku (Ambon)

6.5.3 Educated young people are struggling with unemployment

Educated unemployment is a growing issue in Indonesia. Our Next Generation survey revealed that of those who have completed higher education, but are currently unemployed or working part-time, almost one in five state that this is because 'there are not enough job opportunities' where they live (19 per cent) or that they 'do not have the relevant qualifications for the job' they want (18 per cent). This can mean that youth find themselves in roles for which they are overqualified. This was reflected in our Next Generation survey which showed that 15 per cent of those with a higher education degree are currently in informal employment.

Higher education does not translate into better job opportunities for young Indonesians. As employers become more selective, a university degree is no longer enough. Young people in our qualitative sessions expressed a need to upskill further and demonstrate previous work experience to secure employment.

Better links between higher education institutions and employers are needed to help youth prepare for the world of work, something which curriculum changes (mentioned in the Education chapter) could help to encourage.

“Many young people become unemployed because there are few jobs even though they already have degrees. Therefore, sometimes there are people whose work does not match their title.” Male, 17, Java (Jakarta)

6.5.4 Disabled youth are limited by opportunities to enter and maintain employment

Young people with disabilities face significant barriers in many areas of life, with employment being no exception; the pandemic has made an already challenging landscape even more so (Asean Post, 2021)⁸³. Unemployment rates for those with a disability are consistently higher than those without, but it is hard to find reliable measures of these rates due to a lack of data and consistent measurement tools (National Team for the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction, 2020)⁸⁴. Our Next Generation survey revealed that one in five young people with disabilities cite a lack of job opportunities hindering them from work (with 21 per cent unemployed due to this and 20 per cent working part-time); while 24 per cent are unemployed as they do not have the relevant qualifications for the job they want. This demonstrates the disproportionate impact of unemployment on marginalised youth.

82 World Bank Blogs (2020). <https://blogs.worldbank.org/eastasiapacific/gender-and-education-indonesia-progress-more-work-be-done>

83 Asean Post (2021). <https://theaseanpost.com/article/decent-work-persons-disabilities>

84 National Team for the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction (2020). <https://www.tnp2k.go.id/download/39050Disability%20Situation%20Analysis.pdf>



Chapter 7

Political outlook and engagement

With the next presidential and parliamentary elections in 2024 fast approaching, we sought to capture young people's moods around the current political climate in the country. In the next sections we provide a brief overview of Indonesia's history since independence and recent political milestones to help contextualise our findings. We then discuss how young Indonesians feel about the government and their levels of political engagement. We discuss how, despite Indonesian youth often being branded politically 'apathetic' by the media, the picture is much more nuanced and points to political frustration, not apathy.

7.1 Historical context

7.1.1 The period following independence

Like many nations under colonial rule, the years following the struggle for independence from the Netherlands in 1945 were characterised by political and economic difficulty, including regional dissidence, attempted assassinations, military-civilian conflict, and economic stagnation (Indonesia Investments, n.d.(a))⁸⁵. Much of the tension stemmed from disagreements regarding the ideological basis of Indonesia among influential political groups. This led then President Sukarno to declare a period of 'Guided Democracy', which took an authoritarian approach to keep dissent at bay.

This era came to an end in 1965, when the rise of a "New Order" driven by the army brought about a military-dominated government that removed Sukarno, led by President Suharto. This era saw a period of economic development as well as an active role by the military (and accompanying suppression and corruption) that would rule Indonesia for more than 30 years, ending abruptly in the late 1990s, when the collapse of the local economy, increasing political tension, and student-led protests forced Suharto to resign (ibid)⁸⁶.

After decades of authoritarian rule, Indonesia's *era reformasi* in the late 1990s saw a range of reforms that

marked a definitive break with the political past including freedom of the press, the free establishment of new political parties and unions, release of political prisoners, limits on the presidency term, decentralisation of power, and an announcement of general elections in June of 1999 – the first in 44 years (Indonesia Investments, n.d.(b))⁸⁷.

7.1.2 Present day politics and youth involvement

Since then, Indonesia has seen a range of democratically elected presidents, with current President Joko Widodo attracting international attention in 2014 for his populist campaigning style and anti-corruption rhetoric. Under his watch, the economy has been growing steadily (largely due to a push in infrastructure) and he remains a relatively popular figure, as evidenced by his re-election in 2019 (BBC, 2019)⁸⁸. Despite slumping into a recession during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indonesian economy is slowly recovering, with economic expansion predicted to be 5.1 per cent in 2022 and 5.3 per cent in 2023 (World Bank, 2022a)⁸⁹.

However, not long after Widodo's re-election, students took to the streets to protest a series of laws and political trends, most notably the 'omnibus' law that many young people argue strips away workers' rights and gives companies free licence to violate environmental standards; and to protest what they perceive to be Widodo's slow abolition of Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2019)⁹⁰. A big anxiety for these young protesters is that Widodo's presidency has been accompanied by a decline in hard-won democratic values and rights. One of the slogans of the protests in 2019 and 2020 was Reformasi dikorupsi – Reformasi corrupted – a rallying cry that suggests a real fear that the historic achievements of Indonesian reform are at risk of being lost (New Mandala, 2020)⁹¹.

⁸⁵ Indonesia Investments (no date.(a)). <https://www.indonesia-investments.com/culture/politics/soekarno-old-order/item179>

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Indonesia Investments (no date.(b)). <https://www.indonesia-investments.com/culture/politics/reformation/item181>

⁸⁸ BBC (2019). <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-48331879>

⁸⁹ World Bank (2022a). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/indonesia/publication/indonesia-economic-prospects-iej-june-2022-financial-deepening-for-stronger-growth-and-sustainable-recovery>

⁹⁰ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (2019). <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/09/30/protests-against-joko-widodo-rock-indonesia-pub-79989>

⁹¹ New Mandala (2020). <https://www.newmandala.org/indonesian-protests-point-to-old-patterns/>

7.2 Youth perceptions of the efficacy of government are mixed; corruption, collusion and nepotism are key issues young people want to see addressed

Perceptions of the government in Indonesia are mixed among young people, with 32 per cent stating that they think the current government is effective (this is higher among rural youth – 34 per cent versus 30 per cent in urban areas), and 30 per cent of young people thinking that the government is not effective (see Figure 7.2).

However, 33 per cent of participants feel that the government is more effective than before, suggesting that young people feel some improvements have been made; a feeling that is stronger among men than women (35 per cent versus 31 per cent among women). When asked about improvements in our qualitative sessions, young people noted advancements in infrastructure development and felt hopeful that unemployment rates would decrease as the economy recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.

When asked in our Next Generation survey about key issues they would like to see improved in their country, just under half (42 per cent) of participants stated that political corruption is a priority issue to tackle. When probed on this in our qualitative sessions, young people raised concerns about ‘KKN’ (corruption, collusion, and nepotism) that they feel are deeply engrained in the fabric of the Indonesian political system, at both a national and local level. We heard many examples of local politicians making promises they did not keep and of politicians taking bribes instead of representing the interests of the people. Other studies have found that young people have little trust or faith in the political parties or the national parliament. For example, a study by Hidayet et al. (2020) showed that among 17-25 year-olds, 54 per cent did not trust political parties and 62 per cent did not trust the national parliament.

“There are still many political figures in the city of Medan who practice corruption. The Medan city bureaucratic system on all lines is also very tied to the practice of corruption/extortion.” Male, 23, North Sumatra (Medan)

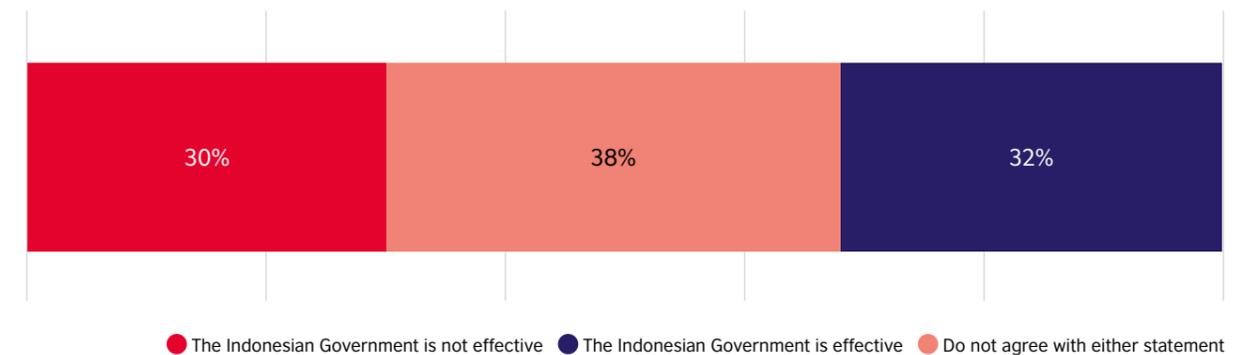
“The world of politics in my opinion is a cruel business, and money is everything. If the person has big money, the opportunity to get a position is getting bigger too ...This is what I think makes politicians justify any means to gain profits to guarantee their position, one of which is corruption.” Male, 30, West Java (Bandung)

7.3 Against this backdrop, young people are politically frustrated, not apathetic

Whilst young Indonesians played an important role in the Joko Widodo’s election campaign, a common narrative in the country is that young people are politically apathetic. At first glance, our quantitative data would seem to confirm this picture (32 per cent describe themselves as unengaged, whilst 60 per cent are neutral towards politics; eight per cent describe themselves as politically engaged). Moreover, when asked what would encourage them to increase their political engagement, 44 per cent per cent of those who are either unengaged or neutral state that they have no interest in increasing their engagement. A lack of engagement with politics is particularly pronounced among women, youth in rural areas, and among younger age groups (with 16-19 year-olds being the least engaged).

However, when digging deeper in our qualitative sessions, it is clear that ‘political apathy’ is too simple a conclusion. The low levels of political engagement reported in our Next Generation survey may be because some young people equate engagement with political participation. Our qualitative findings revealed that whilst young people may not be actively participating in politics, many are engaged in the conversation and passionate about political issues.

Figure 7.2. Perceptions of the efficacy of the Indonesian Government



Questions. F4. Which of the below statements do you agree with?
Base: All respondents (3093)

“From my point of view, young people should be more involved politically. This doesn’t mean that we as young people have to participate in political parties, but that we as young people with various passions and educational backgrounds must make sure that we do something if there is a discrepancy between the decisions of the elite officials and the needs of the people (examples of this are the actions taken by students during the Omnibus Law Policy, the scarcity of cooking oil and the high prices of fuel).” Male, 23, Java (Surabaya)

Four key themes emerged from our qualitative research strands:

1. Young Indonesians use social media to stay politically informed

Young people are using social media platforms in a range of ways to express their political views, from creating memes about political candidates to using platforms to galvanise youth energy around key issues like the 2015 ‘save KPK’ (anti-corruption board movement) (Suwana, 2018)⁹². In our own research, young people told us that, among other things, they frequently use social media to find and share political news with friends.

Social media gives youth an outlet for their frustrations with the current status quo and a platform for action, and all signs point to it continuing to play a key role in youth political engagement. In our Next Generation survey, we found that among those who lacked access to the internet, rates of political disengagement were considerably higher (48 per cent were disengaged versus 29 per cent among those with internet access). Over one in four young people mentioned that making political information easier to understand would increase their engagement (mentioned by 28 per cent of young people), particularly through social media (ranked as the top way to increase political engagement).

In the 2019 elections, both candidates invested considerably in their online campaigns to engage youth voters. Due to these initiatives, the number of youth voters increased in the 2019 elections (Jakarta Globe,

2019)⁹³. Current online behaviours and trends indicate that social media will play a key role in the 2024 elections too. Young people hope that social media activity from political candidates will not be used to ‘slander’ others or create unnecessary tensions, and that the elections will proceed in a peaceful manner. A key concern is that the spread of political fake news may cause tension in some areas of the country.

“Yes, I know about the upcoming election. In my opinion, I hope that the election will run smoothly, and safely, and will not repeat the previous incident where a lot of hoax news spread and vilified one candidate and another.” Male, 17, Java (Jakarta)

“Yes, of course, I am aware, I always follow political developments through television and social media. Of course, all parties and candidates for presidential and vice-presidential candidates have been seen in the news. All parties and names are busy seeking public sympathy. This makes the political atmosphere feel like getting closer even though it is still more than a year. The government and all parties should focus on solving problems in Indonesia instead of thinking about 2024. Because the problems in this country are more important now” Male, 22, North Sumatra (Medan)

2. Young Indonesians admire political figures more than political parties

A key finding from our qualitative research is that, in addition to parents and family, politicians are key role models for young people. Despite low faith in the government and political parties as institutions, many young people admire individual political figures. This admiration is usually a result of someone exhibiting traits and values (e.g. honesty, hard work, humbleness) that are felt to go against the political norm of corruption and dishonesty:

“The public figure that I admire is Mr. Anies Baswedan. Because he is intelligent and very patient.” Male, 26, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)

“Mr. Ridwan Kamil. Because, with the condition currently, he taught me how one has to respond firmly and gracefully no matter the situation.” Female, 24, Java (Surabaya)

“Amazed by Mr. Anies for his consistent work. From the first minister of education, he succeeded in making a good education programme and continued to become the governor of DKI Jakarta. Now Jakarta is much more organised, green and alive because of him. His kind, humble and religious nature makes me happy with a leader like him” Male, 23, North Sumatra (Medan)

In our Next Generation survey, 17 per cent of participants felt they would be more politically engaged if there were more political figures to look up to (this was ranked the fourth most effective way of increasing engagement). This sentiment was significantly higher among older age groups (25-35 year-olds). Politicians who display admirable qualities that align with young people’s values are a powerful way to increase youth engagement and trust. Whilst most politicians are still associated with bribery and corruption, a few exceptions to the rule are driving youth interest in the political sphere. This finding is supported by other research that found that, in contrast to countries like the United States, Indonesia’s political system and culture place significant emphasis on figures and leaders rather than loyalty to a certain political party (The Conversation, 2021)⁹⁴. However, a potential risk is that young people pay attention only to the character and values of political candidates, instead of focussing on their broader views and policy agenda.

3. Young people feel they do not have legitimate voice to actively engage with politics

As we saw in Chapter 2 (Youth Voice), a range of personal, social and environmental conditions can place limits on youth voice, and the political arena is a key area where these limits are felt, leaving many young people feeling that politics simply isn’t ‘for them’. There are some groups who are more impacted by this than others:

Young women: Whilst men are not significantly more likely to be engaged with politics than women, women are more likely to report being unengaged (34 per cent versus 30 per cent). This lower level of engagement with politics generally is also reflected in more women reporting that they had not engaged in any political or community activities in the last 12 months (37 per cent versus 32 per cent).

Youth in rural areas: Young people in rural areas were significantly more likely to state they are not politically engaged (40 per cent versus 26 per cent in urban areas) and significantly more likely than those in urban areas to state that they do not intend to increase their political engagement (51 per cent versus 35 per cent).

Youth with disabilities: Youth with disabilities report being slightly more engaged with politics (12 per cent versus six per cent among those with no disabilities). This could be because, as a marginalised group, there is a need to be more vigilant about how policies affect their lives. However, young people with disabilities find political information more difficult to access (30 per cent versus 18 per cent) and to understand, both through social media (29 per cent versus 14 per cent) and from sources outside of social media (22 per cent versus 12 per cent), pointing to the myriad of ways young people with disabilities experience marginalisation in Indonesian society. Youth with disabilities also feel that politicians reflect their views and opinions to a lesser extent than those without disabilities (32 per cent agree that if politics reflected their personal views more it would increase their engagement versus 18 per cent of those who do not have a disability).

A relatively new political party was started in Indonesia to address limits on youth voice in politics in 2015. Led by millennials, the Indonesian Solidarity Party (*Partai Solidaritas Indonesia*, PSI) aims to improve the representation of youth and women in the policy-making process and take an active stand against any forms of ‘old guard’ political corruption and nepotism. Despite failing to meet the four per cent parliamentary threshold in 2019, the party is gaining traction among young voters. In 2019, around two per cent of youth voted for this party (CNBC, 2019⁹⁵) and in 2021 the party’s electability rate increased to 5.2 per cent (Jawa Pos, 2021⁹⁶).

However, the party’s strong reformist agenda does not sit well with all young people, with some political commentators hypothesising that the party’s strong challenge on some religious issues is perceived as too radical, even among young moderate Muslims. The party is also led by a woman, an uncommon phenomenon in Indonesian politics.

Nevertheless, the party has shown young people that political participation is possible, and that the status quo can be challenged. It remains to be seen if this break with tradition inspires other young people to increase their political participation in the coming years. This is also an area where schools could play a role, with 16 per cent of young people in our Next Generation survey stating they would increase their political engagement if students were actively encouraged to engage with politics in school (this rises to 21 per cent for 16-19 year-olds, highlighting the opportunity for this at senior high school).

93 Jakarta Globe (2019). <https://jakartaglobe.id/context/indonesia-sees-record-turnout-in-historic-election-braces-for-fallout>

94 The Conversation (2021). <https://theconversation.com/anies-ganjar-or-prabowo-what-kind-of-politics-and-leaders-do-young-indonesians-want-for-the-2024-elections-163013>

95 CNBC Indonesia (2019). <https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/news/20190522075924-4-74140/resmi-pdip-juara-pileg-2019-dan-kegagalan-psi-hingga-hanura>

96 Jawa Pos (2021). <https://www.jawapos.com/nasional/politik/13/06/2021/survei-psi-alami-tren-kenaikan-elektabilitas/>

4. Young people do not feel that political priorities align with their views

For many young people in our qualitative sessions, politics feel impenetrable and far-removed from their day-to-day realities, with many young people either not being familiar with government policies, or not feeling as though they have any tangible impact on their lives or communities.

“If you look closely, the bureaucratic structure is filled with older people, and there is a minimal role for youth there. No youths would appear if not given a chance. Therefore, let us, as youths play a role in politics in Indonesia.” Male, 27, South Sulawesi (Makassar)

For example, young people in our qualitative sessions expressed there was not enough government support for young people during the COVID-19 pandemic (perceived to be the biggest issue facing young people), both in terms of supporting their continued education and their employment opportunities. Young people also feel the government is not doing enough to help local communities combat the ill effects of climate change or support young people with mental health problems (discussed further in chapters on Health and Climate Change).

In our quantitative survey, 23 per cent stated they would increase their political engagement if Indonesian politics reflected more of their personal views or opinions.

7.4 Young people feel optimistic their generation will disrupt the political status quo, but want more support entering politics from a young age

Despite being deeply sceptical of the current political system, young people are optimistic that the next generation will be able to disrupt the political status quo and bring about positive changes to the country. They believe that young politicians will have better value systems and approach their role with more optimism, intelligence, and critical thinking.

Young people in our qualitative sessions noted being inspired by the fact that more young generations are being represented in politics (most notably the PSI and

younger public figures running for the regional house representative) and that they hope this trend will continue in the future.

However, young people are unclear about how to enter into the political sphere as a young person, with many stating that entering politics requires money and personal connections. Whilst young people at university level feel they have opportunities to join political organisations, this feels lacking for younger age groups and those who do not go into tertiary education.

“With so many young people in politics, there will be many new ideas and ideas so that the mandate to implement democracy in accordance with Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution is more felt in the community. My friends are involved in organisations and actions, such as during the omnibus law policy. I have no experience in politics, but I appreciate my friends actively voicing their aspirations. In the last five years, I think the involvement of young people in politics has improved quite a bit, as evidenced by the presence of several young people in positions, one example being Tina Toon. She is a member of the DPRD (Parliament).” Female, 23, West Java (Bandung)

“The politics in Indonesia in five years will improve as long as young people lead it with clean politics. Brilliant ideas will give birth to programmes that are heavy for the people and not only for the party’s interests.” Female, 33, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)





Chapter 8

Health

In this chapter, we discuss the recent history of healthcare reforms in Indonesia, particularly the rollout of the Universal Health Care (UHC) system in 2014, which aimed to provide equal healthcare access for all Indonesian citizens but suffers from a range of issues with access and insurance costs. Although young people are generally positive about their current health (according to WVS data), our research has found they have concerns about the state of health in the country more broadly, particularly mental health and substance abuse, and are worried about how these will develop in the future. Additionally, we see key gender differences, with women being disproportionately more concerned about mental health issues and pregnancy at a young age than men.

8.1 COVID-19 has compounded issues in an already struggling healthcare system

Indonesia has made notable progress over the past five decades, with key health measures such as life expectancy continually improving. However, like other low-medium income countries, Indonesia faces challenges in the health sector (Asia Pacific Observatory, 2017)⁹⁷. For example, maternity mortality is one of the highest in Southeast Asia and neonatal deaths are the eighth highest number in the world. Nutrition is also a key challenge with 37 per cent of children under five years old being stunted from malnutrition, and obesity in adults having doubled in the past decade (Wiseman et al., 2018)⁹⁸.

Indonesia has been consistently underinvesting in its health sector, spending only about three per cent of its GDP on health. The country has seen a turbulent decade in terms of reforms to the health sector, with decentralisation in 2001 shifting control of expenditure to local governments, followed by the adoption of the national health insurance scheme, *Jaminan Kesehatan Nasional* (JKN) in 2014 (Pisani et al., 2016)⁹⁹. Politicians set an ambitious target: to sign up all Indonesians, and thereby achieve Universal Health Care (UHC) by 2019. Although the target was missed, great strides have

been made towards it, at least in terms of participant registration. The scheme reports over 220 million participants (31st July, 2020), 82 per cent of the national population of 268 million, making JKN one of the world's biggest single-payer health insurance schemes. One of the goals of JKN was to increase equitable access to health services without risk of impoverishment, across the nation (Pratiwi et al., 2021)¹⁰⁰. As we will discuss later in the chapter, issues with healthcare access across Indonesia have hampered the success of rolling out UHC, and currently the scheme does not serve everyone equally (notably poorer SEG's in rural locations are less well served). Issues with access and equity have been further compounded by COVID-19, which has put healthcare under extreme stress and amplified existing issues in need of attention. Even before the COVID-19 outbreak in Indonesia, capacity constraints have been an issue in Indonesia. According to figures provided by the Ministry of Health in January 2020, prior to the pandemic, Indonesia had only about 321,544 hospital beds – to serve a population of about 270 million people (Deloitte, 2020)¹⁰¹, with this being further stretched during COVID-19.

The WVS data showed that young Indonesians are positive about their own health. 73 per cent rated their current state of health as very good or good (in line with the average across the seven ASEAN markets included in the study). While young Indonesians are generally very positive about their own health and wellbeing, they do have several concerns about health issues within Indonesia and these were reflected in our Next Generation survey. 48 per cent of young people stated they have at least one or more concerns about their health. This makes health the second biggest concern for young people after concerns about employment (55 per cent). When breaking down the health concerns young people have, these are mental health (25 per cent), substance abuse (18 per cent, rising to 21 per cent in rural areas), issues relating to smoking (13 per cent), early pregnancy (13 per cent, increasing to 15 per cent in rural areas) and sexual health and disease (10 per cent).

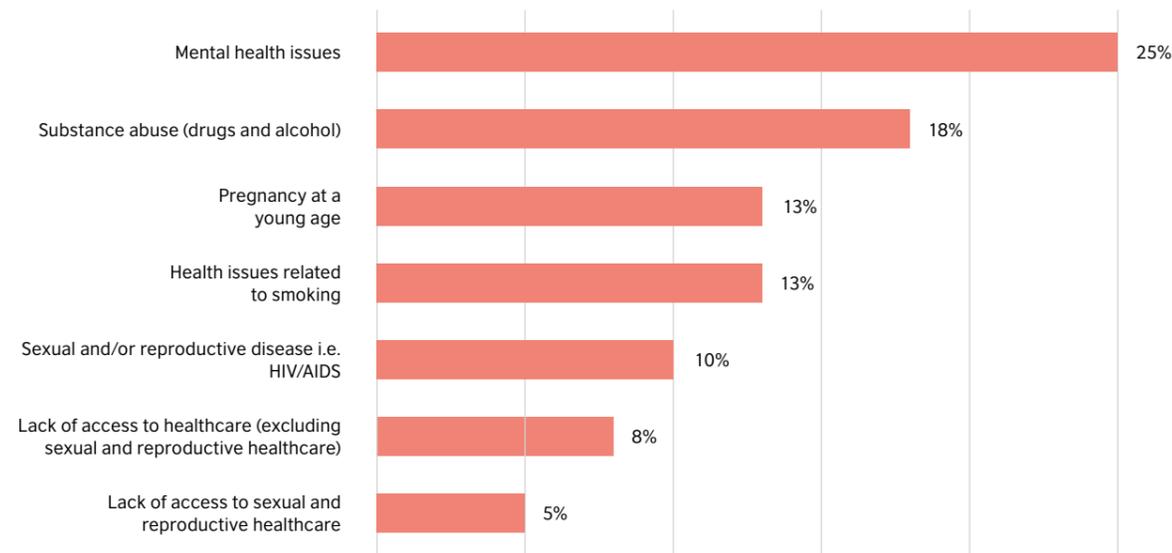
97 Asia Pacific Observatory (2017). <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/254716/9789290225164-eng.pdf>

98 Wiseman et al. (2018). <https://equityhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12939-018-0822-0>

99 Pisani et al. (2016). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5400042/>

100 Pratiwi et al. (2021). <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/11/10/e050565>

101 Deloitte (2020). <https://www2.deloitte.com/id/en/pages/life-sciences-and-healthcare/articles/rising-to-COVID-19-health-care-challenge-in-indonesia.html>

Figure 8.1. Health issues currently experienced

Questions. C3. Looking back from now and over the past five years, which, if any, of the below challenges would you say have had a negative effect on you personally?
Base: All respondents (3093)

8.2 The healthcare system does not feel physically or culturally accessible to all youth

8.2.1 Access to healthcare can be a challenge

Physical access to health care services can be an issue, notably in Eastern and more rural locations. Achieving access to quality health services nationwide is a particular challenge given Indonesia's diversity. Over 60 per cent of the population lives in Java, just six per cent of the land mass and there are a further 7,000 inhabited islands (Pratiwi et al., 2021)¹⁰². For example, one report states that in Eastern Indonesia, only 27 per cent of villages have easy access to a hospital in contrast with 93 per cent in Java and Bali, with those who have limited access to formal healthcare not being able to benefit from their JKN health insurance (ibid.)¹⁰³.

Despite knowing that access to healthcare services can be an issue, from our Next Generation quantitative survey, young people did not think access is a big issue for them (8 per cent). This in part could be down to the age of the participants in our survey (16-35 years old),

and the fact that their needs for healthcare services at a younger age are likely to be fewer than older demographics. When exploring this in more detail qualitatively, many young people did not feel they had any issues accessing primary health care (such as a family doctor). However, there were challenges in terms of access to more specialist care (e.g. hospitals and specialist clinics) particularly for young people living in more rural locations. When analysing differences between young men and women across Indonesia, access to healthcare was viewed similarly.

“Access to healthcare is quite easy for the community to access. There is a village midwife and several unofficial clinics that provide consulting services and provide some medicines although not everything. However, the Public Health Centre is only available in the Talibura sub-district which is approximately five kilometers from Nanghale. Many people are sick and it is a lot effort to look for medicine.” Male, 22, East Nusa Tenggara (Nanghale)

102 Pratiwi et al. (2021) <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/11/10/e050565>
103 *ibid.*

In addition, access to medication was felt to be an issue for young people. Our qualitative work showed how participants living in more rural areas experience issues with access to 'modern' medicine, with participants stating they use traditional herbal medication. For some, this is out of necessity due to lack of access to health services, and for others there is greater trust in using traditional herbs and medicine.

Cost is a further barrier to access. The healthcare system in Indonesia operates two types of membership: government-subsidised and non-government-subsidised health insurance plans. The government requires all employers to register their employees as JKN participants and imposes administration sanctions on companies that do not comply. However, it is difficult to attract people who work in informal sectors to purchase JKN, due to unstable salaries and no sanctions being imposed on them if they are not willing to sign up (Khoirunurrofik and Raras, 2021)¹⁰⁴. The issue of healthcare cost came through strongly in the Next Generation survey when asked what changes young people would like to see in the future, with 41 per cent saying they want access to free healthcare (higher amongst women at 44 per cent).

8.2.2 Cultural norms and values can impede healthcare access

Cultural norms and values can also play a role in terms of access (or lack of) to healthcare. One key area where this is most pertinent relates to sexual and reproductive health.

Conservative social, cultural, and religious norms around sex mean that youth across both urban and rural settings struggle to obtain accurate information regarding sexual reproductive health. Education around sex and sexual health is practically absent in schools. Abortion is illegal (except in very specific circumstances) and teenage pregnancy rates are high (over two million adolescent girls are estimated to have given birth between 2005 and 2010, making up approximately ten per cent of the country's total births (Inside Indonesia, 2019)¹⁰⁵. On top of this, unwanted pregnancies have boomed since the pandemic, spurred by a lack of access to birth control.

As found in our qualitative work, conversations around sex can be seen as a 'taboo' subject, and young people can feel ill-informed or not be aware of the services available to them. From the Next Generation survey, only five per cent of young people stated that lack of

access to sexual healthcare is an issue, which could in part be due to this 'taboo'.

“Sex education isn't that common, a lot of young people are not aware of it. Some of them do know but mostly don't, therefore some people don't use any protection when they're having a sexual activity. It is still a very sensitive topic to talk about it.” Male, 20, Papua (Jayapura)

“In my opinion, parents should be more concerned. In my area, pregnancy at a young age is very high, especially with pregnancy outside of marriage. This happens because they are given too much freedom and there is lack of education and attention to it.” Male, 26, East Nusa Tenggara (Kupang)

8.3 Conversations around mental health are growing, but stigma remains

8.3.1 Mental health is a growing topic of conversation, but not for all

From our qualitative research, many young people felt that mental health is a relatively new conversation. When thinking about their parents' generation, mental health was not a common topic of conversation or a well understood concept. Responses from our qualitative work were mixed in terms of awareness and understanding of mental health, with varying degrees of progressiveness across regions. Some participants, especially in more urban locations spoke relatively openly about their mental health, whereas those living in more rural and marginalised areas spoke of feeling very unhappy but not viewing this as a potential mental health issue.

104 Khoirunurrofik and Raras (2021). <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590229621000216>
105 Inside Indonesia (2019). <https://www.insideindonesia.org/adolescent-pregnancy-in-manggarai>

“I feel depressed sometimes, I also feel insecure and compare myself to others, but I am never really aware that these are mental health issues.” Male, 22, Papua (Jayapura)

Despite disparities in understanding and awareness of ‘mental health’, it seems as though conversations are becoming more common amongst young people. This was reflected in our Next Generation survey where mental health came through as the top health concern for young people (25 per cent) indicating that one in four young Indonesians are concerned about their mental health). Mental health concerns are seen as a bigger issue amongst young women when compared to their male counterparts, as highlighted in Chapter 4.

For young people who have noticed increased awareness around mental health, they felt that this change can be attributed to three key influences:

- Increased education and exposure via social media;
- An increasingly challenging social environment;
- The onset of COVID-19.

First, an increase in conversation and awareness amongst the qualitative sample is due to young people being exposed to more information and education via social media. This has allowed young people to have access to other cultures where conversations around mental health are more open and normalised compared to their lived experience in Indonesia. Young people in particular mentioned sites such as TikTok which they feel educates them on what mental health encompasses and coping strategies.

“Sometimes I find out things online about mental health. Especially on TikTok where I see things about depression and how other people my age feel.” Female, 33, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)

Another influence is an increasingly challenging social environment for young people. As discussed in the Employment chapter, one area where this is especially prevalent is the challenging employment landscape for young people, with issues around competition, long hours and worries around money and income. This in turn creates stress and worry for young people, and many who took part in our qualitative work stated that employment worries have had a direct impact on their

mental health.

“I have been experiencing anxiety and depression because of the pressure coming from my family. They are questioning me on my future career, what I am going to be, where I am going to get money, and so on and so forth. Some youth know what mental health is, but most of the youth don’t, and there aren’t many places available to help people who suffer from mental health.” Male, 22, Papua (Jayapura)

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought with it a unique set of challenges for young people in a way they had never before experienced. Lockdowns, a move to online learning and decreased social contact has meant that loneliness and isolation have been pertinent issues. From our Next Generation survey, 26 per cent of young people stated that COVID-19 has impacted their mental health. When exploring this in more detail qualitatively, many young people explained that lack of contact with friends and family had caused them to experience conditions such as anxiety and depression, some for the first time.

8.3.2 Lack of education reinforces stigma around mental health

The journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health (Brooks, 2021)¹⁰⁶ discusses how a lack of mental health literacy in Indonesia is a major issue. These low levels of mental health literacy and education contribute to pervasive stigma and hinder access to appropriate treatment (ibid.)¹⁰⁷.

Stigma is commonplace amongst young Indonesians, driven by lack of education on the subject, with conditions that are considered to be ‘less serious’, such as anxiety and depression, being more stigmatised. We heard from young people in our qualitative work, that people who suffer from anxiety and depression are often seen to be ‘dramatic’ and ‘attention seeking’.

“Mental health is still a taboo subject in Indonesia. For example, people are still superstitious, and people with mental health disorders regard the disorder as a disgrace. This understanding makes people who need expert assistance reluctant to be

handled. People with mental illnesses are frequently ashamed of their presence in society.” Female, 24, Papua (Jayapura)

This in turn prevents young people who are struggling with their mental health from seeking support. We heard examples of when young people wanted to ask for help, but were worried about others’ reaction and being seen as ‘spoilt’. This is especially true of parents, with young people feeling like the older generation do not understand mental health and can be unsupportive.

“Mental health isn’t a common topic. It is not an important issue – some people deal with it individually so nobody openly talks about their mental well-being. People sometimes talk to their friends about it, but it’s not common to deeply talk about it to your family members especially parents that you are depressed about something, as I know for sure that parents won’t take it seriously.” Male, 20, Papua (Jayapura)

8.3.3 Young people can struggle to know where to go for mental health support

This lack of education is compounded by a lack of knowledge around mental health services, as well as a lack of provision of these services. A study by Into the Light Indonesia found that seven out of ten respondents did not know that mental health expenses were covered by the national health insurance agency (BPJS), and three out of five respondents did not know there were mental health facilities within their district (Anindyajati, 2022)¹⁰⁸. This lack of knowledge could in part be because of a lack of services more generally, with research showing that out of 9,000 primary care facilities across Indonesia, only 40 per cent have operational mental health programmes (ibid.)¹⁰⁹. Where services are available, there is a perception amongst the young people from this study that these are only for very serious mental health conditions such as schizophrenia.

“Therapists aren’t something I know about due to zero people really looking for therapists in my area, and therapists being seen as only for those who have severe mental health. So when people experience depression they tend to deal with it

themselves, as if they openly say that they are depressed about something they will be told they are “exaggerating.” Female, 19, Maluku (Ambon)

“Regarding mental health services provided by the government to the community, they do not get enough attention and there should be more services for people to access.” Male, 22, West Java (Bandung)

In the absence of any formal support, young people are instead seeking out their own ways to cope with their mental health. One such way is young people looking to social media for support and information. Whilst online sources can be educational, a lack of regulation on the content being shared means that some advice can be incorrect or dangerous.

Another coping mechanism young people are using is being in nature and spending time relaxing with friends as a way to ‘de-stress’ and cope with the worries they have day to day.

“Sometimes I feel stressed about my mental health. Sometimes, my friends also feel stressed out. To solve this, I usually try and be active and play volleyball with my friends.” Male, 21, South Sumatra (Palembang)

Coping mechanisms can also manifest in a more destructive way, with young people worrying that substance abuse is a real concern (18 per cent with a greater concern in rural areas). Young people in the qualitative work mentioned that they felt young people in their communities turned to drugs and alcohol as a way to cope with their feelings and worries in their lives. A significant proportion worried that substance abuse would become a greater issue in the coming years (20 per cent).

“Male youth usually don’t talk about their mental health because they’ll be considered a coward if they do so. They then start drinking alcohol and using drugs to relieve their mental issues.” Male, 20, Papua (Jayapura)

¹⁰⁶ Brooks (2021). <https://capmh.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13034-021-00410-5#:~:text=In%20Indonesia%2C%20particularly%2C%20low%20levels,treatment%20%5B17%2C%2018%5D>

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Anindyajati (2022). <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2022.844656/full>

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.



Chapter 9

Climate change

In this chapter, we explore the risks Indonesia faces with regards to climate change and provide a brief overview of government and youth action to date. We then discuss how young Indonesians feel about and experience the issue, and where it sits relevant to other issues and concerns in their lives. We describe the actions they are already taking – and would like to see in the future – to address the issue.

9.1 Climate change in Indonesia: the current state of play

Indonesia's 17,500 islands are home to an extremely varied geography, topography, and climate, ranging from sea and coastal system to volcanoes, grasslands jungles and montane forests. Indonesia lies at the intersection of the Ring of Fire and the Alpidic belt. This makes Indonesia one of the most beautiful countries in terms of natural wonders, but also makes it incredibly vulnerable to the natural disasters and the impacts of climate change, including extreme events such as floods and droughts, shifts in rainfall patterns, increasing temperatures and long-term changes to sea-levels (World Bank, 2022b)¹¹⁰.

Indonesia is both a sizeable contributor to, and a victim of climate change. Over the past decade, its greenhouse gas emissions have been rising steadily, and the country is one of the top ten biggest carbon emitters globally (International Tax Review, 2022)¹¹¹. While rapid economic growth has led to a reduction in poverty levels in recent decades, high population density in hazard prone areas, coupled with strong dependence on the country's natural resource base, puts Indonesia at considerable risk. The Eastern and Western portions of Indonesia's most densely populated island, Java, as well as the coastal regions of Sumatra, parts of western and northern Sulawesi, and south-eastern Papua islands are all highly vulnerable to multiple climate hazards, including drought, floods, landslides, and sea level rise. Current projections suggest that almost all of North Jakarta will be

submerged by 2050 (ibid.)¹¹². A global risk analysis conducted by the World Bank ranks Indonesia as 12th out of 35 countries facing a relatively high mortality risk from multiple hazards. An estimated 40 per cent of the country's inhabitants are at risk (World Bank, 2022b)¹¹³.

9.2 Government action on climate change

The climate has been a contentious policy issue in Indonesia for a long time. One of the unforeseen side-effects of decentralisation during the reformation period was that it allowed local authorities to grant mining and logging permits for large sums of money, without much or any supervision or regulation. This had a devastating impact on the natural environment that is still felt today (Indonesia Investments, n.d.)¹¹⁴.

Indonesian government efforts to address climate change are mixed and have been met with some criticism. Indonesia demonstrated its commitment to tackle climate change by ratifying the Paris Agreement in 2016. It later developed the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to reduce emissions – by 29 per cent domestically and by a further 41 per cent with international support – by 2030. In 2021, the government of Indonesia introduced a carbon tax and started to regulate its carbon market (Sukardi and Jiaqian, 2022)¹¹⁵.

President Widodo has also, on several occasions, reaffirmed his commitment to taking climate change seriously. At the COP26 summit in 2021, he stated that deforestation rates have dropped significantly under his watch, claiming these are the lowest in twenty years and that forest fires fell by 82 per cent in 2020 (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2021)¹¹⁶. However, the President has been criticised by some for not setting more ambitious targets and for looking to more industrialised countries like the USA to lead by example. Indonesia plans to achieve carbon neutrality by 2070, which, some argue, is not ambitious enough.

110 World Bank (2022b). <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/indonesia>

111 International Tax Review (2022). <https://www.internationaltaxreview.com/article/2a7cstq7ub837k28gkmps/indonesias-fight-against-climate-change-carbon-taxes-and-beyond>

112 Ibid.

113 World Bank (2022b). <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/indonesia>

114 Indonesia Investments (no date). <https://www.indonesia-investments.com/culture/politics/reformation/item181>

115 Sukardi and Jiaqian, 2022 <https://www.internationaltaxreview.com/article/2a7cstq7ub837k28gkmps/indonesias-fight-against-climate-change-carbon-taxes-and-beyond>

116 Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia (2021). <https://setkab.go.id/en/cop26-president-jokowi-says-indonesia-is-committed-to-tackling-climate-change/#:~:text=Indonesia%20continues%20to%20contribute%20in,20the%20last%20twenty%20years.>

The President has also not provided a definitive deadline for when Indonesia would start phasing out coal, an industry and resource on which the nation is still heavily reliant (Mongabay, 2021)¹¹⁷.

9.3 Youth activism in the climate space to date

Recent years have seen a rise in youth activism in this space among young Indonesians (UNESCO, 2019)¹¹⁸, with NGO initiatives like 'Bye Bye Plastic Bags' (a youth driven NGO working to raise awareness of the harm of single-use plastics) and Divers Clean Action (a youth-led NGO that takes action against marine pollution) calling for the national government to do more to save the oceans and the environment – such as investing in recycling facilities and reducing the use of single use plastics (Reuters, 2019)¹¹⁹.

It appears that much of the action against climate change in the country is currently led by young people through grassroots initiatives. This is perhaps unsurprising given that young Indonesians are among those at high risk of the impacts of climate change, with a ranking of 46 globally. A recent report by UNICEF states that Indonesian children are “highly exposed to vector borne diseases, air pollution and coastal floods” (UNICEF, 2021)¹²⁰.

9.4 Young people are concerned about climate change, but other day-to-day challenges take precedence

Despite experiencing extreme weather, climate change ('natural disaster') did not emerge as a top concern for young people in our Next Generation survey (it is the sixth biggest individual concern), nor is 'sustainability' a top value that is important to them. This sentiment is similar across both young men and women with 21 per cent of both men and women saying that 'natural disaster' is a top concern and similarly, 21 per cent for both men and women rate sustainability as a top value. This finding supported research from the British Council (2022¹²¹), which found that less than half (44 per cent) of Indonesian youth aged between 18 and 35 see climate

change as a major concern.

However, this should not be interpreted as a complete lack of concern from young people, but rather a sign that other issues feel more tangible and pressing to young people in comparison. For example, the same British Council study found that issues like COVID-19 (63 per cent) and socio-economic challenges such as poverty (52 per cent) and unemployment (51 per cent) are bigger concerns than climate change. Similarly, our Next Generation survey found that issues like education and employment are top concerns for young people that have an impact on their daily life and sense of wellbeing. However, when asked to consider the issue of climate change against economic growth at a national level (rather than at a personal level), young people choose to prioritise the environment. For example, when asked to choose between two statements in the WVS: 'Protecting the environment should be given priority, even if it causes slower economic growth' and 'Economic growth and creating jobs should be the priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent', 73 per cent of youth in Indonesia chose to prioritise the environment. Across all ASEAN markets included in the WVS this was the priority, with two thirds of young people prioritising the environment across these markets. Alongside this, Indonesia was the country with the highest per centage choosing to prioritise the environment, followed by the Philippines (70 per cent) and Vietnam (68 per cent).

This suggests that climate change is an important issue for young Indonesians, but that when it comes to their day-to-day lives, other issues feel more front and centre.

“Indonesia does not only prioritise the climate, but many things are more important, one of which is unemployment which is one of the non-military threats that can disrupt the stability of the country and the welfare of the country. Maybe after the matter has been resolved, the government will focus on regulating climate change in this country.” Male, 16, Java (Jakarta)

9.5 Sustainability is not a top ranked value for young people, with more religious and traditional values considered more important

In our Next Generation survey, when asked to prioritise the values which are important to them, sustainability ('Keberlanjutan') does not come top of the list among youth in Indonesia, with 21 per cent mentioning this as important. However, our Next Generation survey showed that the importance placed on sustainability is higher for those who have achieved a higher level of education (29 per cent higher education versus 18 per cent senior high school), and young people from higher socio-economic backgrounds (24 per cent for higher SEG versus 15 per cent for lower). This highlights the role that formal education can play in raising awareness of the issue, and may also point to the fact that young people who are in more comfortable socio-economic situations have more 'headspace' to think about issues and values that are further removed from their day-to-day realities (See *Scarcity: Why having too little means so much* by Mullainathan and Eldar, 2013¹²² for more information on the *scarcity mindset* phenomenon). The fact that young people in more developed Western parts of the country (22 per cent versus 15 per cent in the East) also value sustainability more, lends further support to his hypothesis.

As we saw in the Values chapter, young people's world view is heavily influenced by religion. In our qualitative sessions, there was evidence that a minority of young people feel that the amount of influence human action can exert on the climate is limited. Given Indonesia's location in the 'Ring of Fire', experiencing natural disasters is, for many, an inevitable part of life. These young people instead looked to their faith for hope and support. Whilst only a few young people mentioned this, it is worth noting that, for some, this may limit their sense of being able to make a difference on this issue.

“In my opinion, the problem of natural disasters in the next five years cannot be predicted by humans because all natural phenomena occur at the will of God Almighty. I hope that in the next five years there will be no disaster like this.” Female, 29, East Nusa Tenggara (Kupang)

9.6 Many young people are already feeling the impact of climate change in their communities and on their lives

Findings from our Next Generation survey show that 21 per cent of young people feel they have been personally impacted by natural disasters. This was more common in rural areas of Indonesia (23 per cent in rural areas versus 20 per cent in urban areas), particularly in Papua (45 per cent) and Bali & East Nusa Tenggara (24 per cent). This is perhaps unsurprising considering these areas are highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Similarly, our qualitative conversations with young Indonesians revealed that almost everyone had personal experience with some sort of climate-related event that had impacted their day-to-day life, particularly their sense of safety and security.

“In my opinion, this statement is relevant because the weather and climate conditions in Indonesia itself are uncertain. There are also many things that we did not expect before. Currently, the weather is very erratic, happening everywhere. One moment it was hot, then suddenly it rained. The climate cycle is also now changing, and we can feel it.” Female, 23, Java (Jakarta)

“My area is in the highlands near the mountains so that natural disasters such as landslides often occur. Sometimes, a catastrophic storm also appears. Of course, this disaster affects the community. We lost some parts of our homes. We work together to help each other.” Male, 26, East Nusa Tenggara (Kupang)

117 Mongabay (2021). <https://news.mongabay.com/2021/05/indonesian-president-joko-jokowi-widodo-slammed-for-wait-and-see-approach-on-climate-action/>

118 UNESCO (2019). <https://en.unesco.org/news/indonesian-youth-activists-press-action-climate-emergency>

119 Reuters (2019). <https://www.reuters.com/article/indonesia-trash-youth-idUKL3N2760V1>

120 UNICEF (2021). <https://www.unicef.org/indonesia/press-releases/children-indonesia-high-risk-impacts-climate-crisis-unicef>

121 The British Council commissioned Ipsos Malaysia to conduct a survey of South East Asian youths between 18 and 35 years old, which took place February-March 2022. A total of 2,320 respondents were interviewed across ten countries, including 300 in Indonesia.

122 Mullainathan and Eldar (2013). *Scarcity: Why having too little means so much*. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2013-37402-000>

All young people in Kupang (East Nusa Tenggara) mentioned the devastating impact of *Angin Seroja* – a tropical cyclone that brought flooding and landslides to portions of southern Indonesia and East Timor in April 2021 – on their communities. Not only did it devastate people's houses and cause widespread power outages, but the financial impacts lasted for months after the storm as people could not carry out their daily jobs and activities.

Given that a considerable proportion of young people are already feeling the impact of climate change, they are also able to recognise the link between the climate and other areas of their lives, such as their financial security, access to food, water and housing. In other words, young Indonesians understand that climate change impacts all areas of life as they know it, not just the climate. Young people are also aware that those from poorer communities are likely to be worst affected by the effects of climate change.

“The impact of climate change will mainly be felt by small people, such as fishermen and farmers, in the form of rising sea levels and uncertain planting seasons due to weather changes.” Male, 26, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)

“I agree because they can overcome the problem of climate to have an impact on the problem of poverty, and economic growth in Indonesia can be better, especially for poorer people.” Female, 29, East Nusa Tenggara (Kupang)

This is supported by British Council data from the same 2022 Malaysian study¹²³ which found that young Indonesians expect that the climate will impact their every-day lifestyle, when compared to their parents' generation.

9.7 Many young people see climate change as a local issue with local solutions

Whilst young people understand that climate change is a global issue, the way they talked about its impact and solutions in our qualitative sessions suggests they perceive it (and experience it) to be more of a local

issue with local solutions. This is likely because the varied geography and topography of Indonesia creates very different localised manifestations of climate change, which young people feel need to be tackled locally. As a result, young people are looking to action from local governments as a priority.

“My experience is with flooding. Due to a lot of felling trees in my area, the embankment is too low. In my opinion, we need to regularly carry out reforestation programmes in the upstream regions, a culture of disposing of waste in its place, and even structuring watersheds in an integrated manner and in accordance with the function of the land.” Female, 25, North Sumatra (Medan)

“Yes, this statement is relevant to our region, especially in the agricultural sector, which has experienced many crop failures due to the long dry season. My own experience has experienced the impact of an uncertain climate, so my family experienced crop failure.” Female, 29, East Nusa Tenggara (Kupang)

“The government in my area is very negligent in handling climate change. All officials are busy with their respective affairs and their political affairs. There is no significant innovation in dealing with climate change.” Male, 23, North Sumatra (Medan)

9.8 Whilst young people agree personal action is important to combat climate change, action from the government (especially local governments) feels most critical

Most young people understand the importance of, and support taking, personal action to combat climate change. For example, many gave examples of their personal efforts to avoid littering, bringing bags from home when grocery shopping and reducing their use of

single-use plastics. Some young people also mentioned school and community level initiatives to make young people aware of the importance of 'small' personal actions.

“At my school, we are encouraged to reduce plastic waste. The canteen now does not provide single-use plastic cups but washable glass or plastic cups. Food is wrapped in paper boxes. Straws also use paper, so I usually bring my stainless-steel straws. If you want to eat snacks in front of the school, such as batagor, pentol, and sempol, we are encouraged to put them in the lunch box we bring ourselves home. If Indonesian citizens are highly aware of this and slowly change their lifestyle by, for example, bringing their straws, their own shopping bags, surely this will improve in the next five years.” Female, 16, East Java (Surabaya)

“I agree because climate change requires every area to be protected from floods, natural disasters, etc. For example, in my area, I work as a community service to collect 500 ornamental plants suitable for better climate change, not relying on the government or anyone.” Male, 30, West Java (Bandung)

However, many young people in our qualitative sessions felt unsure of what clear actions or steps they can take to protect the environment. This is supported by British Council data (ibid)¹²⁴, which found that 59 per cent of young Indonesians feel powerless to do anything personally. In our qualitative conversations with young people, this was compounded by the fact that many were witnessing first-hand the carelessness of big businesses, many of whom were cooperating with local governments in their area to make the issue worse.

“My experience is seeing two factories dumping waste carelessly in the wrong place, causing flooding. It will damage the environment soon if a waste disposal site does not facilitate it. Rather than taking the steps together, most young people are still

solely waiting for the government to act. Such as bringing order to the major players/corporations responsible for forest destruction, littering, land burning, etc.” Male, 30, West Java (Bandung)

“In my area, the forest is now mostly converted into a gold mine. The mountains are dug up for land. The central government should be more assertive about licensing, focussing on the relevant agencies in the regions. It is possible that if this problem is not taken seriously, then in the next five years, nature will be increasingly unfriendly to humans.” Female, 33, West Kalimantan (Singkawang)

Although young people are looking to the government for action, most are unsatisfied with how the government is handling the situation, leading to hopelessness that the situation simply is not being taken seriously enough.

“Indonesia is very late in responding to climate change. The government is also negligent in handling this because the government is busy with infrastructure development priorities lagging throughout Indonesia and unfinished political issues. It should have been several years ago that the climate change response had to be implemented because dealing with climate change takes decades.” Male, 23, North Sumatra (Medan)

“As a result of hurricane Seroja, landslides, and wildfires, almost 80 per cent of damage occurred and local governments should care about what their residents are experiencing. For example, by providing food and housing assistance for residents whose houses were badly damaged.” Female, 29, East Nusa Tenggara (Kupang)

¹²³ The British Council commissioned Ipsos Malaysia to conduct a survey of South East Asian youths between 18 and 35 years old, which took place February-March 2022. A total of 2,320 respondents were interviewed across ten countries, including 300 in Indonesia. (Ibid)

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Chapter 10

Support and solutions

This chapter outlines young people's views on the support and solutions they seek to achieve their ambitions and goals. As we have seen throughout this report, young people place a lot of emphasis on faith, hard work, and personal responsibility to help them address the challenges they face in their daily lives and in Indonesian society. Whilst young people believe in the value of personal action in realising their ambitions, they are also aware of the importance of a supportive environment – in terms of their immediate families and communities, but also the broader social, political and policy environment in which they operate.

In this chapter, we outline the types of support young people told us they wanted across the key topic areas discussed in this report. The suggestions for support and solutions below came from the young people we spoke to. Suggestions have been divided according to the key topic areas covered throughout this report.

10.1 Education

At present, education is not meeting young people's needs. Youth are aware that the distribution of educational funds is uneven, and it is evident that more rural areas across Indonesia and Eastern regions are particularly bearing the brunt of underfunding. Young people want the modernisation of infrastructure that they are witnessing across Indonesia, to extend to educational infrastructure too - integrating technology into schools, bringing more practical and communicative methods to teaching, and supporting teachers with the resources and facilities to inspire students. Whilst it is too early to comment on the impact of the educational overhaul currently in progress with the *Merdeka Belajar – Kamus Merdeka* policy, young people at the time of this research called for:

- **Equal investment in education across Indonesia (particularly in rural areas and Eastern regions) to address quality and infrastructural issues**
 - Identifying regions that have lower quality education and ensuring gaps in funding are addressed to create a more equal learning environment across the country, using a locally relevant and tailored approach
 - Ensuring that school infrastructure and resources reflect demand, to overcome issues with large class sizes and antiquated infrastructure
- **Improvements in teacher training and quality – particularly at lower levels of education**

- Addressing issues with 'honorary' teachers by making it easier and more attractive for people to get their teaching degree across the country;
- Ensuring teachers are paid adequately and get the right support to create a supportive learning environment for students. Young people also called for a cultural shift with regards to violence or verbal abuse from teachers, and to put policies in place that reprimand those who engage in these practices;
- Helping teachers to develop soft skills, to create a more collaborative and creative teaching environment where students feel empowered to speak up and voice their opinions; specifically, a move away from didactic teaching towards more interactive methods that challenge students and encourage them to use critical thinking;

The above should be prioritised at primary and senior high school levels, as this is where young people experience most issues.

- **A better match between the skills taught in schools and those required by the labour market**
 - Young people want schools to invest in technology and digital teaching methods to keep up with the times. They called for schools to move away from more traditional pen and paper methods, investing in technology and provision of computer labs and laptops instead;
 - They also called for more practical experience that would benefit them outside the classroom and help them get a job;

Young people wanted more support learning how to write CVs and cover letters, how to conduct a good interview, how to write professional emails, etc.

More practical skills such as IT skills, financial and business literacy, English language, etc.

- Young people wanted clearer links to the working world, in terms of opportunities for apprenticeships and internships that were based on merit, not personal connections.
- **Improvements in, and expansion of financial support programmes that help youth stay in (and re-enter) education**
 - Further develop and expand programmes (e.g. filial schools) that allow re-entry to education for those who drop out at a young age;
- More publicity on these initiatives and

- encouragement of youth taking up these opportunities, to build community awareness of the value of education, particularly in rural areas;
- However, there is a need to acknowledge barriers to staying in education beyond financial limitations and lack of family support – addressing teaching quality and social environments (as detailed above) are equally important.
 - **Create more scholarship opportunities for youth from lower socio-economic backgrounds to study abroad**
 - Currently most young people studying abroad are self-funded; scholarship opportunities should be extended to increase opportunities for young people from lower SEG backgrounds.
 - **More emphasis on nurturing creative talent and innovation in the classroom**
 - Young people felt that respect for creative subjects was relatively low in Indonesia and young people who wanted to do something in the creative industry (e.g. writing, music, graphic design, etc.) often felt that their opportunities to nurture these skills in the classroom were limited;
 - In line with this, young people called for more ‘innovation’ in classrooms to nurture young people’s writing, debate, and creative/critical thinking skills;
 - Young people felt that if these skills could not be taught in the classroom, there should be a space dedicated to them in the form of extracurricular courses or activities.

10.2 Employment

Despite multiple challenges and barriers to employment, young people maintain a characteristically optimistic outlook for the future. As the next generation of workers, they want to be part of helping Indonesia to thrive – either through formal employment or as an entrepreneur – while also being afforded the opportunity to thrive themselves. Young people are aware that their hard work and faith can only get themselves so far and called for the following changes:

- **More support for entrepreneurship from authorities and government at all levels**
 - As entrepreneurship is one of the only viable routes to employment, young people felt that much more needs to be done to support young people on this journey:

- Financial support in the form of loans (and more transparency and clear-cut procedures around how to obtain a loan and the terms of repayment);
- Skills-based support to fill information-gaps around practical business skills (e.g. how to ‘register’ a business, how to file taxes, how to manage budgets, etc.);
- Young people are already starting to harness the internet to create and grow their own businesses, but need further support and education with this – training opportunities should include digital skills;
- More government action to address the cultural barriers to entrepreneurship (e.g. lack of family and community support);
- More networking events and opportunities to meet other like-minded young people to share ideas and connect.
- **A cultural shift away from nepotism, sexism, ageism and ableism in the workplace**
 - Young people felt frustrated by the lack of transparency around hiring practices and the often ‘obvious’ signs of various ‘isms’ in the workplace, despite multiple policies aimed at addressing these. Young people wanted guarantees that they would have equal chances to get a foot in the door – regardless of gender, sexuality, personal connections, or disability status;
 - The culture of nepotism is particularly frustrating for young people, and one they want addressed with urgency.
- **A focus on infrastructure development outside of major cities to increase opportunities for young people in rural areas**
 - This includes digital infrastructure to ensure equal access to the internet across regions.

10.3 Politics

Young Indonesians are sceptical of politics and feel their opportunities for meaningful engagement are limited, especially for certain groups. It is clear from this research that young people are not politically apathetic, but that the political sphere feels intimidating and impenetrable. From a youth perspective, politics needs a ‘rebrand’ to become more attractive to them and increase levels of trust. Key priorities for youth include:

- **Greater enforcement of anti-corruption regulations and more severe consequences for those who get caught engaging in corruption, bribery and/or extortion**
 - One of the biggest grievances from young people was the existence of anti-corruption policies that do not get enforced on the ground. Young people called for policies to be properly enforced;
 - Young people called for greater punishment of those who misappropriate money and government funds.
- **Increasing education and critical thinking skills around the policy agendas of political parties**
 - This will help ensure that young people are not swayed solely based on the charisma or personality of political figures.
- **Continuing use of social media as a tool to increase political engagement among young people**
 - However, young people stress the importance of political parties using these tools responsibly – to imbue knowledge rather than to spread hate and create tension.
- **Efforts to increase the representation of young people, particularly marginalised groups at local and national levels**
 - Young people feel that youth representation is moving in the right direction, and want to see this continue;
 - This is particularly important for marginalised groups who do not feel their voices are represented (e.g. young people with disabilities, young women, etc.).

10.4 Digital and media

Young people are benefitting from the technological boom in Indonesia; greater access to digital devices has come hand in hand with an increasing reliance on social media. However, as technological infrastructure, and reliance on social media and the internet continues to grow, inequalities in access have begun to emerge. Alongside this, there are multiple negatives that can come with using the internet, and young people feel that they need to be better educated around how to recognise these. Key priorities for youth include:

- **More support to understand and identify ‘fake news’**
 - Social media is the most trusted information channel, but young people lack the skills and tools to help them navigate this new space. Young people called for more education and support on how to discern a ‘credible’ news source from a ‘fake’ one and assess the overall credibility and validity of information;
 - This feels particularly important around the elections, when the spread of ‘fake news’ can cause tensions;
 - Young people felt that schools would be a good starting point for these new skills.
- **Greater equality in technological infrastructure and device access**
 - Many young people living in rural/remote areas and parts of Eastern Indonesia experience a lack of access to the internet, which can have a negative impact on their lives, particularly access to news, information, and educational resources.
- **Meeting young people where they are: online**
 - The internet provides an opportunity to reach young people in a personal way. With high usage of and trust in social media, politicians and businesses should recognise the role the internet and social media play in the lives of young Indonesians – and make sure they are speaking to them in a manner that is relatable.

10.5 Health

There are some key health concerns that young Indonesians feel warrant more attention, and which need to be improved in the future. Young people’s health concerns centre around two key areas: 1) access, which encompasses physical access to services, and cultural access in terms of ‘taboo’ topics such as sexual healthcare; and 2) concerns around mental health.

Young people called for the following changes:

- **Free healthcare services for all young people**
 - This is an important issue for youth. Whilst UHC has aimed to provide access to all, the costs of insurance and medication can still be a barrier for some, and those not in formal employment cannot reap the rewards of employer-sponsored health insurance.

- **Increased education on sex and sexual health**
 - Young Indonesians have very little or no formal sexual education at school, and rely on word-of-mouth from friends or family, who often do not feel comfortable discussing the topic and/or are ill-informed;
 - Whilst sex and sexual health is still a ‘taboo’ subject, there is a growing desire from young people to be better informed and for there to be more ‘formal’ information they can access to protect themselves (and be better prepared and informed in terms of early pregnancy and sexual health).
- **Increased education around the harms of substance abuse, alcohol and smoking and support to overcome these issues**
 - Despite it being a prevalent issue for youth, many felt there is little education in school on the harms of substance abuse, or support services to address the issue;
 - Young people would like greater acknowledgement of the issue, and formal support at a community level to help young people struggling with addiction.
- **Better mental health literacy and support**
 - COVID-19 and social media have increased awareness of, and conversations about mental health among young people;
 - Young people called for formal education about the topic (at school), in order to break down stigma, as well as increased access to, and provision of, mental health support services;
 - In lieu of this, young people are today turning to social media for information, which is often not reliable, and could exacerbate existing concerns.

10.6 Climate change

Whilst daily worries often take precedence, young people are concerned about climate change and feel that more needs to be done to address the issue. Young people are feeling the impact on their own lives and communities and called for greater action, specifically:

- **More coordination between local and national government – and between different local governments, so as to arrive at coordinated, but locally relevant solutions and regulations**
 - For example, one young person mentioned that

efforts in Surabaya have seen results and that this should be replicated elsewhere.

- **Stricter regulations for businesses who are responsible for the devastating impacts on the environment, such as logging and pollution of rivers**
 - Young people want to see consequences for businesses who breach environmental regulations, and punishment for corrupt government officials who allow them to get away with it.
- **Provision of better facilities to support the community with climate and conservation efforts**
 - For example, investment in recycling facilities, banning plastic, etc.
- **More support (financial aid, temporary housing, educational support) for communities who are currently most affected by the impact of climate change**
 - Currently, many young people feel they rely on the good will of other communities and NGOs.
- **Educating the public through communication campaigns (including social media) on the gravity of the issue, and on the specific actions they can take to help**
 - Young people stress the importance of bringing home the message that small actions can and do make a difference.
- **Definitive action from educational institutions on the issue, specifically:**
 - Young people feel that learning about climate change and climate change action, should be part of the school curriculum, so that young people are taught to care about and protect the environment from a young age;
 - Increasing opportunities for youth activism on climate within the school environment, by promoting after-school clubs that act in local communities.





Conclusion and policy recommendations

Collaboration between educational institutions and employers

- Create better links between higher educational institutions and employers to offer apprenticeships and internship programmes for young people, to better prepare young people for the working world;
- Incentivise local businesses to run skill-building workshops and apprenticeships to prepare youth for work in their sectors;
- Develop the accreditation system so that educational institutions are empowered to tailor their curriculums to better meet the needs of local communities and industries.

Reducing educational inequality

- Create a clear map of areas in the country that lag behind in terms of access and quality and focus resources and investment in these areas;
- Measure the impact of the Expanded Zoning System (under Merdeka Belajar – Kampus Merdeka) to assess to what extent it is having the intended impact on access and quality disparities between different regions, and eliminating the trend of ‘favourite’ schools;
- Reduce stigma around returning to education or vocational institutions by incentivising students through scholarships or financial support to return to school or education at any age.

Employment

After education, employment was the second biggest concern for young people and an area where they want increased governmental support. In addition to the need for greater links between educational institutions and employers (mentioned above), there are several key areas where changes could be made to have a positive impact on young people:

Create policies that enable *all* young people to find meaningful work and develop their skills

- Create policies to ensure that hiring practices are based on merit over personal connections;
- Ensure marginalised groups have equal opportunities to fully participate in the workspace by:
 - Challenging cultural norms that women are less

capable of thriving in senior positions and ensuring that quotas for gender parity are enforced;

- Leveraging the change in working habits brought on by the pandemic (i.e. increased flexibility and remote working) to hire a more diverse work force (e.g. young people that live outside of urban hubs and young people with disabilities);
- Provide more financial support for young people (and build awareness of how they can access it) to be able to participate in internships/apprenticeship schemes (both nationally and internationally).

Provide opportunities for young people to develop skills locally

- Improve communication and collaboration between central and local government to direct initiatives, funding and support to areas that need it the most;
- Create and encourage more mentoring schemes where young people in local industry can mentor other young people looking to work in the sector;
- Focus on building skills needed for local industry or jobs for local young people to reduce the need to move to larger cities;
- Build on existing short-term funding to offer more long-term funding for grassroots initiatives supporting art, marginalised youth (e.g. disabled youth), and entrepreneurs.

Support young people to develop entrepreneurial skills, and create a culture where entrepreneurship can flourish

- Nurture an entrepreneurial spirit by creating more opportunities for young people to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions, including training, networking and access to financial support;
- Provide youth entrepreneurs and informal and gig workers with a platform to shape more inclusive policy discussions around their legal rights and privileges;
- Set more defined roles for ministerial departments so young people know where they can access information on policies and offer them more unified support.

Politics

Young people feel frustrated with the current political status quo and what they perceive to be widespread corruption, but there is openness to increasing knowledge and engagement. Engaging youth in political conversations and offering them opportunity to use their voice could help counteract current political frustration and provide reassurance that youth have an active role to play in the future of their country. There are two key aspects to this:

Create more opportunities for young people to engage with politics, sending a clear signal that their involvement is welcome

- Create and encourage more youth ‘forums’ to consult with young people on policymaking, so that policies are created *with* youth, not just *for* youth;
- Create and fund youth-led and youth-focused media channels with a focus on disseminating political information in an easy-to-understand way;
- Create extracurricular programmes across all educational levels that promote youth interest in the political sphere;
- Create programmes/initiatives that provide young people with an interest in politics with a clear pathway, regardless of region or socio-economic status.

Address young people’s concerns and barriers to engagement

- Take seriously youth concerns regarding corruption, particularly the perceived abolition of the Corruption Eradication Commission and ensure there are consequences for those who take advantage of their position of power;
- Take seriously the importance of social media as a source of news and political information and ensure young people are equipped with the skills to understand and decipher valid and reliable news sources from invalid and unreliable ones.

Digital media

Young people in Indonesia have reaped the benefits of a digitally engaged society. However, digital access and literacy across the country is not equal, creating distinct barriers for more rural youth. Young people in general feel ill-equipped to deal with elements of a digital world such as online bullying and fake news. As a result, there are three key policy areas that young people feel need addressing to deal with these issues:

Ensure equal digital access for all

- Ensure equity in digital access and literacy by prioritising investment of digital infrastructure in Eastern parts of the country and rural locations;
- Ensure schools and students across the country have the capacity for digital teaching methods.

Address young people’s concerns with online safety and ‘fake news’

- Encourage inclusion of a diverse group of young Indonesians in policy discussions about the regulation of digital platforms – this is particularly important given the prevalence of online bullying and the spread of ‘fake news’;
- Increase and expand digital literacy education and the use of online platforms and technology for young people across the country.

Encourage more opportunities for youth activism online

- Leverage the success of social media campaigns in mobilising youth activism across a range of social issues and use these successes to galvanise youth around similar issues.

Health

A key issue among young people is the lack of awareness and understanding of free government health insurance, particularly for those that are unemployed or in informal work. Young people also express concerns around specific health issues such as smoking and alcoholism, as well as more ‘taboo’ issues that aren’t widely spoken about such as mental health and sexual health. Young people’s concerns could be reduced through greater awareness of where and how they can access support, as well as enhanced education and understanding of health issues, delivered through a range of touch points/channels:

Promote access to free and subsidised healthcare insurance

- Raise awareness and promote use of free healthcare insurance through local government campaigns, social media and incentivising young people to inform their peers and raise awareness in their area.

Address key health concerns young people are currently facing

- Increase regulation on underage purchase of cigarettes and ensure there are programmes available to support youth if they decide to quit.

Provide safe spaces for young people to talk about taboo subjects around their health

- Provide a more supportive space for young people to discuss issues or get support, particularly on more traditionally ‘taboo’ subjects within a safe space;
- Better education and support within schools to better educate young people on their personal health and mental health and provide resources for them to seek help;
- Encourage youth to support other youth, e.g. forums where young people can speak to others about sexual health;
- Incentivise young people to join the medical profession to increase the number of younger professionals in the sector so young people feel like they can talk more openly about their concerns.

Climate change and natural disasters

Whilst young people express concern about climate change, this is overshadowed by concerns that feel more pressing on a day-to-day level, such as education, health, and employment. Concerns about climate change are greater among young people from higher socio-economic backgrounds and young people with higher levels of education, pointing to the importance of education around the issue. Young people agree that greater government support and awareness building at both a local and national level is required to tackle the climate crisis, specifically:

Educating the public

- Raise awareness of climate change among Indonesian youth through government communication campaigns and social media, providing resources where people can find more information to educate themselves;
- Incorporate climate, climate change and climate action as part of the school curriculum across educational levels;
- Encourage youth activist groups in schools who can disseminate information to provide greater education of the issue among their peers.

Providing greater government support

- Create greater regional support from local governments to help communities with changes and impact of climate change on the region such as conservation programmes, funding flood prevention, financial aid, and temporary housing;
- Encourage greater coordination between local and national government on implementing solutions and policies related to climate change and allocation of funding;
- Create stricter regulations for businesses directly damaging the environment such as pollution of rivers.

Legitimacy and confidence of youth voice

We conclude our recommendations by providing guidance on things that could be done to create and foster a culture that values youth voice and makes young people feel that what they think and feel matters:

- Encourage expansion of youth-friendly spaces (e.g. youth centres, religious groups, volunteer programmes) to be more inclusive and diverse in their membership (paying particular attention to more marginalised groups including LGBTQ+ young people, young women and young people with disabilities). This is key given the importance of youth community groups in making young people feel they have a voice;
- Support and expand organisations and institutions that provide support for marginalised groups (LGBTQ+, young people with disabilities, young mothers, among others);
- Leverage the institution of family as a resource to influence and encourage positive youth behaviours, e.g. political participation, tolerance and respect for others;
- Consider the appeal and power of social media to foster a sense of community for youth and provide a platform for amplifying youth voice;
- Create a culture of mutual respect in educational institutions, and one that does not tolerate verbal or physical violence against students of any kind;
- Manage classroom sizes and teacher training so that students can be recognised as individuals and teaching methods can be tailored to individual needs accordingly;
- Nurture and encourage corporate work cultures (in both the private and public sector) that value knowledge, ambition and different perspectives, as well as experience, and create an environment where young people feel safe to speak up.



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Literature review:

Prior to drafting any of our primary research materials, we undertook a brief review of the existing literature across all of the key themes outlined in this report. Rather than aiming to be a stock take of the current situation against these key themes, this review was specifically aimed at understanding regional differences in context that should drive our sampling; trends and tension points that we might want to consider in our questioning.

Sources that were included in this report are cited in Appendix 1 and have been removed from the below.

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Appendix 2: Methodology and sample

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Quantitative research:

For the quantitative phase of the research, we conducted a nationally representative 20 minute survey using a mixture of online and face-to-face methodologies.

1. Our survey content included the following:

Personal profile: current and previous living situation

Education and employment status: previous and current education and employment status; attitudes towards education and employment; potential barriers to educational and employment opportunities; access to additional facilities.

Issues and challenges: perceptions of Indonesia today and in the future, in the context of personal, social and economic challenges; the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia.

Opportunities and aspirations: perceptions of whether current issues and challenges will improve in the future; contributors to happiness in Indonesia and how achievable these are.

Personal identity: values that are important to youth in Indonesia and that they would like to see passed on to the next generation; priorities for improvements in the future; perceptions about women's role in society.

Digital and media access: access and usage of media channels and technology; sources of news and information and trust in these sources; perceived online concerns.

Political outlook: engagement with politics and community activities; perceptions of the Indonesian government; ways to help increase political engagement among youth.

2. Sample and quotas

We surveyed 3093 Indonesians aged 16-35 years old. To ensure that we spoke to a representative sample of young Indonesians, we placed quotas on our sample on age, gender, region and urban/rural locations. We allowed all other demographics to fall out naturally (e.g. religion, disability, ethnicity, education status). The quotas are detailed in the table below:

		Online	Face-to-face	Total
Gender	Female	49%	49%	49%
	Male	51%	51%	51%
Age	16-19	20%	20%	20%
	20-24	25%	25%	25%
	25-29	25%	25%	25%
	30-35	30%	30%	30%
Region	Jawa	54%	54%	54%
	Kalimantan	6%	6%	6%
	Bali & Nusa Tenggara	6%	6%	6%
	Maluku Islands	2%	2%	2%
	Sulawesi	8%	8%	8%
	Sumatra	22%	22%	22%
	Papua & West Papua	2%	2%	2%
Urban versus Rural	Urban	75%	40%	58%
	Rural	25%	60%	42%

To ensure that we reached a more representative audience, we split the quantitative sample in two, with 1539 participants completing an online survey, and 1554 completing the same survey, but administered face-to-face. This was done to help capture responses from youth living in more remote areas of Indonesia or those who did not have access to the internet (who may have been missed using an online-only approach) and therefore upweighted the face-to-face sample to interview a greater number of rural respondents. To conduct these face-to-face interviews, we partnered with Myriad Research, who took on this part of the fieldwork. Our panel partner, CINT, managed the online fieldwork.

Final sample sizes achieved for each of these groups are below:

		Total
Gender	Female	1497
	Male	1498
Age	16-19	627
	20-24	827
	25-29	774
	30-35	865
Region	Jawa	1771
	Kalimantan	187
	Bali & Nusa Tenggara	181
	Maluku Islands	33
	Sulawesi	213
	Sumatra	669
	Papua & West Papua	39
Urban versus Rural	Urban	1834
	Rural	1259

The full list of Provinces covered are below:

Total	3093
Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam	46
Sumatra Utara	209
Sumatra Barat	64
Riau	74
Kepulauan Riau	27
Jambi	46
Bengkulu	22
Sumatra Selatan	89
Kepulauan Bangka Belitung	13
Lampung	78
DKI Jakarta	260
Banten	155
Jawa Barat	535
Jawa Tengah	341
DI Yogyakarta	66
Jawa Timur	411
Bali	82
Nusa Tenggara Barat	57
Nusa Tenggara Timur	42
Kalimantan Barat	51
Kalimantan Tengah	27
Kalimantan Selatan	48
Kalimantan Timur	52
Kalimantan Utara	8
Sulawesi Utara	31
Gorontalo	11
Sulawesi Tengah	30
Sulawesi Barat	14
Sulawesi Selatan	102
Sulawesi Tenggara	25
Maluku Utara	14
Maluku	19
Papua Barat	13
Papua	26
Other (please specify)	5

2.1. Propensity weighting

Due to the two different methodologies used to achieve the quantitative sample (a combination of online and face-to-face interviews), we used propensity weighting analysis to ensure that any differences between the two samples were true and not just a result of the two different methodologies. We found that the online participants were more likely to select more statements for multicode questions than those completing the face-to-face interviews. Where applicable, we applied weighting to account for this difference and to bring the two samples in line with one another so that they were directly comparable and we could confidently combine into one sample to represent Indonesian youth as a whole.

3. Sample definitions referred to throughout the report

When analysing the Next Generation survey, we identified a number of audiences of interest within our sample which are defined as below, netting data where required.

3.1. Disability definitions:

The question we used to identify disabled youth is below:

A9. Do you have any health conditions or illnesses which affect you in any of the following areas? Please select all that apply.

1	Vision (for example blindness or partial sight)
2	Hearing (for example deafness or partial hearing)
3	Mobility (for example walking short distances or climbing stairs)
4	Dexterity (for example lifting and carrying objects, using a keyboard)
5	Learning or understanding or concentrating
6	Memory
7	Mental health
8	Stamina or breathing or fatigue
9	Socially or behaviourally (for example associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) which includes Asperger's, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD))
10	Cardiac disease (e.g., hypertension, heart failure)
11	Diabetes
12	Tuberculosis
13	Neurological condition (e.g. stroke, multiple sclerosis)
98	Other (e.g. stomach acid disease, skin disease, kidney condition) (please specify)
99	None of the above

Where relevant, we have included key subgroup differences between youth with various disabilities and youth without any disabilities. We defined disabilities as youth experiencing impairments in one of the following ways:

- Physical disability:
 - Vision (for example blindness or partial sight)
 - Hearing (for example deafness or partial hearing)
 - Mobility (for example walking short distances or climbing stairs)
 - Dexterity (for example lifting and carrying objects, using a keyboard)
 - Stamina or breathing or fatigue
- Mental/cognitive impairment:
 - Learning or understanding or concentrating
 - Memory
 - Mental health
 - Socially or behaviourally (for example associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) which includes Asperger's, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD))
- Illness/condition:
 - Cardiac disease (e.g. hypertension, heart failure)
 - Diabetes
 - Tuberculosis
 - Neurological condition (e.g. stroke, multiple sclerosis)
 - Stomach acid disease
 - Skin disease (e.g. hives)
 - Kidney condition

Where there were no significant differences between these different subgroups of youth with disabilities (but all differed from youth with no disabilities), we present these differences with all disabilities netted together. In cases where there are significant differences for specific types of disabilities, these are highlighted.

3.2 Eastern versus Western Indonesia:

Throughout the report, we also make comparisons between youth living in Eastern Indonesia versus Western Indonesia. For the purposes of this report, these were defined as youth living in the following regions:

- Eastern Indonesia:
 - Bali & Nusa Tenggara
 - Kepulauan Maluku
 - Sulawesi
 - Papua
 - West Papua
- Western Indonesia:
 - Jawa
 - Kalimantan
 - Sumatra

This is based on the following question in the Next Generation survey:

S3a. Which of the following regions in Indonesia do you currently live in?

Please select one answer.

1	Java
2	Kalimantan
3	Bali & Nusa Tenggara
4	Kepulauan Maluku
5	Sulawesi
6	Sumatra
7	Papua
8	West Papua
98	Other (please specify)

3.3. Socioeconomic group (SEG):

Throughout the report, we have made reference to significant differences in survey responses based on SEG (also referred to as socioeconomic classification). We split participants based on their household living expenses per month into High, Medium, and Low SEG based on the following criteria:

High = Rp 3,000,001 and above

Medium = Rp 1,000,001 - Rp 3,000,000

Low = Rp 0 - Rp 1,000,000

This is based on the following question in the Next Generation survey:

A14. Approximately, how much does your household spend each month on living expenses such as food, transport, etc. excluding major items that you may buy such as a car, TV, house?

Please select one answer.

1	Rp 3.500.001 and above
2	Rp 3.000.001 - Rp 3.500.000
3	Rp 2.500.001 - Rp 3.000.000
4	Rp 2.000.001 - Rp 2.500.000
5	Rp 1.750.001 - Rp 2.000.000
6	Rp 1.500.001 - Rp 1.750.000
7	Rp 1.250.001 - Rp 1.500.000
8	Rp 1.000.001 - Rp 1.250.000
9	Rp 900.001 - Rp 1.000.000
10	Rp 700.001 - Rp 900.000
11	Rp 600.001 - Rp 700.000
12	Rp 500.001 - Rp 600.000
13	Rp 500.000 and below
99	Don't know/prefer not to say

3.4. Religion

Throughout the report we have analysed by religion and grouped 'Minority Religions' as anyone not identifying with Islam most strongly (i.e. Muslims versus. Non Muslims). The question is below:

A10. Which of the below religions do you identify with most strongly?

Please select one answer.

1	Islam
2	Catholicism
3	Protestantism
4	Buddhism
5	Hinduism
6	Confucianism
96	Prefer not to say
98	Other (please specify)
99	None of the above

Qualitative research

Following the survey research, we conducted primary qualitative research to dig into the quantitative findings in depth and provide a full holistic picture of how young Indonesians perceive their lives.

This was achieved through the combination of two methodologies:

1. Online community

Our first qualitative methodology was an online community methodology which was managed by our research partners – Illuminate Research Indonesia. Illuminate Research managed the recruitment of participants and the full moderation of the online community.

In total, 40 participants took part in the 14-day online community study. This was split between private tasks and a forum discussion (as mentioned in the Introduction and Methodology section). Private tasks included:

Task 1: Getting to know you

An introductory task to learn about young people's daily lives and perspectives on their communities and culture.

Task 2: Life in Indonesia

Participants described a 'typical' young person in their area to understand the challenges facing young people in their community.

Task 3: Making a big decision

Participants were given a scenario and asked how they would approach it. Scenarios covered: personal values and marriage; migrating to find work; becoming an entrepreneur; dropping out of school; and becoming involved in political activism. This helped us understand the extent to which young people feel they have a voice and can effect change.

Task 4: My concerns and challenges

Participants had to select top issues they experienced from a list (built from the quantitative and literature review phases of research). They selected the top three issues and provided more detail on how they experience these and the changes they would like to see in the future.

Task 5: Letter from my future self

A task that asked participants to predict what would have happened in their lives five years from now, and provide advice to themselves in the present day.

Online community sample framework:

City	Male		Female		Ethnicity	Religion	Marginalised communities	Education Levels & SES
	16-24	25-30	16-24	25-30				
Bandung (West Java)	1	2	1	1	Sundanese	Islam	1; Physical disability	Mix of education level & SES in each city
Surabaya (East Java)	1	1	2	1	Javanese	Islam	1; Cognitive disability	
Medan (North Sumatera)	2	1	1	1	Batak & Malay	Christian/Catholic & Islam	1; LGBTQ+	
Makassar (South Sulawesi)	1	1	2	1	Bugis	Islam	1; Physical disability	
Jakarta	2	1	1	2	Betawi, chinese, Javanese	Christian/Catholic /Buddhism/Islam/Hindu	1; LGBTQ+	
Kupang (East nusa tenggara)	1	2	1	1	Timor, Rote, Flores	Christian/Catholic	1; Cognitive disability	
Singkawang (West Kalimantan)	1	1	1	2	Chinese, Malay	Buddhism & Islam	None	
Jayapura () Papua	1	1	1	1	Papuan	Christian/Catholic/Islam	None	
Total	10	10	10	10				

2. Youth Research Volunteer Depth Interviews

Our second qualitative methodology was 1-2-1 depth interviews, run by our Youth Research Team of volunteers (YRT).

In total, 20 participants were interviewed across the following locations:

- North Sumatra (Medan)
- South Sumatra (Palembang)
- East Nusa Tenggara (Naumere)
- Maluku (Ambon)
- Papua (Kaimana)
- West Java (Bandung & Cimahi)
- East Java (Surabaya)
- South Sulawesi (Makassar)
- West Kalimantan (Sanggau)

Across the research, the YRT were involved in:

Training

- Project briefing and introductory workshop session.
- Two x training sessions on core qualitative research skills (interviewing techniques, participant safety and comfort, analysis, obtaining consent, etc.).

Fieldwork

- *Each volunteer conducted three interviews each with young people (each was given a recruitment specification and screener to ensure inclusion of marginalised young people). Please see Appendix for full details.*
- *Each volunteer recorded their interview, wrote comprehensive notes and recorded video footage of the interview.*

Analysis and write-up:

- All volunteers attended and contributed to two analysis sessions with 2CV and other qualitative partners.
- All volunteers wrote a summary of their findings into a PowerPoint presentation that was shared at the 'Stakeholder Galvanisation' Workshop (with support from 2CV researchers).

Workshops and presenting

- The YRT presented findings to the British Council and a panel of stakeholders (the Youth Task Force) and were given an opportunity to share their views on the most pressing policy-areas to tackle.

Youth Research Team sample framework (approached on a best effort basis):

Volunteer name	Participant age	Participant gender	Additional criteria
Chelsy (Cimahi, west Java)	26-35	2 females (optional 1 male)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1 of your participants to have dropped out of school • At least 1 participant to lack regular internet access
Neng (Maumere, East Nusa Tenggara)	26-35	2 females (optional 1 male)	
Sofyan (Surabaya, East Java)	26-35	2 male (optional 1 female)	
Zahrotuts (Makassar, South Sulawesi)	26-35	2 females (optional 1 male)	
Vinita (Medan, North Sumatra)	16-25	2 females (optional 1 male)	
Iqbal (Ambon, Maluku and Papua)	16-25	2 male (optional 1 female)	
Julian (Sekayam, West Kalimantan)	16-25	2 male (optional 1 female)	
Brian (Palembang, South Sumatra)	16-25	2 male (optional 1 female)	

3. Stakeholder involvement in this research (Youth Task Force)

Stakeholder key engagement points were as follows:

- **Stakeholder onboarding and engagement workshop.** An interactive two-hour project kick-off workshop (moderated by 2CV) with key stakeholders (internal and external to the British Council) across the UK and Indonesia to introduce the team and research approach and establish what 'success' looks like, not just in terms of the research output, but how the research is socialised and used in the future.
- **Partnership 'Stop & Think' Workshop:** A workshop to discuss findings from the literature review and cultural analysis and agree on how to use this insight to guide research materials and sample decisions, particularly for the quantitative phase of research.
- **Partnership 'Stop & Think' Workshop 2:** A workshop to share quantitative insights and brainstorm what this means for the qualitative stage of research – again, stakeholders were invited to participate and feed into the key themes that needed to be explored in the qualitative research.
- **Stakeholder Galvanisation Workshop:** An opportunity for our Youth Research Team (YRT) to meet the British Council and other stakeholders and present the findings from their peer-to-peer research
- **Final Findings Workshop:** A presentation/workshop by 2CV to deliver the final research findings and recommendations.
- **Check-in Workshop:** This will be held roughly 3-6 months after the publication of this report and is an opportunity to meet stakeholders and assess the impact the research has had thus far, and what more could be done to ensure the findings are used to their full potential.

Youth Task Force members included representatives from:

- Ministry of National Development Planning
- Executive Office of the President Republic Indonesia
- Universitas Padjadjaran
- Universitas Prasetiya Mulya Business School
- Nalitari
- Indonesia Youth Diplomacy
- Skilvul/Social Innovation Acceleration Programme (SIAP)
- Agile Innovation Labs
- Kitong Bisa
- Future Leaders Connect Indonesia Members 2021

About the Authors



2CV is a research agency that gives people a voice so they can influence the world around them. 2CV designs research to help change happen, using innovative, immersive methodologies, and sensitivity for people and cultures, to uncover inspiring truths. 2CV works with NGOs and public and private organisations to explore opportunities for change. For more information, please visit www.2cv.com



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