

### The Indonesian Multi-stakeholder Partnership for Education Sustainability of Migrants Children in Sabah, Malaysia

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**Abstract.** This article explores the engagement of Indonesia Multi-stakeholder Patnership in handling Education Sustainibility of Migrants Children the in the Sabah, Malaysia. This issue is very sensitive when at 2010 there are 36.000 (75%) of total 48.000 of their children, are not receive education rights, yet. This issue to be more complicated because 70% (490.000 amongs 700.000) of their parents are illegal workers; amids the Indonesian - Malaysian fluctuative relations in the time by time. The source of this qualitative research comes from observation at Sabah Malaysia at 2017 and 2020; interview with Indonesian General Consulate, head master, 4 teachers, 4 students, 4 parents of Sekolah Indonesia Kota Kinabalu (SIKK) and Tawau, Sabah, Malaysia. It finds that Indonesian Government conduct multi-stakeholder patnership with Central Government of Malaysian, Local Government of Sabah, Private Bussines Corporation, and NGO's. As a result there is a progress in which at 2020 there are 12.500 (25%) of total 50.000 of their children, are not receive education rights, yet. It's mean that Indonesia can maximilise achievement of SDG's, Point 4. Enrollment in primary education and Completion of primary education, **especially** Equitable Access for Marginalized Populations. Those efforts are still unsuccess to serve education rights of all children cause by unfavourable social realities such as illegal status and less support of parents and small palm oil corporations also their remote position.

Keywords: Indonesia  $\cdot$  multi-stake holder partnership  $\cdot$  sustainable education  $\cdot$  migrant children

#### 1 Introduction

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity and no one left behind (UNDP 2015) especially to tackle the world's most pressing challenges including poverty, hunger, and inequality, while ensuring social inclusion, environmental sustainability, economic prosperity, peace and good governance (Awiti 2020).

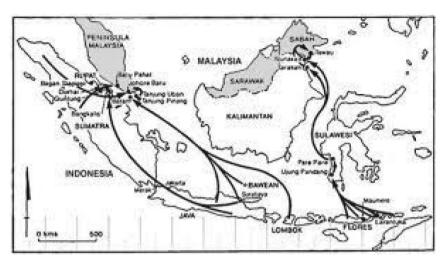


Fig. 1. Map of Indonesian Migration Route to Malaysia

In the fact, education is one of SDG's issue, especially SDG 4 Quality Education: equality of education right for child, especially who come from marginal society (including migrant children). The reduced inequalities SDG calls for equality within and among countries, particularly focusing on the most disadvantaged individuals and nations. Education advancement of poor and marginalized communities is emphasized.

The Indonesia has been a firm advocate of the SDGs since its formal establishment in 2015. In the following years, the Indonesian government has shown its unfaltering cooperation as a part of a global community working in unison on the shared commitment of achieving the 17 global goals, especially serve education right for all citizen wherever their position, including who live in the overseas. For example, education right for family of 2,7 million diasporic Indonesia in Malaysia, in which part of them live as Indonesia Migrant Workers (IMW) at Sabah, East Malaysia (Fig. 1).

The Indonesian Consulate General of Kota Kinabalu, Sabah; stated 500.000 IMW in federal state of Sabah, Malaysia; in which 243.090 of them are illegal (Irfan, 2017; Djelani, 2019). Meanwhile, NGO "Asia Monitor Resource Centre (AMRC)" stated 700.000 IMW in which 490.00 (70%) are illegal (Mufakir 2020). Unfortunately, at 2010 there are 36.000 (75%) of total 48.000 of their children, are not receive education rights, yet (Irfan, 2017; Djelani, 2019). Education rights of IMW Children, are in complicated social dimension of Indonesia dan Malaysia (Tamer 2014).

The Indonesian Minister of Law & Human Rights, Yasonna Laoly stated that legal status of IMW in Malaysia are 50% legal and 50% illegal (Putra 2017). This topic has correlation with such of previous research, those are: Wahyu Susilo, Anis Hidayah, Mulyadi (2013), discuss to history and process of the Indonesian migration to Malaysia (Hidayah, Susilo, and Mulyadi 2013). Rakhmi Ratrayu Salmah (Salmah 2012), discuss to the Indonesian and the Malaysian governments cooperation in handling this issue in 2012, early years of law enforcement of The Malaysian Education Law, in which

Malaysia regulated that Malaysia School only for Malaysians. Increasingly, it needs pro-active of the Indonesian government initiatives (Rachmawati 2017).

Unfortunately, Indonesia and Malaysia, as close and direct border neighbors, have fluctuative relations in the time by time. (Hara n.d.; Maksum and Bustami 2014; Pertiwi 2014; Razak et al. 2013; Warsito et al. 2019). The most sensitive issue among them is existence of 2,7 millions of Indonesia Migrant Workers (IMW) in Malaysia. That's why this paper begin from research question: How does the Indonesian Government conduct multi- stakeholder for Education Sustainability of Migrants Children at Sabah, Malaysia?

#### 2 Research Method

The source of this qualitative research comes from observation at Sabah Malaysia at 2017 and 2020; interview with Indonesian General Consulate, head master, 2 students, 3 parents of Sekolah Indonesia Kota Kinabalu (SIKK) and Tawau, Sabah, Malaysia.

### 3 Findings

## 3.1 G to G Coordination Between the Government of Indonesia and Malaysia Responsibility to Protect

At the World Summit in 2005, the majority of states, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries (Zain Maulana 2019), agreed to endorse the concept of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) – through emphasising three key responsibilities: national responsibility to protect, international responsibility to assist, and international responsibility for timely and decisive action when states manifestly fail to protect their people Maulana (2021) (Zain Maulana 2021). In 2009, the Annual Dialogue on R2P was created to facilitate the debate and contestation surrounding it, and most ASEAN countries were actively involved in this. At this level, most ASEAN countries indicated their acceptance and support regarding the principle of R2P.

This article draws on the concepts of norm implementation and norm subsidiarity – where 'local actors develop new rules, offer new understandings of global rules or reaffirm global rules in the regional context' – to explain how Indonesia and Malaysia as ASEAN countries interpret R2P. Indonesia suggested to the international community that it should refrain from reinterpreting and renegotiating the conclusions of the World Summit, and instead find ways to implement R2P principle (Natalegawa 2009). Malaysia emphasised that they were ready to cooperate with the international community, including UN members, regional organisations, and civil societies, to prevent and protect people from existing and emerging threats of mass atrocities (Government 2015).

At the 2004 Annual Consultation meeting between President Megawati and PM Abdullah Ahmad Badawi it was agreed that Indonesia would send teachers to Sabah to help educate Indonesian children. This agreement cannot yet be implemented. At the Annual Consultation between President Soesilo Bambang Yudhoyono and PM Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (2006), the formation of Kota Kinabalu Indonesian School was discussed. In the Joint Statement between the two leaders it was stated that, "Prime

Minister Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi was informed that the Government of Malaysia welcomed the intention of the Indonesian Government to establish the Kota Kinabalu Indonesian School and would facilitate its realization. As a result, the Indonesian government obtained permission from the Malaysian government to establish an Indonesian School in Kota Kinabalu (SIKK) (Makrib 2017).

The agreement between the two leaders was then followed up by a meeting between the Indonesian side consisting of the Education and Culture Attaché, the Indonesian Consulate General and PTF Tawau, and the Malaysian side consisting of the Malaysian Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture and Commodities, the Position of Chief Minister of Sabah, the Sabah Study Position, the Position Sabah Immigration, Sabah Plantation Association, farming companies, and the NGO Humana Child Aid Society. The meeting resulted in an agreement in which agreed: The NGO Humana Child Aid Society carries out education for Indonesian children in the fields, Indonesia sends teachers to teach at Humana schools, Indonesia pays teacher salaries and delivery costs to the school/tutoring, For starters Indonesia will send 51 teachers, The Plantation Company will provide housing for teachers, The Malaysian government makes it easy for education, and The curriculum used is the National Curriculum (Malaysia).

Those agreement has become a guideline for the Malaysian side in dealing with the education of Indonesian children in the fields. Given the recent developments, those agreement in 2010 is deemed necessary to be renewed due to several problems, including: The number of Indonesian children in Sabah has grown to 43.000, Up to that time (as of 1 February 2010) the NGO Humana Child Aid Society could only accommodate 7,095 children so it was necessary to add at least five (5) more NGOs in order to provide services to all Indonesian children in Sabah, In order to be granted permission to establish a Community Learning Activity Center (PKBM- Pusat Kegiatan Belajar Masyarakat), There must be a regulation on the use of donations requested by NGOs to the Plantation Company, There is no collection of money from students/women/parents of students, Syarikat are required to establish schools, for those with Indonesian children or send them to the nearest Indonesian school without being asked for payment, as part of the implementation of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility). Increase the weight of the Indonesian curriculum to provide opportunities for children to continue their education in Indonesia (Assistant Athan RI in Kuala Lumpur 2016).

# 3.2 Coordination Between the Jakarta Central Government and Indonesian Representatives in Sabah

The Jakarta Central Government and the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia Kota Kinabalu conducted a feasibility survey for the establishment of Community Learning Centers (CLC, an Indonesian school that was officially established by the Indonesian Government) and conducted coaching for Indonesian (Non-Government) Schools in Sabah, Malaysia. Based on a survey conducted by the Indonesian Consulate General in Kota Kinabalu in 2006, there were 24,199 children and only 7,000 children who received education. Starting from this situation, there is a need for schools that can provide adequate education so that it is necessary to establish formal schools that use the Indonesian curriculum (Makrib, 2017).

#### 3.3 Send Teachers from Indonesia to Sabah on a Contract Work System

In 2006, the Indonesian government officially sent 51 teachers to Sabah, Malaysia for starters (Effendi, 2016). Until 2015, the Ministry of Education has deployed 381 assisting teachers to meet the needs of teaching staff in these schools. Apart from this number, there are also 167 educators from the local community, of whom 30 are Malaysian citizens. Since then, this number has become a guideline for the Ministry of National Education for the official sending of teachers to Sabah Malaysia (Makrib, 2017).

#### 3.4 Launch of the Distance Education Program

Sekolah Indonesia Kota Kinabalu (SIKK) on 23 July 2016 launched the Distance Education (PJJ) program, with the aim of expanding and facilitating access to education for the children of Indonesian migrant workers (PMI) in Sabah. This program offers ease of learning by utilizing Information and Communication Technology (ICT). SIKK acts as the main school for the group of PJJ program participants known as the Learning Activity Place (TKB). This PJJ program targets PMI children who are constrained and cannot receive education through SIKK, CLC, or Equality Education (Package Examinations). With the presence of PJJ, there are new alternatives and opportunities for PMI children to attend education which is also officially recognized by the Government of Indonesia. In 2019, there were around 400 PMI children who participated in the PJJ SIKK program for Elementary School (SD). On 23 July 2019, the Indonesian Consulate General in Kota Kinabalu launched the School Management Information System (SIMS +) (Konsulat Jenderal Republik Indonesia di Kota Kinabalu Sabah 2019).

## 3.5 Collaboration Between the Indonesian Government and Various Campuses in Indonesia

The government to provide opportunities for various campuses in Indonesia to send students to do Community Service as assistant teachers at various CLCs (Effendi 2016) and providing scholarships for BMI Sabah children to continue their studies in Indonesia according to the Head of the Secretariat of the Indonesian Consulate General (KJRI) Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia Wasito Achmad (Ismail 2016). The Head of SIKK Istiqlal Makrip said that all the paper based exams had not yet held a computer based exam. After graduating, 22 children of BMI in Sabah received scholarships to continue studying in Indonesia (Mashita 2015). In addition, Malaysia also accepts Community Service (KKN) and Teaching Practices at Sekolah Indonesia Luar Negeri (SILN) and CLC. One example is the University of Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) implementing the Community Service (KKN) program in Tawau, Sabah, Malaysia in 2017. The agenda was attended by 12 UMY students with several main programs, namely Care for Children, Water Purification, Batik Making, Folklore Drama, Traditional Dance, Reciting Iqra' and Al-Qur'an, and Independence Day (Sitta Wahyu Qur'ana, Muhammad Aziz Irfanuddin, Nellatika Chaerunnisa, Vega Bhenazi, Nabila Zalzabila Lausepa 2017).

## 3.6 Cooperation Between the Government of Indonesia and the Local Government of the State of Sabah

This must be done especially in the handling of 38 schools of children of Indonesian citizens (WNI) or migrant workers in Malaysia who are not registered as foreign schools because they do not comply with the provisions of the Malaysian Government which do not justify the existence of overseas schools outside of farms or plantations. These various schools or community learning centers (CLC) were established on the initiative of Indonesian citizens or parents of Indonesian children who live in urban areas that are far from Kota Kinabalu. This CLC is not recognized as an overseas school by the Government of Malaysia because of the regulations issued by the section dealing with education issues in the country. The Indonesian Consul General for Kota Kinabalu, Krishna Dielani said, even though these schools violated Malaysian regulations, they were given the policy to continue operating or carry out a teaching and learning process (PBM) with consideration, for the sake of the continuity of the education of Indonesian children in the vicinity as a form of cooperation between the Indonesian Government. Through the KJRI Kota KInabalu and the Malaysian Government. However, he said, the Malaysian Central and Local government warned against adding more schools in urban areas. Meanwhile, oil palm fields and plantations are still given the area of establishing schools with the consent of their employers.

The agreement with the education department of Sabah was that the 38 unregistered schools were allowed to continue operating as long as they did not establish new ones in urban areas (Djelani, 2017). However, the Indonesian Consulate General in Kota Kinabalu, as the representative of the Government of Indonesia, still pays attention to these 38 schools by monitoring and providing guidance and assistance such as procurement of advice on book infrastructure, furniture and other needs outside of building or classroom repairs (Rusman 2019). Actually, the Malaysian central government and the local government of Sabah object to the number of schools that are already too many, let alone those that are not registered. However, due to the consideration of human rights and the fulfillment of the SDGs, the Malaysian government agreed.

### 3.7 Indonesian Cooperation with Malaysian Entrepreneurs

The cooperation includes building schools for BMI children in Sabah (Republika 2017). For example, the Indonesian Consul General for Kota Kinabalu Akhmad DH. Irfan on 16 January 2016 inaugurated the completion of the Smart CLC learning facility in Penampang, Kota Kinabalu. The building, which consists of 8 aluminum rooms, is an aid from a joint venture between Indonesian BUMN and Malaysian BUMN, Rekaya Industri (Rekind) Sdn Bhd.

In 2019, in Sabah there are around 50,000 school-age children who need educational services from the Indonesian Representative, Consul General Ahmad DH. Irfan appreciated the assistance and participation of Rekind and the NHY construction company in providing learning facilities for Indonesian children at CLC Cerdas, Penampang. Welly Abizar from Rekind and Sholy from NHY stated that the assistance for learning facilities to Smart CLC is a form of corporate social responsibility and concern, especially for the education of children of TKI in Sabah.

#### 3.8 Cooperation Between Indonesia and NGOs in Malaysia

The activists are from Indonesia and Malaysian 'origin' NGOs, they are Holy Trinity Chatholic Church, Sime Darby's Bombalai Plantation Estate, Sime Darby's Merotai Plantation Estate; including the activists from the NGO Borneo Child Aid Society who founded the HUMANA school (Rusman, 2019).

### 3.9 Various Complexity Factors of Policy

#### 3.9.1 The Issue of Legality of Immigrant Children

Migrant-Care NGO activists, namely Anis Hidayah, Wahyu Susilo, Mulyadi (2013) Line of Policy (Minus) Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, Migrant Care Indonesia, in CHAPTER III Mobilization, Placement, Minus Protection (p.44–65), among others identified Indonesian Migrant Workers (BMI) in Malaysia, as follows: Indonesian migrants in Malaysia. Malaysia is second highest recipient of Indonesian migrant workers after Saudi Arabia and the number is increasing 17% of Malaysia's workforce are from overseas: more than 60% of these are from Indonesia. Approximately 1.3 million documented and 700,000 undocumented Indonesian migrants worked in Malaysia in 2006 60% of documented Indonesian migrants in Malaysia are women. Undocumented workers travel without visas, overstay visa/work permit, change jobs without necessary procedures. They have no legal protection and are often exploited by Malaysian employers due to their illegal immigration status (Hidayah, Susilo, and Mulyadi 2013).

The Immigration Technical Staff of the Indonesian Consulate in Tawau Malaysia, Ujo Sujoto, explained that there are still high 70% numbers of illegal TKI employed by companies in Malaysia, stating that of the many BMIs, 500,000 of them are in the state of Sabah, East Malaysia, of which around 300,000 are illegal (Sukoco 2017b). NGO AMRC explained that BMIs in Sabah mostly work in the palm oil sector. In Sabah, in 2018, there was a referee palm area of 1.5 million hectares which is 26.5 percent of the total area of oil palm plantations in Malaysia. In Sabah there are about 1 million workers with a composition of 90 percent of migrant workers, the majority of whom come from Indonesia (Sulawesi and NTT). The rest (10 percent) came from the Philippines, Suluk and Bajau (Mufakir 2020).

In reality, 70 percent of the status is undocumented. This happens because the border character is porous, meaning that there are many gaps that are easy to pass through the mouse path. Traditional migration has also been going on for a long time. The nature of work in oil palm for workers' families includes: Father as a harvester, mother spraying or fertilizing, child as collector of oil palm fruit seeds. The recruitment quota system for plantation workers is limited by the immigration institution as part of population control, namely: 1 worker for 8–10 hectares. In fact, in fact, it is only a portion of the labor for harvesters, not including fertilizers and pest sprayers. The increase in the number of illegal workers is also caused by the process of 'illegalizing', caused by: (1) changing employers. (2) documents cannot be renewed because the work permit period cannot be renewed anymore, (3) documents are lost, and so on (Mufakir 2020).

The poor condition of BMIs in Sabah, Malaysia, is reflected in the fact that in 4 months January-April 2017, 28 TKI from East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) died in Malaysia (Bere 2017). Head of the Protection and Empowerment Section of BP3TKI Kupang,

Siwa said, of the 28 TKIs who died, 27 were illegal workers or did not have official documents when they entered and worked in Malaysia. Most of the migrant workers who died in Malaysia, continued Siwa, were male and came from South Central Timor (TTS). Meanwhile, the others were from North Central Timor (TTU), Malacca, Belu and Ende districts. According to Shiva, these migrant workers died from disease, work accidents, and drowned in the sea and ponds. They work as household assistants and workers in oil palm plantations. Of the 28 TKI who died, 25 TKI had already returned to their hometowns in NTT. Meanwhile, three people were buried in Malaysia, because they did not have complete addresses in NTT (Bere 2017).

The Indonesian Consulate General in Tawau, Sabah Krishna Djelani, Wednesday (26/04/2017) said that the Indonesian Consulate in Tawau had 4 times asked TKI companies and agencies in the State of Sabah Malaysia to stop hiring workers illegally. The Indonesian Consulate in Tawau Malaysia, Krishna Djelani, Wednesday (26/04/2017) (Sukoco 2017b). The high number of illegal TKIs in Malaysia is due to the fact that many rogue oil palm plantation companies employ illegal TKIs. With the awareness of companies and plantations in Malaysia not to accept illegal workers, the number of illegal TKI in Malaysia is certain to decrease accordingly. Or in other terms. If companies in Sabah do not employ illegal migrant workers, they will automatically not dare to go to Malaysia. Krisna added that companies and agencies in Malaysia are welcome to take advantage of the Malaysian government's re-hiring program. This program makes it easy for illegal TKIs whose documents have expired to update their documents. Malaysian companies can also take advantage of the LTSP Border Center Integrated Services program to process worker documents.

The illegal status of migrant workers ultimately has implications for the rights of their children. The Indonesian Consul in Tawau, Malaysia, Krishna Djelani indicated that 50,000 BMI children who work in the State of Sabah, Malaysia, do not have identity (Sukoco 2017a). Thousands of unidentified Indonesian migrant workers are the result of the marriage of migrant workers at their place of work because the Malaysian government has prohibited TKI who want to work in their country to bring their families with them. Both immigration and Malaysian labor regulations do not allow unskilled foreign workers to bring their families. Initially they came alone, met their soul mate and continued to marry and have children in Sabah.

The Indonesian Consulate noted that out of 50,000 child migrant workers who did not have documents, 23,396 of them are currently studying at CLC. Krishna Djelani said that the parents of thousands of unidentified children were mostly reluctant to take documents at the consulate in Tawau City. The consulate admits that it is difficult to provide documents for unidentified children of migrant workers because their parents are not only reluctant to report, but also reluctant to process documents for their children. Most of their parents are illegal TKI. "Many don't report. This has to do with the passport. To provide valid documents there are conditions, we verify the parents whether they are true Indonesian citizens, there is a certificate (letter) of birth, there is a witness to the marriage of their parents and a certificate from the company" (Sukoco 2017a) (Fig. 2).

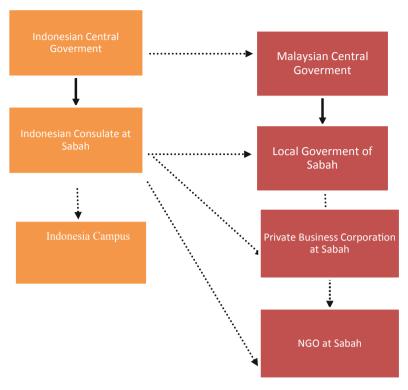


Fig. 2. Indonesian Multi Stakeholder Partnership for Education Sustainability of Migrants Children in Sabah

#### 3.9.2 Migrant Worker Poverty Has Implications for Children's Education

Apart from the difficulty in obtaining an identity card, the majority of TKI children do not receive education. For example what happened to Petrus Blawa's family (Sukoco 2017a), one TKI from Flores who works on an oil palm plantation in Tawau, Malaysia, said that out of their 6 children born in Malaysia, only 1 can read. The difficulty of getting education makes TKI children choose to work to help their parents in the oil palm plantation to become operators of lorries (oil palm trucks). This happened because there were no schools in the fields.

Why did that happen? The Malaysian government, indeed, has provided educational services to all residents living within Malaysia's territory, including Sabah. As a means of providing educational services, the Malaysian Government has established People's Schools, Middle Schools, Colleges, and Universities. Every resident is allowed to attend/get education services in schools. As a host country, Malaysia prioritizes providing services to its own citizens.

Prior to 2002, Indonesian Migrant Workers or Indonesian Migrant Workers (TKI) were still free to work and send their children to school without documents. But after the issuance of the 2001 Labor Act and the 2001 Education Act, their activities were limited. All foreign workers must have complete documents and all foreign students must also



Fig. 3. Indonesian Student at Sabah Malaysia

have complete documents. In principle, the Malaysian Government can accept foreign students who will study in Malaysian schools both Royal schools (Public Schools) and private schools as long as they meet the requirements stipulated under the laws and regulations in the field of education. Some problems that are sometimes difficult for Indonesian citizens to meet in order to obtain educational services, including personal documents of children, immigration status of parents, residence and availability of places (Salmah 2012; Umar and Suniarti 2011).

In general, children of Indonesian citizens living in oil palm plantations, tea plantations and factories do not have valid travel documents such as passports, entry visas, and residence permits. The immigration status of the parents are mostly unskilled workers. Their places of residence vary and do not have a fixed address. In addition, their residence is far from the school; it takes two or three hours from residence to school; public transport is very rare; and unable to pay for transportation costs. The availability of school places is also a problem for Indonesian citizens (Nugroho 2018).

General requirements for obtaining educational services in Malaysian schools include Malaysian citizenship, legal foreign nationals, of legal age, and availability of places. Bearing in mind that the interest of the Malaysian Government in establishing schools is to provide educational services for its citizens, the capacity of the schools established is in accordance with the number of Malaysian citizens who need educational services. Meanwhile, foreign citizens who wish to obtain educational services wait until the availability of school places. School buildings established by the Malaysian Government are generally located close to Malaysian citizens' settlements, to make it easier for children/students to go to and from school to/from their homes. The first problem is about school fees for children - non-Malaysian children who are difficult to reach by Indonesian Migrant Workers whose income is indeed low, as noted by UMY International KKN students in Tawau Malaysia (Fig. 3).

#### 3.9.3 Small Plantation Companies

The availability of school places is also a problem for Indonesian citizen students. Plantation companies that have employees of more than 100 families, they are able to establish independent schools for basic education for children of migrant workers. Problems arise, because 60 percent of oil palm plantations in Sabah are small-scale with less than 100 employees, so they are unable to establish independent schools. As a result, the children of these migrant workers cannot access basic education facilities.

#### 3.9.4 Geographical Factors Where They Live Deep in the Interior

In addition, their residence is far from the school; it takes two or three hours from residence to school; public transport is very rare; and unable to pay for transport costs.

#### 3.9.5 Low Parental Support

In addition, the attitude of parents who do not realize the importance and benefits of education for their children also often becomes an obstacle. The low attendance of students in class is also a serious problem. During the oil palm harvest season, many students do not attend school because they help their parents collect the oil palm harvest.

These problems cannot be resolved by the students and their parents. This is what causes the children of Indonesian citizens not to receive educational services. As a result, in 2019, of the 50,000 children, 25,000 of them are threatened with illiteracy.

# 3.10 Additional Complexities of Indonesian Migrant Workers Education in Sabah During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Since March 18, 2020, his government has implemented a lockdown policy to prevent the spread of COVID-19. On March 22, 2020, for example, the Malaysian government reported 1,306 positive COVID-19 cases in Malaysia, and 158 cases in Sabah (Narudin 2020). The NGO "AMRC" noted that the Covid-19 Pandemic had a bad impact on BMIs in Sabah. After the Malaysian government implemented a lockdown in early March 2020, there was the closure of oil palm plantation operations in six districts with a production value of 60 percent of Sabah's total palm production. Most of the field workers (permanent, sprayer, fertilizer department) did not get paid during the closure of oil palm plantation operations. In fact, most of them do not have access to labor unions and legal aid agencies. As a result, most of the BMIs began to run out of food as a result of traders who usually went to the fields, could not enter the fields (Mufakir 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic has also impacted the education world of IMWs in Sabah after the Royal Malaysia Administration gave instructions that all schools in Malaysia, both with Malaysian curriculum and Indonesian schools in Malaysia, began implementing home learning since March 16, 2020. Ferry Sulistiyono as a guidance teacher at the School Indonesia Overseas (SILN) CLC 4 Sapidua located in Sabah, Malaysia explained that teaching students online, in almost all subjects for students in grades 7,8 and 9 SMP. He admitted that he did not encounter significant difficulties when he had to teach via online media by making videos and then uploading them to YouTube, some also gave

discussions via WhatsApp, Google Classroom and Zoom (Farida 2020). When implementing online learning in the midst of the current pandemic, teachers are also required to provide education related to the COVID-19 outbreak to their students. Ferry is well aware of this, who also has to rack his brains to explain the reasons why schools should be closed to his students.

As much as possible Ferry did not want to make his students feel overwhelmed by learning which only emphasized the cognitive aspects. Because according to him, it would be impossible if students were able to comprehend the material comprehensively with learning activities carried out without face to face. After all, online learning technically has its own challenges, including the internet network. However, he is also realistic about the fact that the learning process is not optimal. Regarding the internet network which is very reliable in online learning, it also has an impact on students' enthusiasm for learning. Ferry tells about some of his students who were very enthusiastic at the beginning of the application of home learning, but in the middle of the journey the enthusiasm faded due to low quota problems and stagnant signals because most of them live in oil palm areas where there is no internet network at all times. Even if there is a signal, they have had difficulty leaving the house to buy internet quotas since the government implemented a lockdown.

However, the use of the WA group in online learning often has problems. Because Indonesian citizens (WNI) who live in Sabah partly use the Bugis regional language or the Malay language. Submission of written material through WA is sometimes captured by different perceptions by each student. For example, the teacher instructs students to make product advertisements using Indonesian, but there are students who still use Malay. Even though Ferry admits that the children really enjoy learning activities online, he does not cover up that there are times when students feel very bored. Not infrequently he heard complaints like that from some of his students. In general, students miss classrooms and learning activities at school. Quizzes or online games that are deliberately designed to overcome students' boredom are sometimes not effective enough to get rid of boredom for those who immediately want to hang out with friends (Farida 2020).

#### 4 Discussion

#### 4.1 Various Advances

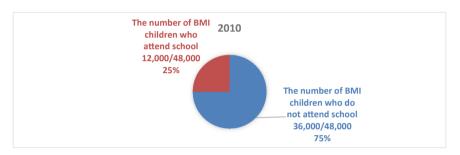
Such of the Indonesian and Malaysian multi-stakeholder partnership since 2012 to 2022, result they can maximilise achievement and give Positive Effects to education quality for children of Indonesia migrant at Sabah Malaysia (Abiyoga, T. A., Mulyanto. 2019). This is reflected in the inauguration of service for Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (pre-school) PAUD Tunas Cendekia on June 16, 2016 by the Consul General of the Republic of Indonesia Kota Kinabalu Ahmad Daya Handasah under the name PAUD SIKK (Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini Sekolah Indonesia in Kinabalu City). Until 2020, some of the progress of the SIKK, CLC and NGO Humana schools were as follows (Table 1; Figs. 4 and 5):

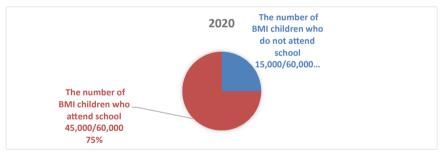
This can happen because although the relationship between Indonesia and Malaysia is up and down and many citizens are illegal, but because the protection of human rights and the fulfilment of education in the SDGs (no one left behind) are the main

Table 1. Improving Education Services for Children Of Indonesian Migrant At Sabah

NO	ASPECT	2010	2020
1	Number of IMW at Sabah	700.000	800.000
2	Number of BMI school-age children up to 18 years of age	48.000	60.000
3	The number of BMI children who do not attend school	75% (36.000/48.000)	25% (15.000/60.000)
4	The number of BMI children who attend school	25% (12.000/48.000)	75% (45.000/60.000)

<sup>\*</sup> Note: The amount of data above is an estimate, due to the complexity of the data collection process for the number of Indonesian Migrants and their children at Sabah Malaysia.





**Fig. 4.** Progress of Education Sustainability of Indonesian Migrants Children in Sabah (2010–2020)

considerations. Actually, the Malaysian central government and the local government of Sabah object to the number of schools that are already too many, let alone those that are not registered. However, due to the consideration of human rights and the fulfilment of the SDGs, the Malaysian government agreed.

#### 4.2 Various Limitations

The Indonesian government has made various efforts to address the issue of the education of children of Indonesian migrant workers (BMI) in Sabah, Malaysia. However,

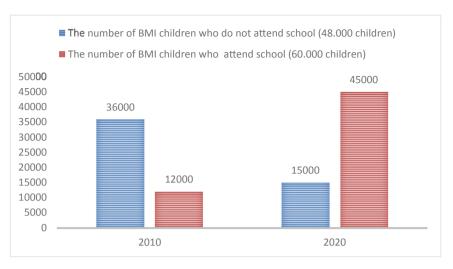


Fig. 5. Improving Education Services for Children of Indonesian Migrant at Sabah

in reality, various problems are still encountered, including: Their low knowledge of history, geography and Indonesian language; the low motivation to learn and support from parents of students; and limited number of schools and teachers.

This was recorded in the UMY International KKN student activity report in Tawau, 2017, as follows: "...(1)The lack of identity awareness from Indonesian Workers...many Indonesian migrant who used illegal procedure to enter tawau, obviously did not aware to the importance of acquiring passport and visa for worker...the worst part is when this problem grows into a bigger problem when they make a family and have children...(2) Complicated Procedures from Government....from our direct interview with the local people about illegal identity isu, we found out that most of them argued processing passport, visa or birth certificate are difficult.. Unpredictable Future for the Children...The scholarship offers also do not effectively run as the government's wish because only few children pass the qualification for the scholarship and most of them are not permitted by their parent to pursue a higher study ain afar place (the home land Indonesia)" (Nugroho 2018).

Based on the author's interview with the SIKK Principal, that schools in the fields are usually provided by relatively large entrepreneurs (more than 100 workers), they have sufficient funds and the number of children to teach, limited CSR funds. This means that for children whose parents work in small fields, they have the potential not to receive educational services (Waluyo, E., Handayani. S. S. D., & Diana 2018).

Another problem that is no less complicated is the low level of coordination between Indonesian government agencies, particularly between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of National Education. For example, in terms of the slow issuance of diplomas for SIKK students who have passed the exam. For example, in 2012 the Indonesian Consulate General (KJRI) in Sabah repeatedly asked the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) in Jakarta to issue diplomas for children of Indonesian Migrant Workers (TKI) in Sabah, Malaysia. This is because hundreds of students have

waited up to a year. Though this diploma is needed to continue school back to the junior high school level (detikNews 2012).

#### 5 Conclusion

The Indonesian government considers the issue of fulfilling the right to education for BMI's children due to domestic factors in the form of the ethical basis of the Pancasila Principle 2 of Just and Civilized Humanity and the 5th principle of Social Justice for All Indonesians; mandate of the Preamble and the body of the 1945 Constitution The Indonesian government is obliged to educate the nation's life, including providing educational services for children. Based on human rights, children regardless of ethnicity or nationality have the right to obtain education. The Indonesian state has an obligation to provide educational service facilities for children living outside the territory of the Indonesian state. Indonesian children must attend the compulsory nine years of education. The cost for implementing compulsory education is provided by the Government of Indonesia.

Equality education is a suitable education model for Indonesian children in Sabah, especially for children who cannot attend formal education at Kota Kinabalu Indonesian School. This paper finds that Indonesian Government conduct-stakeholder multi pater partnership with Central Government of Malaysian, Local Government of Sabah, Private Bussiness Corporation, and NGO's. As a result they can maximilise achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), Point 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, especially Equitable Access for Marginalized Populations'; as a continuation Millenium Development Goals (MDG's) no 2 Target 2A: By 2015, all children can complete a full course of primary scholling (enrollment in primary education and Completion of primary education).

Actually, the Malaysian central government and the local government of Sabah object to the number of schools that are already too many, let alone those that are not registered. However, due to the consideration of human rights and the fulfillment of the SDGs, the Malaysian government agreed.

In fact, this effort still meets such of complexities, thats why Indonesia still fail to fullfils education right for Migrant Children at Sabah Malaysia. In fact, until 2020, still there are 10.000 migrant children can't acces primary education service. In addition, many Indonesian schools in Sabah Malaysia still experience Low Facilities (uncompatible facilities). The results of Desty Citra Sari's research (Desty Citra Sari, 2020) show about the condition of facilities and infrastructure in SIKK PAUD based on the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 137 of 2014 (PerMen137, 2014) there are 10 standards that must be met. The facilities and infrastructure at PAUD SIKK have only met four standards. Conditions in Sabah indicate that various Indonesian schools in Sabah still need to procure facilities and infrastructure to comply with the standard guidelines for infrastructure.

#### 6 Recommendations

The need for increased coordination between Indonesian Ministries.

The need to solve the problems of children who have parents who work in small fields and far from cities, so that they are able to get educational services.

Increased awareness of Indonesian citizens and politicians that the problem of fulfilling educational facilities for children of Indonesian descent abroad is an important political issue that must be addressed.

The need for increased coordination between ministries in Indonesia, especially between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Law and Human Rights.

Increased cooperation between the Government of Indonesia and several parties in Malaysia, including: the Malaysian government, private sector management of fields and NGOs.

Suitable institutions for implementing equality education are PKBM, Tuisyen, and NGOs engaged in education. At this time the legality of PKBM was only limited by the Government of Indonesia. In order to be recognized by the Malaysian Government, a cooperation agreement between Indonesia and Malaysia is required. Meanwhile, Tuisyen and NGOs already have arrangements. However, until now there has been no text that specifically uses the Indonesian curriculum and for Indonesian children. So that PKBM can be established and can be developed, it needs support from the company where the parents of the students work. To expand the reach of educational services to Indonesian children in Sabah, it is necessary to increase the number of PKBM, Tuisyen and NGOs engaged in education.

### 7 Recommendation of Study Forward

Study on solving problems of access to education for children who have parents with jobs in small fields and far away in urban areas.

Studies on further education schools for children of migrant workers after graduating from high school and their employment and welfare.

Study the effectiveness of the KJRI KK's Digital Diplomacy for the protection of IMWs in Sabah.

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