

Human rights good practices by states and other actors to mitigate the human rights impact of COVID-19, including on vulnerable or marginalized communities.

The Government of Indonesia (GoI) has laid down a range of measures to respond to COVID-19 even since before the WHO declared it as a pandemic on 11 March 2020. These measures were meant to prevent the spread of the virus in the country, enable the public to make necessary adjustments in their activities and alleviate the negative impact of the virus and the change it has brought to people's lives. In designing policies and measures to curb the spread of COVID-19, the GoI continues to take human rights consideration as an important element in the decision making and executing process.

As the initial confirmed cases were found in foreign countries, the first response taken by the GoI was by providing protection to Indonesia citizens abroad. Enhanced communication and contact-tracing were taken by all Indonesian Embassies and Consulates to Indonesian nationals living in their country aimed at attaining better information on their wellbeing and whereabouts as well as providing protection to those who were highly impacted by the COVID-19. Such protection includes repatriation of Indonesian workers who work in the cruise ship industry.

The prohibition for vessels to dock in ports, taken by many countries during the pandemic, has gravely impacted the welfare of fishermen and seafarers on ships. These restrictions hindered those ships from carrying out crew changes and from providing sufficient basic needs of food, water and medical items on the vessel. Therefore, repatriation of foreign workers and fishermen was one of the areas of priority taken by the GoI during the early stages of the pandemic. As of August 2020, the GoI has facilitated the repatriation of 142.809 people which include migrant workers, students, tourists, and 25.798 fishermen and seafarers.

Further, various steps taken by the GoI to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 also advances multi-stakeholder and inclusive approaches. This includes:

1. The establishment of a COVID-19 Handling Taskforce at the national and subnational level. The taskforce has been working with thousands of volunteers from civil societies and medical personnels.
2. The GoI also converted a number of buildings and hotels to provide temporary stay and isolation facilities for people arriving from foreign countries, both Indonesian citizens and foreigners. These buildings are repurposed as quarantine facilities and emergency hospitals. Moreover, realizing the effect of long working hours and the unprecedented burden for medical personnel/healthcare workers, some of these converted hotels are

now being used for their temporary housing, to reduce their commute time, improve efficiency and reduce anxieties from exposing members of their families with risk of virus spread.

3. In April 2020, the GoI built a new observation and rehabilitation facility in Galang Island, Batam, dedicated for treatment of patients of COVID-19 as well as other emerging infectious diseases. The decision to establish the facility illustrates the commitment to provide sufficient and comprehensive treatment infrastructure facility to enable proper response to the pandemic.
4. The GoI continues to raise public awareness and readiness of the provincial and district level governments to respond to the virus and the pandemic, including through the establishment of the covid19.go.id website dedicated as a single source of information consisting of data, preventive methods, policies, legislations, health and safety protocols which also include information on the negative effects of the COVID-19 stigma to mental health.
5. Various Ministries have issued a number of guidance/protocols of actions to protect vulnerable groups during the pandemic by the relevant ministries/state agencies, which inter-alia includes protocol to protect children with disabilities, protocol to protect women migrant workers in general, protocol relating to gender-based violence and trafficking in person particularly of women migrant workers, distance learning, etc.
 - The protocol for children with disabilities, issued in June 2020, includes measures to be taken by provincial governments, service workers, parents, school teachers and other members of the communities to provide sufficiently healthy environments for these children in their own homes, schools and communities for children at risk and those who have positively contracted the virus.
 - Taking into account the possibility that children whose parents are in isolation, have died from COVID-19, or who cannot be present for their families for other reasons, in April 2020, the GoI has also issued a protocol for children requiring special protection affected by the pandemic. These children whose family, themselves, have contracted COVID-19 may be stigmatised, excluded or could face risk of depression, mental health issues or becoming victim of domestic assault as a consequence of large-scale social restriction or physical distancing measures. The Protocol also include children in juvenile detention as part of children who require special protection.

- All of the Protocols designed to protect children includes principles of the rights of the child i.e non-discrimination, best interest of the child, children' development and children participation as their integral part.
6. Considering the effect of the pandemic to study activities, the Ministry of Education and Culture, together with other relevant Ministries also issued protocols for remote learning during the large-scale social restriction measure and gradual transition to physical learning activities. However, in practice, this remote learning method has created another set of challenges for school management, teachers and lecturers, and particularly children. Such methods require adequate technology and digital infrastructure to enable a fully functioning and smooth learning activity. This is one of the areas where further international cooperation could improve not only physical and digital infrastructure, but also capacities of teachers to adapt the new normal of education in the digital front.
 7. With regard to the protection of prisoners, the Ministry of Law and Human Rights has put in place several measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in prisons and flatten the curve through testing and quarantine for inmates who have the virus. Furthermore, in March 2020, the Ministry of Law and Human Rights issued Ministerial Regulation on the granting of assimilation and rights for integration for prisoners and juvenile inmates as a preventive measure against the spread of COVID-19. Following the regulation, as of August 2020 the Ministry have released more than 36.000 inmates.

The constructive role of Indonesia's robust civil society during the pandemic has also become a prominent feature in mitigating the human rights impact of COVID-19. Despite the myriad of challenges, volunteerism in the mitigation and respond efforts to COVID-19 in Indonesia continues to be on the rise. This comes as no surprise, as even prior to the pandemic, the 2019 Legatum Prosperity Index ranks Indonesia fifth in the world for civic and social participation. At the same time, the 2018 Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) World Giving Index placed Indonesia at the top of the list of for frequency of donating and volunteering.

Volunteerism in Indonesia during the pandemic encompasses a wide range of activities, including i.e crowdfunding to support informal sector workers and the provision of personal protective equipment for healthcare workers. Indonesia's thriving digital economy sector and its innovations continue to connect people ensuring that daily necessities such as food, groceries, and other staple products can still be ordered online and delivered to customers. Therefore, economic activities continue and benefit independent, local and small-scale vendors, consumers and delivery service workers. The telemedicine sector has also contributed in providing round-the-clock online health consultation services and allowing people to book appointments for COVID-19 rapid and PCR tests.

The GoI continues to overcome challenges posed by the pandemic through international cooperation. Advancing multilateralism has been an integral part of Indonesia's policy in various fora that address the pandemic and its impacts. To guarantee the right to health during the normal and pandemic setting, Indonesia, in its capacity as Chair of the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative 2020, has advanced the theme of **Affordable Health Care for All**. Through this theme, Indonesia aims to strengthen collaborative efforts for the availability of quality medicines, vaccines and medical equipment, therapeutics, diagnostic and other essential health technologies in a timely and affordable manner.

In regards to people's livelihood, as a country where entrepreneurship thrives and is one of the major contributors to the economy, a lot of Indonesian are working in the informal sectors involving direct interaction between actors. The GoI understands that strict physical distancing measures will carry unprecedented impacts to people's lives and livelihoods particularly those who work in the informal sector. Therefore, a number of economic stimulus packages have been introduced to cushion the negative effects of the pandemic to the economy. These stimulus packages consist of *inter alia*:

- a. Income tax exemption for micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) for the period of April – December 2020 and subsidy for MSME debtors for the period of 6 months since May 2020.
- b. Financing relaxation for Ultra Micro Credit debtors, administrative requirement relaxation and acceleration for credit grant.
- c. Cash assistance and training courses for the unemployed, incentives for low wage workers and employers with salaries of under Rp. 5 million /month.

An enormous challenge that requires more international cooperation is the spread of hoaxes, misinformation and infodemics relating to COVID-19. These types of news and information ranging from unsubstantiated health tips, false information on vaccines research, to hoaxes relating to social activities dan daily life during the pandemic mostly spread through social media, have often become viral news that mislead people and could lead to dangerous effect to personal and public health. With this in mind, the aforementioned website on covid19 also include a page to counter such misinformation and provides correction based on fact checks.

In the multilateral fora, the High Commissioner should encourage the human rights mechanisms to assist states in their effort to respond to this challenge and enable countries capacity to focus on responding to the pandemic and its side effect to the livelihood of the people.
