

Growing up Tough in Sumatra

Child Rights in Indonesia: Challenges & Responses

www.childrenofindonesia.blogspot.com

Learning Cluster, Soka University of America

January 2012



THE COURSE

Indonesia has emerged as a liberal democracy, in which economic growth and human rights seem to go hand in hand. Despite this progress, the world's most populous Muslim country still faces significant challenges, including child poverty. Throughout the country, children remain vulnerable to predation, civil strife, and poverty. Urban areas feature large populations of street children, while rural areas may lack basic education. The purpose of this Learning Cluster is to examine the challenges involved in safeguarding child rights in Indonesia, and also to look at some local responses to these challenges.

This Learning Cluster is a truly collaborative effort, proposed by students interested in child rights and wedded with the faculty advisor's local contacts. We will travel to Medan, North Sumatra, where we will meet with local NGOs dedicated to helping at risk children, develop friendships with the resilient youths facing such hardships, and meet with educators, politicians, and religious leaders who seek to improve the lives of children who are forced to grow up tough in Sumatra.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To further our understanding of the obstacles facing impoverished youth in Indonesia through participant observation, dialogue, and research
- ❖ To establish meaningful relationships with NGOs, local charities, and children to deepen our understanding of their work while communicating our dedication to peace, education, and humanitarianism
- ❖ To discover ways in which we as participants can assist and aid children affected by problems such as exploitation, poverty, and lack of access to education (although never to overstate our potential roles)
- ❖ To appreciate and assist local actors who have dedicated their lives to helping children
- ❖ To contribute towards sustainable responses to the issue of child poverty in Indonesia
- ❖ To consider the conditions we observe in North Sumatra in a comparative context

- ❖ To work together, as a group, to acquire knowledge and experience to explore answers to our questions and learning objectives
- ❖ To understand how various religious groups seek to mitigate child poverty and how these groups perceive child rights

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ❖ What are the challenges faced by children in Sumatra?
 - How do these challenges vary in urban, semi-urban, and rural contexts?
 - How do these challenges vary across ethno-religious communities?
- ❖ How do at-risk children navigate local threats?
 - How do children understand the concept of rights and how to exercise them?
- ❖ What actual and potential responses are being undertaken to improve the situation?
 - Will economic development mitigate some of these challenges?
 - What tools and strategies are utilized by local activists and educators?
 - What roles can religious leaders and communities play in helping children?
 - Why do some political leaders work to protect child rights, while others do not?
- ❖ What can we do, and what can the international community do, to support local initiatives?
 - Are the solutions we discover in Indonesia applicable to other countries and regions?
- ❖ How do the approaches found in academic texts diverge with what we find on the ground?

EVALUATION

50%	Participation	Ongoing
15%	Book Review	12 January
10%	Blogs	Ongoing
25%	Research Paper	01 February

Participation: 50% of your grade will be earned through participation. Student leadership is central to Learning Clusters, and includes contributions towards creating the Cluster, applying for funding, fundraising, completing the assigned readings, classroom participation, behaviour in the field, preparedness for travel, and contributions to the Learning Cluster Fair.

Book Review: 15% of your grade will be earned by writing a brief (about four pages, double-spaced) paper which summarizes and challenges a book related to Child Rights, primary education, or life in Indonesia. Students are expected to read a book which they have not read before, and must confirm their selection with the instructor by the first day of the course (Monday, 09 January). It is highly recommended that students select a book of their choice in consultation with the instructor prior to our first class, preferably over the Winter break. Students should choose a book which they expect will be important to their final essay. **Due in class 12 January, 1030 am.**

Blogs: 10% of your grade will be assessed in terms of blog entries, which will be posted on the class webpage. One must be uploaded before we depart, discussing the student's expectations, excitement, and concerns. One will be written while in Sumatra, even if we cannot upload it right away, which reflects on the events of a given day. The second blog entry must be written before January 20th. The final blog entry will be uploaded at the end

of the course, looking back on lessons and looking forward to future linkages with the groups we met in the field.

To upload a blog, go to <http://childrenofindonesia.blogspot.com>, and enter your blog under the appropriate heading.

Research Paper: 25% of your grade will be earned through a brief research paper (5-7 pages) which critically analyzes some of the challenges and potential solutions to child rights, probably in Indonesia, or more generally. **Due Wednesday, 01 February.**

BUDGET	Foreign	USD
Flights		\$16,055
<i>\$1,235 x 13 people</i>		
Soka Shuttle		\$150
Vehicle / Driver	12M Rp	\$1350
<i>1.1m rp x 10 days, plus extra vehicle to / from airport</i>		
Accommodation	8M Rp	\$900
Internet	1.5M	\$170
Overnight trip	1.8M	\$210
<i>250,000 rp x 7 rooms, plus driver</i>		
Honorariums / Translator	8.5M	\$960
<i>Ines expenses (time, cell phone, gas), gifts, food expenses at Marawan and Pantai Labu</i>		
Ines / Driver Meals	1M	\$115
Exchange Fees		\$100
<i>3 money transfers, transaction costs</i>		
Miscellaneous	3M	\$340
<i>Mosque entrance, parking, volcano mini-buses, groceries, photos (develop and distribute)</i>		
Airport Tax Medan	75,000 rp x 13	\$110
Singapore Hostel	27 SGD x 13	\$300
TOTAL		\$20,760
	<i>Minus Budget</i>	\$16,500
	<i>Minus Covered by instructor</i>	\$300
Remaining Costs		\$3,960

CALENDAR

The class will meet four times prior to departure. Students are expected to come to class having completed the required readings. This will mean that students will be expected to do some readings over the holiday break, an unfortunate but necessary part of extending our limited time in the field. Some classes will be facilitated by Rashid Kang, a veteran human rights activist from Malaysia.

*****Students must discuss book review with instructor by 09 January*****

09 January Monday Session 01	Child Rights <i>Child labour, education</i>
0900 0930 1230	Conversational Indonesian Lecture and Discussion End
<i>Readings</i>	<i>United Nations</i> , " Convention on the Rights of the Child ," 15 pages. <i>United Nations</i> , " The Convention on the Rights of the Child: An Introduction to an International Treaty " (2009), 34 pages. David Gordon et al, <i>Child Poverty in the Developing World</i> , (London: Policy Press, 2003); 31 pages. Catherine Panter-Brick, " Street Children, Human Rights, & Public Health: A Critique and Future Directions ," <i>Annual Review of Anthropology</i> 31:1 (2002); pp. 147-171.

10 January Tuesday Session 02	Indonesia, North Sumatra
0900 0930 1230	Conversational Indonesian Lecture and Discussion End
<i>Readings</i>	M.C. Ricklefs, <i>A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1200</i> (Stanford University Press, 2001). (Available via Abebooks.com for \$4) Vedi R. Hadiz, "Power and Politics in North Sumatra: The Uncompleted Reformasi," in <i>Local Power and Politics in Indonesia: Decentralization and Democratization</i> , edited by Edward Aspinall and Greg Fealy (Singapore: ISEAS, 2003); pp. 119-131. Loren Ryster, " Pemuda Pancasila: The Last Loyalist Free Men of Suharto's New Order ," <i>Indonesia</i> 66 (October 1998); pp. 45-73.

11 January Wednesday Session 03	Child Rights in Sumatra <i>Threats, challenges, and opportunities</i>
0900 0930 1230	Conversational Indonesian Lecture and Discussion End
<i>Readings</i>	Amy Hsin, " Children's Time Use: Labor Divisions and Schooling in Indonesia ," <i>Journal of Marriage and Family</i> 69:5 (2007); pp. 1-42. Harriot Beazley, " Voices from the Margins: Street Children's Subcultures in Indonesia ," <i>Children's Geographies</i> 1:2 (2003); pp. 181-200 Krisztina Kis-Katos and Robert Sparrow, " Child Labor and Trade Liberalization in Indonesia " <i>Institute for the Study of Labor Paper</i> 4376 (August 2009); pp. 1-50.

*****Book Review Due: 12 January*****

12 January Thursday Session 04	Logistics <i>Staying safe, etiquette, research goals</i>
0900	Conversational Indonesian
1000	Lecture and Discussion
1200	End

*****First Blog Due*****

Travel

13 January Friday	Soka to Singapore
1000	Shuttle leaves Soka
1415	Singapore Airlines Flight SQ11 leaves LAX

15 January Sunday	Singapore to Sumatra
0335	Singapore Airlines Flight SQ11 arrives Singapore Changi (7 hr 45)
0730 (-1 hr)	Silk Airways Flight SQ5234 leaves Singapore Changi
0755	Silk Airways Flight SQ5234 arrives Medan Polonia (1 hr 25)
0830	Shuttle to accommodations

Growing Up Tough in Sumatra

16 January Monday Field 01	Urban Context <i>Visit schools, NGOs, and community leaders</i>
0830	Visit local elementary school (Christian)
1100	Meet NGO (PUSAKA)
1400	Visit school, Marawan Community

17 January Tuesday Field 02	Urban Context <i>Visit schools, NGOs, and community leaders</i>
0830	Visit local elementary school (Christian)
1100	Meet NGO (PKPA, <i>Pusat Pekajian Perlindungan Anak</i>)
1500	Meet Halfway House

18 January Wednesday Field 03	Other perspectives <i>Visit schools, NGOs, and community leaders</i>
0830	Visit National Mosque
0930	Visit local elementary school (Muslim)
1130	To Siantar
1300	Visit Pantai Labu, village art and cultural project
1900	Meet with students from Nomensen University

19 January Thursday	Other perspectives <i>Visit schools, NGOs, and community leaders</i>
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Field 04	
0930	Visit elementary and high schools (Chinese Christian)
1100	To Lake Toba
1500	To Kabanjahe

*****Second Blog Due: 20 January*****

20 January Friday Field 05	Rural Context <i>Visit schools, NGOs, and community leaders</i>
0900	Visit local elementary school
1100	Sibayak Volcano hike
1700	Hot Springs
1900	To Medan

21 January Saturday Field 06	Solutions
0900	Meet with NGO (KKSP)
1130	Meet with urban gangs (Pemuda Pancasila)
1330	Free afternoon, run errands

22 January Sunday Field 07	Solutions
----	Free Day
1900	Meet SARAF (Street punks)

23 January Monday Field 08	Solutions <i>Chinese New Year Holiday</i>
----	Free Day
1500	BBQ with friends

Travel

24 January Tuesday	Sumatra to Singapore
0840	Silk Airways Flight SQ5237 Leaves Medan Polonia
(+ 1 hr) 1105	Silk Airways Flight SQ 5237 Arrives Singapore Changi (1 hr 25)
	One night, Tree In Lodge , Singapore

25 January Wednesday	Singapore to Soka
0925	Singapore Airlines Flight SQ12 Leaves Singapore Changi
1700	Singapore Airlines Flight SQ12 Arrives Narita (6 hr 40)
1850	Singapore Airlines Flight SQ12 Leaves Narita
1150	Singapore Airlines Flight SQ12 Arrives LAX (10 hr 00)
1230	Shuttle to Soka
1400	Arrive Home

26 January Thursday	Rest
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Defending the Rights of Children

27 January Friday Session 05	Reckoning and Planning <i>What did we find?</i>
0930 1230	Discussion, Organize Essays and Learning Cluster Fair End

28 January Saturday Session 06	Child Rights <i>How did what we find diverge with what we read?</i> <i>How do the threats facing children vary around the world?</i>
0930 1230	Lecture and Discussion: academic and reality End
Readings	Mark Francis and Ray Lorenzo, " Seven Realms of Children's Participation ," <i>Journal of Environmental Psychology</i> 22 (2002); pp. 157-169.

30 January Monday Session 07	Act Global, Act Local <i>How can persons in western countries help those in poor ones?</i> <i>What challenges are faced by children in the United States?</i>
0930 1230	Lecture and Discussion: domestic and international contexts End

*****Third Blog Due: 30 January*****

31 January Tuesday	Work Day
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01 February Wednesday	Learning Cluster Fair <i>Communicating your experience to the Soka Community</i>
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*****Research Papers Due: 01 February*****