

## **Network building for SDSN Indonesia: Lessons Learned from Rewards.**

Jatna Supriatna<sup>1,2,3</sup>, Lisa Wijayani<sup>1,2</sup>, Cokorda Dewi<sup>1,3</sup> and Cheri Nursalim<sup>1,3</sup>

1. UN SDSN Indonesia; 2. Institute for Sustainable Earth and Resources, Universitas Indonesia; 3. United In Diversity Foundation

### **Abstract**

UN SDSN Indonesia was inaugurated by the President of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, in 2013 during an APEC meeting in Bali. Initially, only 7 organizations registered for the Indonesian SDSN, which was co-chaired by the University of Indonesia (UI) and an NGO based in Jakarta, United In Diversity Foundation (UID). Since then, the network has grown to 21 registered members and 15 more spectators (not yet fully registered in UNSDSN) and there are now many youth members either individuals or student associations. From 2014-2017, in collaboration with UID, we developed the SDSN Indonesia Sustainable Development Solution Award for local solutions to SDG related works either carried out by local governments, NGOs, the private sector or communities. From more than 300 applicants, we select 5 winners each year, who each receive a token of appreciation, mentoring support, network connection, media promotion, and seed funding for their future work. Every year, we also have member meetings of both regular and youth members. Next year, this SDG award may change into SDGs Action Awards. This is a replica of the SDGs Action Awards made by the UN SDG Action Campaign, which aims to recognize the most innovative and impactful actions on SDGs. However, in Indonesia, this award will be given to the local governments which have implemented the actions.

### **Introduction**

For over five years, UI and UID as the Chair of UN SDSN Indonesia have implemented various activities pertaining to SDGs by involving many stakeholders including government, private sector, civil society organizations, and universities. SDSN Youth Indonesia has actively engaged young people to initiate and implement activities in SDGs agenda.

This year of 2019, SDSN Indonesia hosted a symposium on “Sustainability Science and Sustainable Solutions in the era of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”. The symposium envisioned the objectives to promote sustainability science as a holistic approach and transdisciplinary study in achieving SDGs as well as to dispense information for public on Indonesia’s current development on SDGs. We also hold a two-day happiness festival as our participation to support the international day of happiness which also pertained to the “Alignment of Harmony”- the harmony with each other, with nature, and in spirituality. Those three harmonies were then articulated in a form of SDG Pyramid in which the foundation was constructed with the harmony with people, and the next upper stage was correlated with the harmony with nature (ecological), and then the top stage was aligned with the harmony in spiritual.

Finally, UN SDSN Youth Indonesia organized a series of workshop and programs on sustainable development goals (SDGs) for youth and school students. One of the programs was namely “Envirochallenge”, with the aim to encourage students and school members to find solutions for environmental problems, specifically for plastic pollution at their school. Aside from those perspectives, the program was useful for the students to gain new knowledge from the workshops and a mentoring session being organized.

### **Rationale for Network Development**

On the early stage in 2014, there were not many people aware of sustainable development goals (SDGs). Our focus at that time was then to promote SDGs nationally at all levels and to also encourage people participation on SDGs, particularly by giving them rewards. We believed that reward system could escalate the interest of people and alter people behavior to employ their best efforts to implement SDGs in any of their activities. A cash prize along with other benefits including mentoring was given to the winner so as to support their activities in relation to SDGs. Through the mentoring scheme which included network connection and media promotion, we wanted to ensure that the winner was able to utilize the prize for creating larger impacts.

The rationale behind the reward system that we imposed was aligned with the study of (Haque, Haque and Islam 2014) which stated that the reward system could motivate people as they felt that their effort, commitment, loyalty, and trust were fairly appreciated. Money could give positive influence toward people behavior as an incentive to continue provide desired outputs.

### **Objectives and Selection Criteria**

The SDSN Indonesia Sustainable Development Solution Award supported the global initiative through an award that highlighted unique initiatives for sustainable solutions in Indonesia. The award was aimed to support innovative projects that address the challenges of sustainable development so that it could be scaled up or adapted at a larger scale. The selected winner received a cash prize of US \$30,000; connection to a larger network either on SDGs or in their existing field; media exposure to promote their programs; and mentoring and capacity building support.

Each of the nominations was judged according to seven factors. The first factor was impact potential, in which the project had to be able to describe the impact of the project on the root causes of the stated problem, e.g. simply building more schools would not qualify, but integrating sustainable development principles into the curriculum would. The second factor was proven efficacy or successful demonstration, where the project could show that its innovative approach could make a real impact, e.g. number of people who could access clean water. The third factor was trisectoral approach, in which stakeholders from all three pillars of society (business, government and civil society) was engaged to create and implement the solution. The fourth factor was innovative, thus either the idea or the approach of the implementation should have been new. Fifth was sustainability, where the project had a long-term financial plan and operational sustainability to maintain existing activities. The next factor was scalability to ensure that the project had the potential to be scaled and adapted or replicated to achieve broader

results. Finally, endorsement or strong recommendation from its stakeholders and observers alike was the other factor that we judged from the candidates.

### **The SDSN Indonesia Sustainable Development Solution Award (2014-2017)**

In 2014, the judges selected the Regional Government of Bojonegoro Regency as the winner of SDSN Indonesia Sustainable Development Solutions Award for their inspiring work namely "Better Road Forward: a new, community-based model for rural road paving". The Bojonegoro Regency initiated a road paving program by engaging the community to participate through manufacturing the paving blocks, constructing the roads and maintaining the infrastructure. Having that initiative, the roads were improved and people were more connected.

On the next following year, the award was given to a foundation namely the Learning Farm for their inspiring work "Planting the Seeds of Change". Through the program, the Learning Farm tried to develop Indonesian vulnerable youth to become economically self-sufficient and productive members of communities. The program supported youth with the organic farming skill and other valuable life skills. They also helped to transform participants' values, outlook, and expectations of self and community and equipped them with marketable skills whilst working and participating in a purposeful, communal environment.

In 2016, over 50 organizations with unique solutions for a better Indonesia applied for the SDSN Indonesia Sustainable Development Solution Award. The selection of the winner was conducted in 2017 after having careful consideration of selecting the winner. Finally, the judges selected Bintang Sejahtera as the winner of the award that was successfully developing waste bank for environmental preservation and economic development. The waste bank helped the community in West Nusa Tenggara Province to resolve social economic problems by turning waste into cash. They processed waste into raw materials to supply Recycling Companies in Surabaya. Their waste management system could process up to 28 tons of anorganic waste and 25 tons organic waste every month under 35 waste bank units. With that, they were able to provide jobs for more than 40 housewives and 14 men. Besides processing the waste, they also utilized the profit to create awareness building activities, trainings, and business coaching for the community.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The winners of the awards were selected by having careful consideration based on the criterias that we developed particularly on the impacts of their activities and the possibility that their activities can be scaled up or replicated. To ensure the consistency of the replication of the activities, actually there should the monitoring system in a certain amount of time. The mentoring system could actually help with the utilization of cash prize. However after the mentoring program was accomplished, we could not guarantee that the activities would be sustainable and could reach the objective of being scaled up or being replicated. As (World Bank 2007) stated that monitoring can provide continuous intervention towards of the progress or achievement of the results. The monitoring strategy can be based on the relevance with the award's objective, efficiency, effectiveness, impacts, and also sustainability.

The award as the recognition system can encourage the high productivity of people. Nevertheless, the supporting system is the one that can maintain the sustainability of people's productivity as well as the attainment of the award's objectives. Therefore, there should be a network program that involves the participation of awardees either as the alumni or current winners to share their activities including achievements and challenges to other awardees or public that has interest to replicate their activities.

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