

# Teaching **English**

## **Dreams and Realities:**

Developing Countries and the English Language

Edited by Hywel Coleman

Paper 5

Allocating resources for English: The case of Indonesia's English medium International Standard Schools

by Hywel Coleman

## Policy planning and implementation



## Allocating resources for English: The case of Indonesia's English medium International Standard Schools<sup>1</sup>

**Hywel Coleman** 

#### Introduction

This chapter examines a recent innovation in Indonesia's education system: the establishment of English medium 'International Standard Schools' (ISS). Although the ISS programme has its supporters (e.g. Bax 2010), it has been subject to considerable criticism in Indonesia for threatening national unity and contravening the national constitution, for exacerbating social divisions and for demanding too much of teachers who have to teach their subjects through English (Darmaningtyas 2010, Kompas 2010a, 2010b).

This chapter, however, focuses specifically on the issue of the allocation of resources for the ISS programme. The objectives are to identify anomalies associated with resource allocation, to highlight the differential access which different socioeconomic groups have to this programme and to ask a question about the difficulty which governments seem to have in planning language education (especially English) in such a way that a balance is achieved between national development objectives and the empowerment of citizens at the individual level.

The chapter falls into six sections. The first provides a brief overview of Indonesia and its current development context. The second section describes the ISS programme in Indonesia; from this description it emerges that the use of English as the medium of instruction is one of the most prominent features of these schools. The third section examines in detail the ways in which ISSs are financed. Next, the chapter looks at how the concept of 'globalisation' is used as a rationale for the establishment of ISSs. The fifth section identifies a constituency in Indonesian society which faces the challenges of 'globalisation' in a direct way but which does not have access to the ISS system. The sixth and final section summarises the findings and discusses their implications.

The chapter makes extensive use of financial data concerning per capita income, routine funding allocations for schools, funding of the ISS programme and migrant workers' remittances back to Indonesia. These figures are all, to a certain degree, tentative. Nevertheless, regardless of the precise degree of accuracy of these figures, the author believes that the trends and patterns which emerge are valid.

### The development context of Indonesia

This section looks briefly at Indonesia's overall human development situation, at per capita income and at a number of education indicators. Further key development indicators can be seen in Appendix 2 at the end of this volume.

With a population of over 230 million, Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world. UNDP places Indonesia at 108th position in its Human Development Index (UNDP 2010; see also Appendix 1). This puts it at the mid-point of countries categorised as having 'medium human development', coming just below Namibia, Honduras and Maldives and slightly above Kyrgyzstan, South Africa and Syria.

According to UNDP, Indonesia's gross national income per person is almost USD4,000 (IDR35 million, GBP2,500) per year (UNDP 2010; see also Table 1 below and Appendix 2). Indonesian government figures, however, are more modest; in December 2010 the Co-ordinating Minister for Economic Affairs was reported to have predicted that per capita income for 2010 would be USD3,000 (IDR26.5 million, GBP1,900; Antara 2010).

Table 1: Per capita income, Indonesia <sup>2</sup>						
Category	Period	USD (\$)	IDR (Rp000)	GBP (£)		
National, per capita	Annual	4,000	35,682	2,591		
(UNDP 2010)	Monthly	333	2,974	216		
	Daily	11	98	7		
National, per capita	Annual	3,000	26,762	1,943		
(Antara 2010)	Monthly	250	2,230	162		
	Daily	8	73	5		
Industrial labourer (per capita),	Annual	1,809	16,133	1,172		
Jakarta (BPS 2009)	Monthly	151	1,344	98		
	Daily	5	45	3		
Batik dyer (female, range),	Annual	164–984	1,500–9,000	107–636		
East Java (Ratna 2010)	Monthly	14–82	125–750	9–53		
	Daily	0.47-2.73	4–25	0.30–1.77		
Poverty line	Annual	456	4,070	296		
(UNDP 2010)	Monthly	38	335	24		
	Daily	1.25	11	0.81		

However, even these average figures may be misleading. For example, government statistics show that the average monthly income of an industrial labourer in Jakarta in the third quarter of 2009 was only IDR1.34 million (BPS 2009), equivalent to GBP98 or USD151. Meanwhile, female batik dyers on the island of Madura, East Java, are reported to earn between IDR125,000 and IDR750,000 per month (between GBP9 and GBP53, between USD14 and USD82), depending on their productivity (Ratna 2010). Poverty is widespread; UNDP (2010) records that 30 per cent of the Indonesian population survive below the poverty line of USD1.25 (GBP0.80, IDR11,000) per day.

In contrast, there is also extreme wealth. The Forbes list of the world's billionaires (Kroll and Miller 2010) identifies seven Indonesians who individually are worth between USD1 billion and USD3.5 billion (between GBP0.6 billion and GBP2.2 billion, between IDR9 trillion and IDR31 trillion).

With regard to education, Indonesian legislation requires that all children should attend nine years of compulsory schooling (six years in primary school and three years in junior secondary school). The medium of instruction in schools is Bahasa Indonesia, the national language. English is a compulsory subject throughout junior secondary and senior secondary schools, although many primary schools also teach English as an additional subject.

The nine years of education in primary and junior secondary school are (nominally) free of charge. Central government provides a grant known as BOS (bantuan operasional sekolah, school operational support), which is calculated according to the formula shown in Table 2 and paid quarterly via district education offices.

Table 2: Annual BOS grant from central government to schools, per pupil, 2011 <sup>3</sup>							
Location         Level         USD (\$)         IDR (Rp000)         GBP (£)							
Rural district	Primary	43.51	397	28.19			
	Junior secondary	62.47	570	40.47			
Urban district	Primary	43.84	400	28.40			
	Junior secondary	63.02	575	40.83			

According to this formula a rural primary school, for example, will receive a BOS grant of IDR397,000 (GBP28 or USD44) per year for every enrolled pupil. This central government grant is expected to cover 70 per cent of school costs (excluding teacher salaries); the remaining 30 per cent is supposed to be covered by a matching school operational support grant from the district government.

Actual participation in primary schools is reasonably high, with a net enrolment ratio in 2008 of 96 per cent. In junior secondary schools, the gross enrolment ratio in 2008 was 89 per cent while the net enrolment ratio for all secondary schools was 68 per cent (UNESCO 2010). However, the push to achieve universal participation in nine years of primary and junior secondary education is a relatively recent phenomenon. Consequently, the average Indonesian adult has spent only 5.7 years in school (UNDP 2010; see also Appendix 2).

The overall achievements of the Indonesian education system are rather disappointing. The findings of the 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey of what 15-year-olds who are still in school know and can do (OECD 2010) show that, in reading ability, Indonesia comes at 56th place out of 64 countries. In mathematics, Indonesian 15-year-olds come in 59th place (jointly with Tunisia) while in science, too, Indonesia is in 59th place. (See Table 3.)

Table 3: What 15-year-olds in school in five Asian countries know and can do (OECD 2010)

Country	Rea	Reading		matics	Science		
	Score	Rank/64	Score	Rank/64	Score	Rank/64	
Korea	539	1	546	3	538	5	
Hong Kong	533	3	555	2	549	2	
Singapore	526	4	562	1	542	3	
Thailand	421	49	419	50=	425	48	
Indonesia	402	56	371	59=	383	59	

#### To summarise:

- Indonesia with its very large population falls in the middle of the range of countries with medium human development.
- National per capita income figures are uncertain and may be misleading, but it is clear that rural craftspeople can expect to earn at most IDR750,000 per month (GBP53, USD82) and possibly much less than that whereas urban factory labourers can take home about IDR1.3 million (just under GBP100, USD150) per month on average.
- Three people in every ten exist below the poverty line, making do with IDR11,000 (GBP0.80, USD1.25) per day or less.
- Compulsory education lasts for nine years and about 96 per cent of children attend primary school, but the participation rate for junior secondary school is lower.
- Schools receive annual grants from central government, which are worth about IDR400,000 (GBP28, USD44) per pupil for primary schools and IDR575,000 (GBP41, USD63) per pupil for junior secondary schools.
- On an international measure of educational outcomes, Indonesia performs poorly compared to neighbouring countries in East and Southeast Asia.

## The International Standard Schools programme

Indonesia's ISS programme is described here in terms of the background and objectives of the scheme, the number of schools participating in the scheme, the socio-economic background of pupils, the role of English and actual practice in participating schools.

#### **Background and objectives**

The Soeharto-era government of Indonesia (1966–1998) required that all Indonesian nationals should attend Indonesian schools. Access to international schools operating in the country was strictly restricted to the children of expatriates. Following the collapse of the Soeharto government and the liberalisation of Indonesian society, demands were made by the aspirant upper middle class that their children should also be allowed to study in international schools. The true international schools, however, were – and still are – unwilling to open their doors too widely.

In the face of this reluctance of international schools to admit the children of Indonesian nationals and in response to market demand, some very expensive fully Indonesian private 'international' schools were established. These cater for the extremely wealthy and are beyond the reach even of the average middle class family. There was still, then, an unfulfilled demand from the middle classes for 'international-like' education.

In a development which surprised many observers, Law No 20 of 2003 on the National Education System (Republik Indonesia 2003) introduced the concept of 'International Standard Schools' (SBI, sekolah bertaraf internasional). The law required that central government and/or local governments should work to establish 'one International Standard School at every educational level' (Republik Indonesia 2003, Article 50, Clause 3).4

This was followed in 2005 by Government Decree No 19 on National Standards for Education, which specified that central government should co-operate with local government to provide at least one school per district at the primary level and at least one at the secondary level which could be 'developed to become an International Standard School' (Republik Indonesia 2005, Article 61, Clause 1).<sup>5</sup>

In the same year, the Ministry of National Education's Strategic Plan for 2005–2009 stated:

In order to improve the nation's ability to compete ... central government and the relevant rural district government [kabupaten] or urban district government [kota] [need to] develop 112 international standard primary, junior secondary, senior secondary and vocational secondary schools throughout Indonesia.

(Depdiknas 2005)<sup>6</sup>

This was followed in 2007 by the appearance of government guidelines, which for the first time defined what is meant by 'International Standard School' and which laid down criteria for quality assurance. The definition states that an ISS is:

A school ... which fulfils all the National Standards for Education and which is further enriched by taking into consideration the education standards of one member nation of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and/or another advanced nation which has particular strengths in education such that it achieves competitive advantage in the international forum. (Depdiknas 2007:7)<sup>7</sup>

The same document identifies nine areas in which the quality of ISSs is to be guaranteed, with indicators for each area (Depdiknas 2007:v–vii). The nine areas and some examples of their respective indicators are summarised in Table 4. (The complete document is very lengthy; Table 4 simply provides one or two sample indicators for each of the nine areas.)

The publication of the 2007 ISS guidelines was followed in 2008 by the appearance of very detailed handbooks for the implementation of education of an international standard in primary schools (Depdiknas 2008a) and in junior secondary schools (Depdiknas 2008b).

Table 4: Nine areas for quality assurance in Indonesia's International Standard Schools (extracted from Depdiknas 2007)				
Areas for quality assurance	Examples of quality indicators			
1. Accreditation	school is also accredited by a school accreditation body in an OECD member nation			
2. Curriculum	lesson content equivalent to or higher than that taught in an OECD member country			
3. Learning-teaching process	Science, mathematics and core vocational subjects are taught using English In primary schools, teaching science and mathematics through English begins in Year 4.			
4. Evaluation	'enriched' with modes of evaluation employed in an OECD member country			
5. Teachers	Teachers of science, mathematics and core vocational subjects are able to deliver lessons through English			
6. Headteachers	Headteacher has active mastery of English possesses international vision, capable of developing international links			
7. Facilities and resources	Internet access			
8. Management	School is multicultural			
9. Financing	Achieves Indonesian National Education Standard for school financing.			

More recent legislation (for example, Republik Indonesia 2010) has emphasised that there are to be two categories of school: 'fledgling' International Standard Schools (RSBI, Rintisan Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional) and definitive International Standard Schools (SBI, Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional).<sup>8</sup> The assumption is that not every school will be able to satisfy the ISS criteria immediately. The 'fledgling' or 'candidate' ISSs will therefore be given support over a number of years to enable them to develop to the point where they will be able to achieve full ISS status. The most recent legislation states that primary schools will be supported for seven years while junior secondary, senior secondary and vocational secondary schools will be supported for six years (Republik Indonesia 2010, Article 144 Clause 5 and Article 146 Clause 5). However, a speech by the Minister of Education in April 2010 indicated that the maximum duration for which junior secondary schools can expect to be supported is four years while senior secondary schools will be supported for five years; the duration of support for primary schools was not stated (Kompas 2010c).

The Minister added that if, by the end of the period of support, a school has still not succeeded in achieving the required standard then its status will return to being a 'national standard school'.

#### **Number of participating schools**

Interviews with senior officials in the Ministry of National Education on 06 April 2009 indicated that by the end of 2009 there would be approximately 190 ISSs at the primary level, as summarised in Table 5. Nevertheless, a speech by the Minister of National Education in April 2010 indicated that in fact only 136 primary ISSs had been established (Kompas 2010c).

Table 5: Primary level (SD) International Standard Schools in Indonesia, 2007–2010 (interview data and Ministerial speech)

Category		Intervi	Ministerial speech		
	2007	2008	2009 (planned)	Total	(Kompas 2010c)
Newly established	22	-	-	22	?
Converted	38	66	66	170	?
Total	60	66	66	192	136

Meanwhile, Table 6 shows that approximately 200 ISSs at the junior secondary level had been established by the end of 2008, together with 192 schools at the senior secondary level and 158 at the vocational secondary level. By April 2010, according to the Minister of National Education, 738 ISSs had been established at these levels (Kompas 2010c).

Table 6: International Standard Schools other than primary in Indonesia, 2007–2010 (extracted from Ministerial publication, interview data and Ministerial speech)

Category	Depdiknas (2009:24) and interview data				Ministralial and ask	
	2007	2008	2009 (planned)	Total	Ministerial speech (Kompas 2010c)	
SMP (junior secondary school)	99	100	?	199 + ?	300	
SMA (senior secondary school)	101	91	?	192 + ?	320	
SMK (vocational secondary school)	59	99	?	158 + ?	118	
Total	259	290	150	699	738	

By 2010, therefore, the total number of ISSs at all levels was 874; this constituted just 0.46 per cent of the 190,000 schools in Indonesia (Kemdiknas 2009).<sup>9</sup>

It appears that by early 2011 the number of schools had increased further. There are also indications in the draft Five Year Development Plan for Education in Indonesia for the period 2010–2014 that the number of ISSs is likely to be increased further still. The Plan states that:

The Ministry plans that by 2014 at least one primary school and one junior secondary school in each rural and urban district will have been prepared to become International Standard Schools. ... The [programme for the] development of outstanding schools ... has a target that at least one senior secondary school/vocational secondary school in each rural district/urban district will have become an outstanding local school or an International Standard School by 2014. (Depdiknas 2008c:64. 66)<sup>10</sup>

As there are approximately 500 rural and urban districts in Indonesia (Depdagri 2010), this implies that by 2014 there should be approximately 2,000 ISSs throughout the country (one primary, one junior secondary, one senior secondary and one vocational secondary school per district). Thus the number of ISSs will have to more than double between 2010 and 2014 if this target is to be met.

#### Socio-economic background of pupils

The schools which have been encouraged to apply for international standard status are schools which are already outstanding. As one senior official in the Ministry of National Education expressed it, 'The schools selected are the "cream of the cream" (Interview, 06 April 09).

Headteachers of ISSs are keen to emphasise that their pupils come from wealthy professional families, as the following interview extracts illustrate:

Our parents are busy. Children are brought to school by their drivers and nursemaids. (State primary school, Jakarta, 07 April 2009)

Parents are middle to upper class. (Private primary school, Tangerang, 08 April 09)

The pupils have no problems with English – they are the children of rich parents and we select them rigorously as well.

(State junior secondary school, Jakarta, 07 April 09)

Some headteachers expressed frustration that they were expected to provide opportunities for children from less prosperous backgrounds:

Our parents are middle class and above, mostly from this housing complex. We are supposed to accept pupils with good results from neighbouring sub-districts but we're reluctant to do that because this will be a financial burden on the school. We'd have to arrange transport to collect the children and take them home. (Private primary school, Makassar, 20 April 2009)

Only half jokingly this headteacher added, 'Our motto is berTARAF internasional dan berTARIF internasional [international STANDARD and international FEES]!'

#### Role of English

The role which English is given in Table 4 is notable. English is to be used as the medium of instruction for science, mathematics and core vocational subjects from Year 4 of primary school and throughout junior secondary school, senior secondary school and vocational secondary school. Meanwhile, teachers must possess the competence required to teach their subjects through English while headteachers are required to have 'active' mastery of the language.

Regarding the use of English, the primary school handbook says only that pupils must leave school 'possessing the competence to communicate ideas and information to others in Indonesian and foreign languages (primarily English)' (Depdiknas 2008a:29).¹¹ Furthermore, the professionalism of 'teachers and other educational staff [i.e. the headteacher] will be demonstrated by their mastery of English' while staff development will include 'improving the competence of teachers in foreign languages, primarily English' (Depdiknas 2008a:30).¹² Nothing is said regarding the use of English as the medium of instruction – not even from Year 4.

On the other hand, the junior secondary school handbook – a massively detailed document almost 300 pages in length – makes it clear that English has an important role in the teaching-learning process:

... science and mathematics lessons use English, whilst other subjects apart from foreign languages must use Indonesian ... during the teaching-learning process, apart from using Indonesian and English, other languages which are frequently employed in international meetings may also be used, such as French, Spanish, Japanese, Arabic and Chinese. (Depdiknas 2008b:37)<sup>13</sup>

#### **Actual practice**

Actual practice in ISSs is very varied. In 2009 some schools claimed that they were still thinking about the meaning of becoming 'international' and had so far introduced very few changes:

We've been having internal discussions within the school about what being an SBI means – whether it concerns the learning process, the way we evaluate the pupils, and whether all competencies should be developed, not only the academic ones; for example, dancing, sports. (Interview with teacher in charge of SBI programme in a state primary school, Jakarta, 07 April 2009)

Other schools have provided specially equipped classrooms for their SBI classes as well as other privileges which the regular classes do not enjoy:

Each SBI class is air conditioned and is fitted with an LCD projector and computers. There are individual chairs for the pupils [i.e. not benches] and lockers where pupils can keep their things ... We employ some foreign teachers who come once or twice a month; we want to increase our SBI pupils' exposure to native speakers of English ... We have outdoor activities to supplement routine lessons and links with companies such as PERURI [National Mint] ... I put the young energetic teachers who are on short term contracts in the SBI classes, not the old civil servant [i.e. tenured] teachers; the young ones have TOEFL scores of at least 500 ... I know that some schools even have a special uniform for the pupils in their SBI classes, but we don't do that here. (Interview with headteacher of state junior secondary school, Jakarta, 07 April 2009)

Practice in schools regarding the use of English also varies. As we noted above, the government's handbook for ISS primary schools does not require the use of English as a medium of instruction, even from Year 4. In practice, however, many primary schools do use English to some extent or other. Some schools just 'slip

some English words' into subject lessons whereas others are enthusiastically using English as the medium of instruction for maths and science from Year 1.

As we have seen, junior and senior secondary schools are required to use English as the medium of instruction at least for mathematics and science, but here again practice varies a great deal, with some lessons being taught exclusively in English and others in which English is used merely to open and close lessons while the content is delivered using Bahasa Indonesia.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the offer to use English as the medium of instruction is very attractive to aspirational middle class parents. It is this aspect of the ISS scheme which members of the public are most likely to mention if asked what characterises ISSs.

#### Summary

- Legislation passed in 2003 required ISSs to be established at each educational level in each district of Indonesia. A succession of official documents and announcements between 2005 and 2010 then clarified the scheme in increasing detail
- There is continuing uncertainty concerning several aspects of the ISS scheme, including the duration of support, the number of schools to be supported and the point at which English is supposed to be introduced as the medium of instruction. This suggests that policy has been developed in an ongoing manner since the scheme was first announced in 2003.
- By 2010 there were 874 ISSs. This means that fewer than one in every 200 schools has joined the scheme. Some targets suggest that the number of schools in the scheme should more than double by 2014, but it is unclear how realistic this ambition is.
- ISSs appeal to the prosperous middle class. Headteachers appear to relish this fact.
- The most prominent selling point of the ISS scheme is the requirement to use English as the medium of instruction for certain subjects. However, it appears that this requirement has been quietly modified for primary schools since no mention of English appears in later documentation.
- Actual practice in ISSs is extremely varied. Some provide special facilities and privileges for their ISS classes to which pupils in mainstream classes are denied access. Some schools use English as the medium of instruction (including some primary schools, despite the disappearance of the requirement to use English at the primary level). Other schools appear to pay lip service to the use of English.

### **Financing of International Standard Schools**

In this section we look in detail at the roles of central government, district government and parents in the financing of the ISS scheme. In addition to the school operational support (BOS) funds which all primary and junior secondary schools receive – already discussed – ISSs receive a substantial subsidy from central government.

#### Sources of funding

The funding system for ISSs as it had been implemented during 2007 and 2008 was explained by a senior official in the Ministry of National Education (Interview 06 April 2009) in the following way:

- In 2007, IDR350 million was allocated to each ISS for infrastructure improvement
- In 2007, IDR100 million was allocated to each junior and senior secondary school for headteacher and teacher improvement
- In 2008, IDR50 million was allocated to each ISS for unspecified purposes.

Thus, as Table 7 shows, each ISS at junior and senior secondary levels could expect to receive a total of IDR500 million (GBP35,500, USD54,800) during 2007 and 2008.

A speech by the Minister of National Education in April 2010 (Kompas 2010c) presented a modified picture. This indicated that junior secondary schools received IDR400 million in 2007 and then a further IDR300 million per year in 2008, 2009 and 2010, giving an overall total of IDR1,300 million (GBP92,300, USD142,500) over four years, as Table 7 shows. Slightly different grants were made available for senior secondary schools but no information was given for the funding allocated to primary schools.

Table 7: Block grants for SBI schools							
Source of information	Funding source Purpose		IDR (Rp000,000)	GBP (£000)	USD (\$000)		
Ministry of National		Refurbishment	350	24.9	38.4		
Education (interview 06 April 2009)	Central   government	Staff development	100	7.1	11.0		
(	government	n.a.	50	3.6	5.5		
	Total over tw	o years	500	35.5	54.8		
Ministerial speech ( <b>Kompas</b> 2010c)	Central government	Junior secondary, 2007	400	28.4	43.8		
		Junior secondary,	300	21.3	32.9		
		2008–2010	p.a.	p.a.	p.a.		
	Total over for	ır years	1,300	92.3	142.5		
Primary school, Banda Aceh, Aceh (interview 16 April 2009)	Central government	n.a.	800	56.8	87.7		
	District government	n.a.	100	7.1	11.0		
	Total over tw	o years	900	63.9	98.6		

Junior secondary school, Makassar, South Sulawesi (interview 20 April 2009)	Central government	n.a.	700	49.7	76.7
	District government	Staff development	160	11.4	17.5
	Total over two	o years	860	61.1	94.3
Junior secondary school, Bekasi, West Java (Fahturahman 2009)	Central government	n.a.	300	21.3	32.9
	Provincial government	n.a.	240	17.0	26.3
	District government	n.a.	160	11.4	17.5
	Total per year	r	700	49.7	76.7

Individual schools in different parts of Indonesia reported that the funds which they received from central government were actually more generous than either the interview with the Ministry official or the Ministerial speech indicated. In addition, schools reported receiving additional grants from their district government. In some cases schools said that they had also received further grants from their provincial government. This can be illustrated by the following three case studies.

#### Case study one, state primary school, Banda Aceh

The headteacher of an ISS state primary school in Banda Aceh, the capital of the province of Aceh, reported that over the first two years of participation in the scheme his school had received a block grant of IDR500 million from central government in the first year and IDR300 million in the second year. The provincial government had added a further IDR100 million. As Table 7 shows, the total over two years came to IDR900 million (GBP63,900, USD98,600). The headteacher was expecting that there would be a further payment in 2009 for the 2009–2010 school year. (Interview 16 April 2009)

#### Case study two, state junior secondary school, Makassar

The headteacher of an ISS state junior secondary school in Makassar, the capital of the province of South Sulawesi, also reported figures which were markedly higher than those suggested by the Ministry official. The school had received IDR400 million from central government in 2007 followed by IDR300 million in 2008. The Makassar city government had also made available IDR160 million, earmarked specifically for staff training, bringing the total over two years to IDR860 million (GBP61,100, USD94,300). Further payments were expected. (Interview 20 April 2009)

#### Case study 3, state junior secondary school, Bekasi

Fahturahman (2009) reports that an ISS state junior secondary school in Bekasi, a city in the province of West Java, received ISS funds from three sources in its first year of being associated with the ISS scheme. Central government provided IDR300 million, the West Java provincial government granted IDR240 million and the Bekasi city government allocated a further IDR160 million. As Table 7 shows, the total funding received by this school in just one year was IDR700 million (GBP49,700, USD76.700).

We noted earlier that there has been uncertainty regarding several aspects of the ISS scheme and that policy development has been an ongoing process. From these three case studies it appears that a similar degree of uncertainty is a feature of the funding arrangements for ISSs. Nevertheless, what is undeniable is that schools receive extremely generous financial allocations, especially in comparison with the modest value of the standard BOS grants which are given to all schools. Indeed the non-government organisation (NGO) Koalisi Pendidikan (Coalition for Education) has estimated that the average annual subsidy received by ISSs from central and local government in 2010 was actually IDR1.5 billion (GBP107,000, USD164,000). This is even more than the figures in Table 7 would suggest, although the basis for Koalisi Pendidikan's estimate is not explained.

But the story does not stop there. State primary and junior secondary schools are forbidden from charging fees (however disguised). An exception is made for ISSs, however. Consequently, state primary and junior secondary ISSs are free to charge additional fees, on top of the BOS and ISS grants which they receive from government.

According to a 2010 study by the NGO Koalisi Pendidikan, the average monthly fee charged by ISS primary schools was IDR200,000 (GBP14, USD22) with an additional annual 'development contribution' of IDR6 million (GBP426, USD658). In the same year the average monthly fee charged by ISS junior secondary schools was IDR450,000 (GBP32, USD49), also with an annual development contribution of IDR6 million. On top of these, there are also entrance examination fees and fees for international study tours (Kompas 2010d).

In comparison, among the ISSs surveyed in 2009 by the author of this chapter, monthly fees ranged from as little as IDR20,000 (GBP1.42, USD2.19, primary school, Banda Aceh) to as much as IDR1 million (GBP71, USD110, senior secondary school, Jakarta). Although these fees may appear to be modest, if they are set alongside the per capita income figures for Indonesia discussed above (Table 1) it becomes clear that the ISSs are way beyond the financial capacity of the majority of the population.

All in all, therefore, ISSs are extraordinarily well funded, with funds from the routine BOS programme, with ISS funds from central, provincial and district governments and with substantial monthly and annual fees which have to be paid by parents. It is not surprising then that the ISSs have been described as 'overflowing with cash' (kucuran dana melimpah, Kompas 2010d). As further evidence of this wealth, a Ministry of National Education official reported in early 2011 that a group of ISSs in Jakarta were planning to draw on their own funds to send a delegation of teachers and headteachers on a study tour to the UK; in 2010 the same group of schools had sent a similar delegation of teachers and headteachers to Australia at a cost of IDR600 million (GBP43,000, USD66,000) (Samto, personal communication, 24 January 2011).

#### Summary

In this section we have seen that:

- ISSs receive government grants over and above the routine funding which is given to all schools.
- The ISS grants from central government are very generous. They are supplemented by further grants from district governments and in some cases by grants from provincial governments as well.
- Some schools report receiving grants which are even more generous than those announced by government.
- State ISSs are also permitted to charge admission and tuition fees. This makes them accessible only to the most prosperous sector of society.

## Globalisation as a rationale for International Standard Schools

This section examines the arguments which have been proposed for the establishment of the ISS scheme in Indonesia.

One justification for the establishment of ISSs is that they prepare pupils for studying abroad. An example is the following statement made by the headteacher of a private primary ISS in Tangerang, one of Jakarta's satellite cities:

It's for the long term, so that the pupils can study abroad. (Interview 08 April 2009)

Other informants felt that the rationale for the ISS scheme lay in the use of English as the medium of instruction, as the following somewhat confused argument suggests:

International Standard School means 'bilingual' lessons. That means teaching through English. But unfortunately sometimes two languages are used. (Interview with headteacher, state senior secondary school, Banda Aceh, 17 April 2009)<sup>14</sup>

But overwhelmingly the justification put forward – both in official documents and by individual stakeholders – for the establishment of ISSs is that of 'globalisation' and 'competition' with other nations. A Ministry of National Education background document, produced in 2007 as the ISS scheme was about to be introduced, stated (emphasis added):

Education will produce people of [high] quality who can compete locally and internationally. This is important in the era of globalisation and the free market, in which competition between nations is becoming ever more transparent and uninhibited. (Hadi et al. 2007:1)<sup>15</sup>

The 2008 guidebook for junior secondary schools working towards ISS status makes a similar statement:

The provision of international standard education at the primary and secondary levels ... is based on the following argument ...: The era of globalisation demands competitive competence in engineering, management and human resources. (Depdiknas 2008b:3)<sup>16</sup>

A senior official in the Ministry of National Education interviewed in Jakarta in 2009 repeated the same formula:

This is the era of globalisation. We need to be prepared so that the Indonesian nation can compete with other nations. (Interview, Jakarta, 06 April 2009)<sup>17</sup>

And a very similar comment was made by the headteacher of a state primary school in Aceh:

Actually I don't know what the rationale [for establishing ISS] is, only 'global competition'. (Interview, Banda Aceh, 17 April 2009)<sup>18</sup>

The same concept is expressed in a government decree on the management and implementation of education issued in 2010:

The quality of education must be constantly improved ... so that the future generations who will take the nation forward can be prepared well in advance such that [they] will be in a high ranking and competitive position in national life and globally. (Republik Indonesia 2010:1)<sup>19</sup>

And so it goes on, with the terms 'globalisation' and 'competitiveness' repeated time and again like a mantra. Even individual primary schools claim to be producing graduates who are 'globally competitive':

Vision: Leading towards a school which is innovative, prestigious and religious such that its graduates are innovative, possess high morals and are competitive globally. (SDS Model Islamic Village 2008)<sup>20</sup>

One can only wonder just how 'globally competitive' twelve-year-old children can be expected to be  $\dots^{21}$ 

The use of English as a medium of instruction also frequently collocates with 'globalisation' in government and school documents concerning the ISS system. The relationship is never spelt out explicitly, but it is approximately as shown in Figure 1. The Figure shows that globalisation is perceived as being synonymous with international competition; international competition in turn is assumed to involve the use of English; and using English appears to necessitate the learning of other subjects through English.



Of course, this formulation can be challenged in a number of ways. First, globalisation need not imply competition. An alternative interpretation of globalisation, which celebrates the opportunities which it offers for co-operation between the peoples of the world, is very rarely encountered. The only exception which we have found is contained in the Indonesian Ministry of National Education's 2008 Handbook on International Standard Primary Schools:

The aim of international standard primary schools is to improve the professionalism of primary schools ... based on national standards and an international perspective ... Graduates of international standard primary schools are world class, able to compete and to collaborate globally with other nations in the world, and this requires understanding of people and cultures across the world. (Depdiknas 2008a:3, 23)<sup>22</sup>

Although 'competing globally' makes an appearance here as well, the formula is leavened to some extent with references to an 'international perspective', 'collaborating globally' and the need for cross-cultural understanding.

The second way in which the formulation shown in Figure 1 can be challenged is simply to question whether the need for English in international contacts (whether those contacts are competitive or collaborative in nature) necessarily implies that the learning of mathematics, science and vocational subjects in school should take place in English. There is no obvious link.

#### **Summary**

This section has shown that:

- The most common explanation for the establishment of the ISS scheme found in official documents and given by stakeholders is 'globalisation'. This is almost always interpreted in terms of competing against other nations.
- Globalisation and competitiveness are associated with a need for English and then with a need to use English as a medium of instruction, although the logical relationships between these different concepts remain unclear.

## **Another constituency**

But there is another constituency in Indonesia which, it can be argued, is actually experiencing the impact of globalisation in a direct way. These are Indonesia's migrant workers. According to Indonesian government figures, in the period January to September 2010 there were 428,000 Indonesian migrant workers in other parts of the world (Kompas 2010e). However, the International Labour Organisation claims that the figure is much higher, with 700,000 registered migrant workers from Indonesia working in other parts of the world in 2008 (ILO 2008). Meanwhile, a report produced for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees calculated that in 2007 there were 'more than two million illegal [= unregistered] migrant workers' from Indonesia in other countries (Sidel 2007). We can conclude, then, that at any one time there are possibly between 2.5 and 3.0 million Indonesians working abroad.

The principal characteristics of Indonesia's migrant workers are that they are 83 per cent female, aged 14–40, generally unskilled and for the most part educated only to primary school level (World Bank 2006). The majority come from rural backgrounds in East and Central Java, East Kalimantan, Riau and West Nusa Tenggara (World Bank 2007). Many are employed as domestic servants in the Middle East, Malaysia and Hong Kong. Registered migrant workers are given minimal basic skills training before they leave Indonesia but the unregistered migrants receive no pre-departure training at all. Once they arrive at their destination they face many obstacles and are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

The scale of the difficulties experienced by migrant workers can be gauged from an Indonesian government announcement in early 2011 in which it was revealed that 25,000 migrant workers in Saudi Arabia were 'experiencing problems' (bermasalah) and would need to be repatriated. The repatriation programme was expected to take until the end of the year and would cost IDR120 billion (GBP8.5 million, USD13.2 million), a sum which will be charged to the public purse (Co-ordinating Minister for the People's Welfare, quoted in Kompas 2011).

Another indicator of the hardship experienced by Indonesia's migrant workers is the number who die abroad. For example, the Chair of the Indonesian Migrant Labourers' Union was reported in 2010 as saying that the airport of Surabaya, capital of East Java, receives on average one coffin a day containing the remains of a migrant worker from the East Java region who has died abroad (Sawabi 2010). It is likely that similar events occur in those other parts of the country which are home to large numbers of migrant workers.

No research has been undertaken to investigate why Indonesia's migrant workers experience problems on such a scale but it appears that a major factor is likely to be the difficulty which they have in communicating with their employers. Cultural misunderstandings between workers and their employers are also likely to be contributing factors.

Despite these appalling problems, migrant workers remit very large amounts of money back to their families in Indonesia. The World Bank estimated that in 2005 USD2.5 billion (GBP1.6 billion, IDR22 trillion) was transferred back to Indonesia through formal routes (World Bank 2006) but by 2008 the International Labour Organisation estimated that this sum was actually USD6.1 billion (GBP4.0 billion, IDR54 trillion; ILO 2008). By 2010 the World Bank estimated that USD9.1 billion had been remitted back to Indonesia by migrant workers in the first nine months of the year (Kompas 2010e); if the flow of remittances continued at the same rate for the rest of the year then the total for 2010 would be approximately USD12.1 billion (IDR108 trillion, GBP7.8 billion).

#### Summary

There may be up to 2.5 million migrant workers from Indonesia in other countries producing an annual capital inflow of IDR108 trillion in remittances. The majority of these people receive no language tuition or any other sort of training before going abroad. Many of them appear to experience communication problems while they are away.

#### **Discussion**

This survey of the ISS scheme in Indonesia and the context in which it operates has found that:

- Education at the primary and junior secondary levels in Indonesia is compulsory and free. The national language, Bahasa Indonesia, is the medium of instruction while English is a compulsory subject in the second school curriculum. Primary and junior secondary schools receive a modest capitation allowance from government, in return for which they are not allowed to levy fees. About 30 per cent of the population of Indonesia live on less than USD1.25 per day.
- The ISS scheme was introduced in 2007. The ISSs are excused from the requirement to use Bahasa Indonesia as the medium of instruction and in fact are expected to use English, at least for the teaching of mathematics and science and at least in secondary schools. ISSs appeal primarily to the prosperous middle class. By early 2011 fewer than 0.5 per cent of the country's schools had been given ISS (or 'fledgling ISS') status.
- ISSs receive extremely generous additional funds from central and local government; they are also permitted to charge fees. They have been described as being 'overflowing' with money.
- 'Globalisation' is referred to repeatedly as the reason for the ISS scheme to be established. This concept is interpreted in terms of 'global competition' which supposedly requires children to have a mastery of English and therefore (although the link has not been demonstrated) there is a need for English to be used as the medium of instruction.
- Indonesia's migrant workers constitute a neglected constituency. They are calculated to generate IDR108 trillion in foreign exchange but are given minimal

   if any language training or other pre-departure preparation.

The picture which has been created reveals a number of anomalies. The first is that the ISSs – which serve a privileged and prosperous minority – receive a massive financial reward from government on top of the modest grant which is given to all schools. In other words, the ISSs constitute a considerable subsidy to the most prosperous sector of society which is not available to the rest of the community.

The second anomaly is that the ISS scheme claims to be preparing students for a 'globally competitive' world. But there is a very large group of Indonesians who go abroad and face 'global competitiveness' in a direct and often painful way: the migrant workers. Migrant workers are mostly female, are generally poorly educated, do not speak any foreign language and are not being prepared at all for the 'globally competitive' world which is waiting for them.

A third anomaly is that this second group – despite being so poorly prepared before leaving the country – generates a very large inflow of funds to Indonesia.

What, then, are the implications of these findings?

At one level, it is possible to argue that the Indonesian government's English medium ISS scheme, presumably established with the best of intentions, seems to be focusing on a sector of society which already has a high level of awareness of the importance of English. As Lamb (2011, Chapter 9 this volume) shows, the Indonesian middle classes will always find a way to achieve their aspirations. Consequently, this sector of society does not require a substantial state subsidy.

On the other hand, it is also appropriate to suggest that the migrant workers, who make an enormous contribution to the Indonesian economy, are being neglected even though they would actually be able to benefit substantially from pre-departure language training (and other forms of preparation, including cross-cultural awareness training). Such language training would have to include both English and the language of the host community where the workers are to be placed: Colloquial Arabic in the Middle East, Cantonese in Hong Kong, Malay in Malaysia, etc.<sup>23</sup>

More broadly, the ISS case appears to confirm the suspicion, already aired by Lamb and Coleman (2008) – in a paper written before the ISS scheme had been launched – that the Indonesian education system is perpetuating social inequalities, particularly through the way in which English is offered and taught. Those who can afford to purchase English language tuition privately are enjoying access to a heavily subsidised school system which gives high priority to the use of English as a medium of instruction. On the other hand, those who urgently need English (and other languages) for survival while working abroad are left to fend for themselves without access to language tuition of any kind.

More broadly still, this case highlights the difficulties which many governments have in planning the allocation of resources for language development (particularly English) in a manner which supports national development objectives, maximises economic benefits, is transparent, is equitable and, crucially, empowers citizens to make of their lives what they will. In this regard, Sayers' proposal for a 'human rights typology' of language acquisition planning is extremely thought provoking (Sayers 2010).

Perhaps we can conclude by adapting Amartya Sen's celebrated statement about starvation and the availability of food: 'Ignorance is the characteristic of some people not having enough access to good education. It is not the characteristic of there being not enough good education.'<sup>24</sup>

#### **Notes**

1. This is a modified and updated version of one section of an earlier paper (Coleman 2010) which also looked at similar types of school in South Korea and Thailand. I am grateful to Martin Lamb and Danny Whitehead for comments on an intermediate version. The views expressed here are those of the author and are not those of the British Council, which commissioned the original study (Coleman 2009) on which the chapter is based.

- 2. Published figures are indicated in **bold**; other figures are extrapolated from these. Figures are rounded to the nearest 1000 rupiah and to the nearest dollar and pound (except for the daily rates for batik dyers and those living below the poverty line where they are given to the nearest hundredth of a dollar and hundredth of a pound).
- **3.** The rupiah figures were announced by the Minister for National Education on 27 December 2010 (Kompas 2010f).
- **4.** 'Pemerintah dan/atau Pemerintah Daerah menyelenggarakan sekurangkurangnya satu sekolah pada semua jenjang pendidikan untuk dikembangkan menjadi sekolah yang bertaraf internasional.'
- **5.** 'Pemerintah bersama-sama pemerintah daerah menyelenggarakan sekurang-kurangnya satu sekolah pada jenjang pendidikan dasar dan sekurang-kurangnya satu sekolah pada jenjang pendidikan menengah untuk dikembangkan menjadi sekolah bertaraf internasional.'
- **6.** 'Untuk meningkatkan daya saing bangsa ... pemerintah dengan pemerintah kabupaten/kota yang bersangkutan [perlu] mengembangkan SD, SMP, SMA dan SMK yang bertaraf internasional sebanyak 112 unit di seluruh Indonesia.'
- 7. 'Sekolah/Madrasah yang sudah memenuhi seluruh Standar Nasional Pendidikan dan diperkaya dengan mengacu pada standar pendidikan salah satu negara anggota Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development dan/atau negara maju lainnya yang mempunyai keunggulan tertentu dalam bidang pendidikan sehingga memiliki daya saing di forum internasional.'
- **8.** Literally, rintisan means a 'new shoot' on a plant. In the context of the ISS scheme the term is used metaphorically to indicate schools which are leading towards full ISS status. 'Fledgling' therefore seems to be a more appropriate translation.
- 9. The total number of primary, junior secondary, senior secondary, vocational secondary and special schools (both state and private) in 2007–2008 was 189,284. This was the most recent figure available on the website of the Ministry of National Education (www.kemdiknas.go.id/list\_link/statistik-pendidikan.aspx) in February 2011. This figure does not include Islamic schools operated or overseen by the Ministry of Religious Affairs.
- **10.** 'Depdiknas menargetkan pada tahun 2014 paling tidak satu SD dan satu SMP pada masing-masing kabupaten/kota sudah dirintis menjadi ... sekolah bertaraf internasional ... Pengembangan sekolah berkeunggulan ... menargetkan paling tidak satu SMA/SMK pada masing-masing kabupaten/kota akan menjadi sekolah berkeunggulan lokal dan/atau bertaraf internasional pada tahun 2014.'
- 11. 'Kemampuan mengkomunikasikan ide dan informasi kepada pihak lain dalam bahasa Indonesia dan bahasa asing (utamanya Bahasa Inggris).'
- **12.** 'Profesionalisme pendidik dan tenaga kependidikan ditunjukkan oleh penguasaan bahasa asing bahasa Inggris khususnya ... Pengembangan guru-

- guru SDBI dilakukan secara bertahap dan berkelanjutan, melalui ... peningkatan kemampuan salah satu bahasa asing, utamanya bahasa Inggris.'
- 13. '... pembelajaran mata pelajaran kelompok sains dan matematika menggunakan bahasa Inggris, sementara pembelajaran mata pelajaran lainnya, kecuali pelajaran bahasa asing, harus menggunakan bahasa Indonesia ... dalam proses pembelajaran selain menggunakan bahasa Indonesia dan bahasa Inggris, juga bisa menggunakan bahasa lainnya yang sering digunakan dalam forum internasional, seperti bahasa Perancis, Spanyol, Jepang, Arab dan Cina.'
- **14.** 'SBI artinya pembelajaran bilingual. Artinya mengajar dengan Bahasa Inggris. Tetapi sayang sekali kadang-kadang dua bahasa dipakai.'
- **15.** 'Melalui pendidikan akan dicetak manusia-manusia berkualitas yang memiliki daya saing lokal maupun internasional. Ini menjadi penting pada era globalisasi dan pasar bebas, di mana persaingan antar negara semakin terbuka bebas.'
- **16.** 'Penyelenggaraan pendidikan yang bertaraf internasional pada jenjang pendidikan dasar dan menengah ... dilatarbelakangi oleh alasan ... berikut: Era globalisasi menuntut kemampuan daya saing yang kuat dalam teknologi, manajemen dan sumberdaya manusia.'
- **17.** 'Ini era globalisasi. Siap-siap supaya bangsa Indonesia bisa bersaing dengan negara lain.'
- 18. 'Sebenarnya saya tidak tahu kenapa mesti ada SBI, hanya "persaingan global".'
- **19.** 'Pendidikan harus secara terus-menerus perlu ditingkatkan kualitasnya ... agar mampu mempersiapkan generasi penerus bangsa sejak dini sehingga memiliki unggulan kompetitif dalam tatanan kehidupan nasional dan global.'
- 20. 'Visi: Menuju sekolah yang inovatif, prestatif dan religius sehingga mampu menghasilkan lulusan yang inovatif dan berakhlak mulia serta kompetitif di dunia global.'
- 21. This concern with competitiveness and relative standing vis à vis other countries can be seen also in the importance which both government and press in Indonesia attach to achievements in the various international 'olympiads' in different school subjects. Examples include the International Mathematics Olympiad (www.imo-official.org/), which has up to 100 participating countries, and the International Earth Science Olympiad (www.ieso2009.tw/main/home/home.html), with just nineteen participating nations. Every medal won by an Indonesian high school student in these competitions is reported in the national press, almost always with the phrase anak bangsa ('child of the nation') appearing somewhere in the report to indicate the nation's pride in the achievements of its sons and daughters in their competition against representatives of other countries.

- 22. 'Tujuan SDBI adalah untuk meningkatkan keprofesionalan satuan pendidikan SD ... berdasarkan standar nasional dan wawasan internasional ... lulusan SDBI berkelas dunia, mampu bersaing dan berkolaborasi secara global dengan bangsa-bangsa lain di dunia, dan itu memerlukan pemahaman orang dan budaya lintas bangsa.'
- 23. Most Indonesian migrant workers are native speakers of Javanese, Sasak and other Indonesian languages, not of Bahasa Indonesia. Their school education will have been through Bahasa Indonesia but, as the majority come from rural workers, they may not have had much experience of using Bahasa Indonesia on a daily basis. Moreover, colloquial Bahasa Malaysia differs sufficiently from Bahasa Indonesia for communication difficulties to arise.
- **24.** 'Starvation is the characteristic of some people not having enough food to eat. It is not the characteristic of there being not enough food to eat.' (Sen 1981:1)

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