



Australia Indonesia Association

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MEDIA RELEASE

NSW Indonesia group targets unemployed artists and Jakarta's poorest with AUD\$5000 COVID-19 donation

The Australia Indonesia Association of New South Wales (AIA NSW)* has responded to Indonesia's health and economic crisis by donating AUD\$5000 to two reputable grassroots charities operating in two cities on Java, the country's most populous island.

A volunteer group supporting creative industry workers in Yogyakarta will receive \$3000 toward their efforts to supply food packages to out-of-work artisans and their families.

A further \$2000 will be channelled to a foundation in Jakarta who since 2000 have provided social and material support to poor families and orphans in East Jakarta.

"Those living in Jakarta, where the cost of living is significantly higher than in other Indonesian provinces, have been among the hardest hit by the Covid-19 pandemic," said Isla Winarto, AIA NSW's Jakarta-based volunteer committee member.

"Lockdown restrictions have impacted on jobs, which in turn, has impacted on the purchasing power and survival of the poor," she said.

Yesterday, Ms Winarto, accompanied by the Balarenik Foundation staff in East Jakarta, visited poor communities in the area, to deliver the aid and see the group's range of services first-hand. These include ensuring access by the poor and disabled to vaccination centres, as well as providing food parcels to those out of work.

"With the AIA donation, Yayasan Balarenik will continue with this work. However, they also hope to provide school uniforms, and seed funding to the poor for micro businesses such as for street vendors and provide the use of mobile phones with internet connection in their drop-in centre in East Jakarta," she said.

“As many schools in Indonesia are still catering for students on a limited basis, this service will enable school-age children to access online education programs at the centre,” she added. The donation will also assist fishermen in the West Bekasi area of North Jakarta.

The second donation to local Yogya-based aid group, Babaran Segaragung in collaboration with Sama2Makan, is a response to the severe impact of the pandemic on the city of Yogyakarta where the creative economy - including tourism - has collapsed, leaving artisans, craftspeople and performers destitute and dependent on food aid.

The city has to date over 154,314 confirmed covid cases, with 5,158 deaths.

In July this year, Indonesian Statistics Bureau (BPS) reported that the Indonesian population living in poverty as of March, 2021, had reached 27.54 million people – an increase of 1.12 million people.

** The Australia Indonesia Association of NSW is a membership-based organisation promoting people-to-people contact between Australians and Indonesians to increase mutual understanding and friendship. <http://australia-indonesia-association.com/>*

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