

THE POLICY BRIEF NO. 6

Improving Teacher Education in Indonesia

Reflections from The HEAD Foundation
Professional Learning Programme (May 2018)



Theme 1: Context for Education and Teaching in Indonesia

Research has clearly established the need for quality teachers, and the key roles they play in raising the quality of schooling. Underscored by the literature on how educational quality strongly influences economic outcomes, governments around the world today find themselves increasingly compelled to move beyond their key focus on improving education access to improving learning outcomes. Global agencies have echoed that message through initiatives such as the UNDP's ambitious Sustainable Development Goals to achieve quality education for all.

Teachers who are focussed on teaching for learning are fundamental to meeting the demands for quality and equitable education. They are key agents within the classroom and, together with effective school leaders who practice instructional and distributed leadership, can significantly improve student learning outcomes. However, implementation of any education reform has proved difficult in Indonesia due to the mismatch between high demand for quality education on the one hand and low support, policy- and practice-wise, for quality teachers on the other.

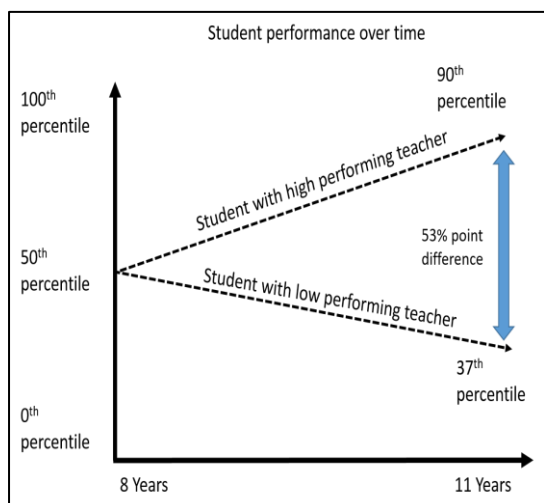


Figure 1. Cumulative effects of teachers on future student academic performance (Sanders & Rivers, 1996)

In large and developing nations such as Indonesia, any reform aiming to create a high-quality teaching force is an ambitious but necessary endeavour. Indonesia has undoubtedly made progress in the last two decades, enhancing access, improving gender equity, and integrating information and communication technology (ICT) into teaching and learning. Since 2005, Indonesia's enactment of the Teacher Law has sought to improve educators' credentials and

professionalism and increase respect for them. Although there has been significant progress since, Chang et al. (2014) note that more work is needed to improve the overall quality of teachers, teaching, and education. In particular, they note that more emphasis needs to be given to improving teacher preparation and creating more effective and impactful professional development programmes.

There are two issues arising from present arrangements for teacher preparation. The first is the rapid rise of low-quality private institutions from the early 2000s due to low government investment in education. These low-quality private institutions, which are mainly in higher education, absorb the high demand that state institutions are unable to meet. A Lowry Institute report shows that 96% of higher education institutions in Indonesia are privately owned, and 63% of higher education enrolments are in private institutions (Rosser, 2018). Significantly, a high percentage of teacher education colleges that offer the compulsory Certificate for Professional Teachers, or Pendidikan Profesi Guru (PPG), are private institutions. The key concern that arises from this is huge variations in quality in teacher preparation.

The second issue is the lack of an impactful professional development system and support for teachers, principals, and teacher educators in Indonesia. Such a system encompasses reward systems, such as incentives for upgrading, and also career development that aids in improving hard and soft skills. Dr Paulina Pannen, Senior Advisor on Academics to the Minister of Research, Technology and Higher Education, shared that many Indonesian teachers lack support from their family and friends because most Indonesians do not see teaching as a profession. The lack of support from the community, and poor professional development, discourage teachers and school leaders from providing high-quality teaching, research, and environments (Rosser, 2018). Dr Pannen stressed the need for teaching to be treated as a profession, and for teachers to believe that as well and to act as professionals. She went on to add that this required new competencies because, in the new technology-dominated socioeconomic landscape, teachers need to also be leaders and "teacherpreneurs".



Figure 2. Dr Pannen’s slide on “New 21st-Century Roles for Teachers”

Unfortunately, many Indonesian teachers hold part-time jobs, resulting in a high percentage of teacher absenteeism. Though the Indonesian government tried to rectify this situation by doubling teachers’ base salaries in 2005, it was found that their effort and student outcomes did not improve in the long run (de Ree, Muralidharan, Pradhan, & Rogers, 2018).

Another prominent challenge to providing quality education in Indonesia is the frequent change of curriculum and school principals. The Indonesian government changed the school curriculum nine times between 1952 and 2013. Frequent curriculum changes confuse both teachers and students, as pedagogy and assessment methods need to change with each curriculum reform. Principals, teacher educators, and teachers have just enough time to master the previous curriculum before they have to learn new content and skills.

Further, school principals are rotated every two years on average, giving them no time to plan and execute any effective reform or programme for their schools. This decreases the authority of school principals and any positive influence they might have on the schools they are assigned to. It also strengthens the case for more effective teacher and school leadership preparation.

In order to assist Indonesian teacher educators in responding more effectively to these challenges, The HEAD Foundation organised a three-day seminar at Universitas Negeri Jakarta (UNJ) in April 2018. This Professional Learning Programme (PLP) included presentations, discussions, and the sharing of best practices in teacher education.

This policy brief seeks to summarise the PLP sessions and provide information and insights on how Indonesian colleges can rethink teaching and learning, and better prepare teachers and leaders in the light of Industry 4.0. Figure 3 provides an overview of this policy brief.

The first section provides some context and presents the challenges facing teacher education colleges in preparing quality teachers, especially in the light of challenges posed by new curricula. The second section presents some solutions, discussed during the PLP, to mitigate the challenges Indonesian teacher education colleges face due to education reform. The third section is a case study on the policies and processes involved in utilising ICT for teacher preparation in Indonesian schools. The last section gives an overview of the research and programme redesign that Indonesian colleges can undertake to improve the quality of teacher and leader preparation.

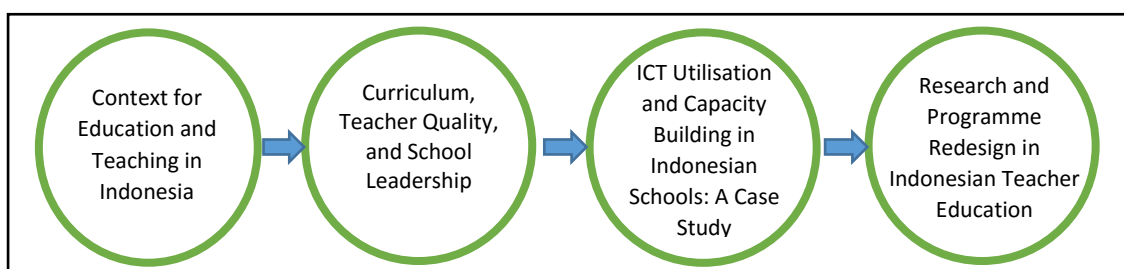


Figure 3. Four themes from the Professional Learning Programme for Indonesian teacher educators

Theme 2: Curriculum, Teacher Quality, and School Leadership

To raise Indonesia's education potential, the Ministry of Education and Culture implemented Kurikulum 2013 (K-13), a curriculum that aimed to develop students to "become good citizens" (Michie, 2017), raise their competencies, and improve the quality of teachers (Zuhdi, 2015). K-13 brought about major changes in three areas: curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment.

The first change was in the curriculum itself. Compared to the previous curriculum where schools could design and develop their own syllabus, K-13 was developed by the ministry. This meant that teachers would need to understand thoroughly and follow the prescribed curriculum. Subjects were now categorised into two groups—group A (to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes for living well in society and country) and group B (to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes for social interaction, culture, and the arts)—and four competencies (spiritual, social, intellectual, and psychomotor). All subject content would have to come under these groups and competencies.

The second change was in the pedagogy (Rumahlatu, Huliselan, & Takaria, 2016). Integrating technology into teaching and learning was a major focus of K-13. Teachers were required to use ICT in teaching and assessing students, and students were encouraged to use technology in learning. There was, however, no proper capacity building for teachers and teacher educators in this particular area. Hence, it was not a surprise that many older teachers were unable to integrate ICT into their curriculum. In addition, with growing Internet access, students could easily access content and learn faster than their teachers could teach them.

The third change was in the use of assessment methods. Teachers were encouraged to use authentic methods to assess their teaching and students' learning. This meant assessing not only content knowledge but also motivation, attitude, understanding, and application (Fitriani, 2015). However, teachers were not thoroughly taught how to craft such assessments. Authentic assessment also required multiple methods, which increased teachers' workloads, and they were not taught properly how to effectively manage that. Additionally, assessments had to determine whether students met the standards of the four competencies.

Dr Scott Paris emphasised in his presentation that connecting curriculum with assessment and instruction is a critical task for teachers and, under good leadership from principals, schools are able to successfully implement education reforms.

However, teacher trainers, school leaders, and teachers in Indonesia struggled to prepare themselves to accommodate K-13 requirements, because pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment required new skills. For example, a lack of competence in technology integration prevented teachers from being fully supportive of the new curriculum. Most teachers were not equipped to integrate technology, and their schools lacked the infrastructure to support these endeavours. A survey in 2017 found that only 37% of teachers had a good understanding of this new curriculum and only 33% had training and ICT access. As many as 43.5% of teachers were having difficulties in implementing authentic assessment, with changes in assessment criteria and in the curriculum. The result was a reversion to the previous curriculum, Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP), which was first introduced in 2006 (Suyanto, 2017).

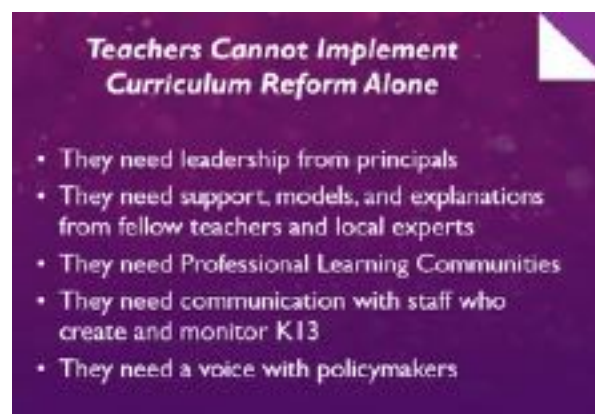


Figure 4. Dr Scott Paris' slide on "Implementing K-12 Educational Reforms: The Role of Curriculum, Teachers and Teaching"

In his presentation, Dr Paris also argued that no matter how prepared teachers are, effective change in teaching practices depends on sharing, collaboration, and instructional leadership. The school is an important site for learning about effective teaching, especially for beginning teachers; thus, the role of more experienced teachers as mentors and coaches is important. There is an undeniable gap between the required and current competencies of teachers and school leaders in implementing the new education policy successfully.

Teacher education colleges are charged with strengthening teacher education with the goal of better equipping teachers, and with training future school leaders in hopes of effectively implementing education reforms. This is the reason why teacher education colleges are best positioned to prepare educators who can successfully implement education reform.

Enhanced teacher education model

The Teacher Law passed by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2005 required teachers to obtain a PPG on top of their bachelor degree. This meant that all in-service teachers with a bachelor degree needed to attain the PPG certificate and all pre-service teachers were required to complete the PPG after their bachelor degree (Jalal et. al, 2009). This requirement was a reflection of government recognition of the value of higher levels of teacher competencies. Evidence shows that there is a positive correlation between the 2005 Teacher Law and student outcomes, though it shows that this correlation is not directly caused by the increased subject knowledge competencies of teachers (World Bank, 2014).

Dr Goh Kim Chuan pointed out in his presentation that high-quality Initial Teacher Preparation (ITP) programmes, provided by teacher education colleges, are an essential component of teacher quality. ITP programmes equip teachers with the knowledge and skills that aid them in improving student outcomes (Musset, 2010). Additionally, it is important that ITP programmes aim to always meet acceptable standards with regard to theoretical knowledge, skills, and professional ethics. Efforts should be made to ensure a proper balance of all three components. And given that use of ICT for effective instruction is a key aim of the new curriculum, teachers and educators must model these new pedagogical behaviours.

Well-organised professional development in tandem with initial teacher preparation is vital in developing highly competent teachers. Well-organised professional development not only helps the teacher build up expertise but also helps the education ministry retain teachers, because these teachers, with constant skills upgrading, would more likely view teaching as a profession. In Singapore, for example, the Ministry of Education offers teachers three career pathways, as shown in figure 5, thus encouraging their professional development. This policy has been shown to reduce teacher attrition while keeping good teachers within the system.

Another aspect of professional development is professional learning in contexts where teachers learn to make decisions and practice theoretical knowledge acquired during the ITP programme.



Figure 5. Career pathways available to teachers in Singapore (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2017)

Dr Goh argued that professional development does not only happen off-site, when teachers attend professional development courses offered by teacher education colleges, or part-time degree or diploma courses for skills upgrading. He mentioned that schools are also effective platforms for professional development and learning. In many progressive school systems, school-based initiatives like lesson study, action research, and learning communities are commonplace. Teacher education colleges should instil an awareness in trainees of the need to grow continuously so that self-learning becomes a lifelong venture. Thus, effective implementation of innovative and impactful professional development is vital to effective implementation of the new curriculum.

Developing school leadership

The World Bank (2018) points out that teaching and learning environments and school management play essential roles in Indonesia’s education system. With the increasing decentralisation and autonomy of schools, challenges related to the capacity of teachers and schools, and “weak systems of checks and balances in education service delivery” have emerged.

For an education reform to impact student and schooling outcomes, strong school leadership is imperative. Dr David Ng noted in his presentation on instructional leadership that an instruction-oriented school leader is able to create a positive culture for teaching and learning and also support teachers in their development of professional skills, such that schooling outcomes are enhanced.

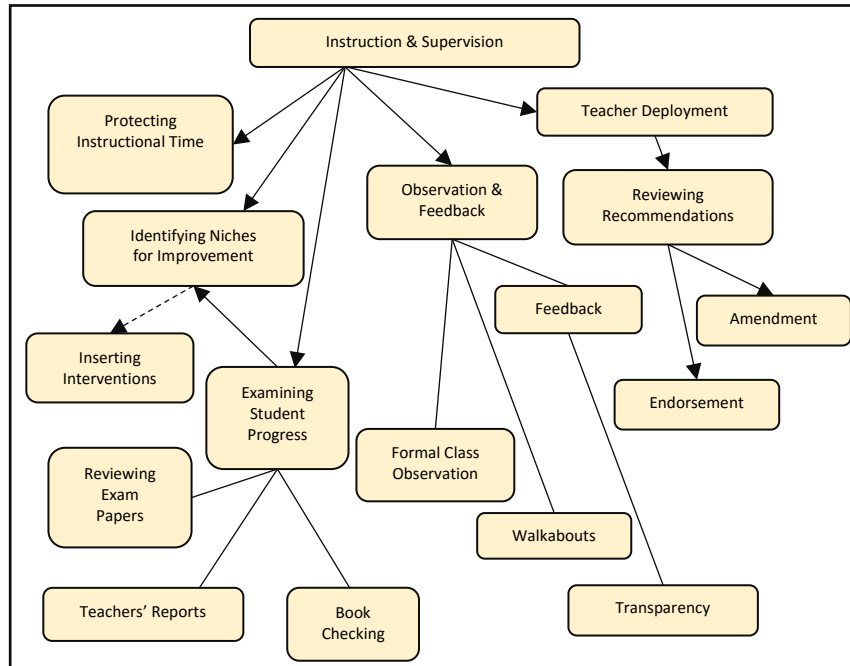


Figure 6. Dr David Ng’s slide on “Instructional Leadership: The Key to Improving Learning Outcomes”

Teacher education colleges train present school leaders, and teachers who may become school leaders. Hence, the role of these colleges also encompasses training leaders to effectively lead their teachers in implementing education reforms when necessary.

In order to create a conducive environment and system for implementing education reforms, building relational trust with staff is paramount. This includes caring for teachers, exercising distributive leadership by empowering staff, and recognising their efforts. Cheong (1986) found that school leaders are able to achieve greater teacher outcomes by promoting nurturance and creating a people-oriented school culture.



Figure 7. Teaching teachers for the future (Teaching Teachers for the Future, n.d.)

With Industry 4.0, the use of smart technology is a skill that school leaders, teachers, and students need to be familiar with. In discussions at the PLP, it was agreed that students are now more technologically savvy than their teachers. This poses a danger, especially with the spike in fake news and the difficulty of discerning truth, and with the growing obsolescence of teachers without this skill, as students are now able to derive content from the Internet.

With the K-13 curriculum focusing on the use of technology for teaching and learning, there needs to be a shift in teacher education towards realising and utilising the potential of ICT. An example that Dr Vicente pointed to was the Teaching Teachers for the Future (TTF) programme in Australia, where the ICT proficiency of teachers and school leaders is developed. TTF is available online to pre-service and in-service teachers and to teacher educators and can be accessed easily and in one’s own time.

Theme 3: ICT Utilisation and Capacity Building in Indonesian Schools: A Case Study

Education systems across the globe consistently recognise that schools need to develop future workers possessing the cognitive, metacognitive, social, and technological skills required for 21st-century citizenship and employment (Voogt & Roblin, 2012). Despite the huge affordances of technologies for enhancing teaching and learning, the impact of teaching and learning technologies on education has

been rather mixed. One of the priority areas recommended by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (2017) is the regional adoption of a common framework for 21st-century teaching and learning with 21st-century curricula and skills, and the building of the region's teachers' capacity to integrate 21st-century skills in their teaching.

A 2015 OECD article stated that "education systems that had invested heavily in ICT have seen no noticeable improvement in PISA scores for reading, mathematics, or science." This could be due to the dominant focus on infrastructural issues like hardware and connectivity, while there have been limited opportunities for professional development to improve teachers' ICT skills.

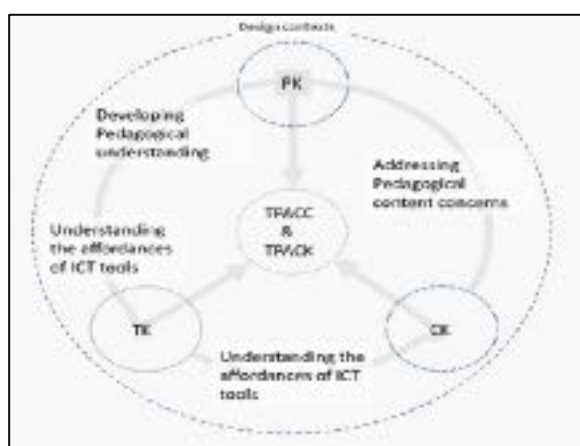


Figure 8. Reproduced with the permission of the publisher. ©2012 tpack.org (TPACK ORG, 2011)

With this background in mind and drawing on Mishra and Koehler's conceptions (2006) of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK), The HEAD Foundation organised a professional development course in 2016 and 2017 to support the creation of TPACK 21st-Century Learning (TPACK-21CL). The following case study illustrates how this approach was implemented with 80 pre-service and in-service teachers and university professors from two different teacher education institutions in Indonesia, and the outcomes.

The TPACK framework above defines what teachers need to know about ICT integration. The two-day programme for building teachers' ICT capacity was developed based on a multifaceted approach to training Indonesian teachers in TPACK concepts and 21st-century learning. Content analysis of teachers' lesson artefacts and statistical analyses of TPACK-21CL surveys were also conducted (Koh, Chai, & Lim, 2017).

The programme permitted teachers to approach TPACK-21CL systematically, from the dimensions of technology, pedagogy, and content. The creation of ICT integration strategies is a process that emerges as teachers make connections among these dimensions. The framework (shown in figure 8) encouraged the following practices:

1. Authentic learning (contextualised in real life) to engage and develop students' problem-solving abilities
2. Collaborative learning around and through computers to strengthen students' capacities to work in social settings
3. Reflective learning that engages students' self-diagnosis and adjustment of learning strategies
4. Active learning that involves knowledge construction of digital artefacts through the use of ICT as cognitive tools

Creating lessons that embed such practices requires complex design reasoning that integrates pedagogy, ICT, and content knowledge (Koh, Chai, & Lim, 2017).

Content analysis of teacher-designed lesson artefacts showed qualitative improvements in teachers' conception of TPACK-21CL throughout the programme. Teachers' ICT lesson designs showed that they were able to move beyond whole-class teacher-directed instruction through engaging students in some level of divergent knowledge expression and reflection.

Indonesian teachers' preference for face-to-face instruction (Widodo & Riandi, 2013) influenced their designs prior to the training. The TPACK-21CL dimensions helped teachers refine their notions of TPACK-21CL, and their ideas were further developed when they explored and related the functionalities of ICT tools to each activity. The teachers began to understand how ICT could facilitate a variety of differing knowledge expressions through artefact production, concept analysis, and idea visualisation. The final teacher-designed lessons and activities demonstrated that teachers were able to apply the new forms of TPACK-21CL, as they designed different kinds of student-centred activities, including reflection, concept analysis, peer feedback, and idea visualisation.

The findings showed that only a few teachers were able to design activities that progressively support students in developing high levels of divergent knowledge creation and authentic problem solving.

Analysis of available literature found that these are common issues, and teachers' design expertise generally develops with iterative and continuous practice. It would thus be necessary for school leaders and ministries of education to consider providing structured time for teachers to continue implementing or adapting the ICT integrated lessons.

Connectivity was a problem that affected the participants' work with various online tools and activities. The barriers with technology infrastructure are typical issues in ICT professional development in developing countries (Kozma & Vota, 2014). The ability of teachers to design and enact deepened understandings of TPACK-21CL shows promise and potential. The professional development programme is now being implemented in a third university in Indonesia.

Policy implications

The story of ICT integration in schools in developing countries like Indonesia has been more of undelivered promises due to policies where education systems have been ill-prepared to realise the potential of technology. Significant gaps in the ICT infrastructure, coupled with inadequate pedagogical preparation on how to blend technology meaningfully into lessons, cause the gap between expectations and reality. If these challenges are not addressed as part of national technology plans in Indonesia, ICT cannot be harnessed to support quality teaching and student engagement. Teachers do acknowledge that technology is a valuable tool, but it needs to be noted that the successful integration of ICT in education is not so much a matter of the right tool or software; it is a matter of the context, in which the various stakeholders (policymakers, teachers, school leaders, and students) share the vision and make the connection between students, ICT, and learning.

The success of the ICT capacity building project shows the power of well-conceptualised, context-sensitive professional development initiatives. Active teacher involvement gave students ownership of their learning. Relevance to actual teaching and learning needs was a powerful motivator. Teacher education colleges should seek to redesign professional development with these principles in mind.

Theme 4: Research and Programme Redesign in Indonesian Teacher Education

In his summative presentation, Professor Gopinathan, Academic Advisor, The HEAD Foundation, and Programme Director, Indonesian Professional Learning Programme, drew upon previous presentations to make the case for the need to review and redesign Indonesian teacher education. The digital revolution and Industry 4.0 call for serious rethinking of traditional models of schooling, teaching, learning, and assessment. The government has responded with significant curriculum reform, and new roles for teachers as learning facilitators, coaches, and teacherpreneurs are being discussed.

There is now increasing awareness of the need for newer and more effective models of initial and professional development, as greater, practice-oriented, and collaborative learning is essential. Additionally, more emphasis needs to be given to the role of principals as instructional leaders; and in a context of constant change, they need to be prepared to lead change, not be led by it. As always, there will be a need to prove the effectiveness of changes. This will, in turn, lead to a need for a comprehensive programme of education research. This will be necessary both to justify changes and to demonstrate the effectiveness of these changes.

It is clear that education colleges will be key institutions in leading change. They will, however, need the support of the government in the form of farsighted, effective and desirable policies, such as committing to teacher professionalism (via an Indonesia-specific career-pathways model for teachers) or ensuring that all schools have adequate resources if teachers are to responsibly perform their duties. The government could also facilitate closer alignment of education goals, policies, and processes with training colleges and schools.

Conclusion

The quest for education excellence is one that all systems aspire to. Indonesian education has made much progress. Based on PISA 2015 data, the World Bank (2016) estimated that Indonesian students made substantial gains across reading and mathematics subjects roughly equivalent to one school year. This is a solid foundation on which to build on. High-quality Indonesian teacher education colleges have a vital role to play in the impending education transformation.

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About This Policy Brief

This policy brief was written by Professor S. Gopinathan, Academic Advisor of The HEAD Foundation. This document is a synthesis of the discussion and presentations made during the run of the Professional Learning Programme conducted in 2018 by The HEAD Foundation (THF) at the Universitas Negeri Jakarta (UNJ). The author would like to thank Dr Uma Natarajan and Ms. Rachel Thng for their assistance in drafting this policy brief.

The positions taken in this policy brief are not representative of the views of each participant and/or speaker but is a fair summary of the discussions at the Professional Learning Programme.



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