

# STORIES FROM CITIES IN INDONESIA (SESSION 1)

POP UP DISCUSSION SERIES: #2  
RDI UREF

WEBINAR REPORT



# **Pop Up Discussion Series: #2**

Stories from Cities in Indonesia (Session 1)

## **Webinar Report**

Resilience Development Initiative – Urban Refugees (RDI UREF)

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## Abbreviations

CWS	Church World Service
GCM	Global Compact for Migration
GCR	Global Compact for Refugees
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
P2MP2S	<i>Penanganan Penyelundupan Manusia, Pengungsi dan Pencari Suaka</i> or Desk for Handling of People Smuggling, Refugees and Asylum Seekers
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
UAM	Unaccompanied Minors
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioners for Refugees

## Introduction

The influx of refugees into countries and cities is an emerging global issue. In 2018, there are more than 70.8 million possibly displaced people worldwide. Asia and the Pacific alone hosts some 4.2 million refugees, majority from Afghanistan and Myanmar, 2.7 million IDPs and 1.6 million stateless persons<sup>1</sup>. Of this number, two thirds live in urban areas. The roles of cities in migration management are also acknowledged in the 2016 New Urban Agenda, the 2018 GCM and GCR. This includes a recognition to the need of supporting local authorities, finding new mechanisms for local engagement, and identifying new ways of working between humanitarian and development actors. Against this backdrop, there is an urgency to gain better understanding of the refugee issue. Since the issue is perennial, we would be expected to see more refugees and displaced people in the future due to war and conflicts, climate crisis, as well as economic crisis precipitated by the recent pandemic COVID-19.

Since Indonesia has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention, refugees and asylum seekers are not allowed to settle in Indonesia. Nonetheless, Indonesia and other ASEAN countries such as Malaysia and Thailand, abide by the principle of non-refoulment. Thus, Indonesia is expected to play an important role in managing refugees in Southeast Asia. The recent arrival of Rohingya Refugees in North Aceh, although problematic, demonstrates the willingness of society to contribute to refugee management. Indonesia still has lots more to work on in order to be actively involved in the refugee management, particularly to ensure that the jurisdiction and regulation in handling refugees will properly address the influx of refugees and its predecessors, and to raise awareness and build positive discourse on refugee issues among society.

The refugees live dispersedly in several locations in Indonesia, such as Jakarta, Aceh, Bogor, Makassar, Yogyakarta, and Pekanbaru. Furthermore, there are two types of urban refugees based on the assistance given to them, namely refugees under the International Organization for Migration (IOM) support and independent refugees. These types of support influence their interactions with host society. For instance, the Mayor of Makassar signed an MoU with IOM to enhance their coordination in refugee management<sup>2</sup>. As a result, the majority of refugees in Makassar live with assistance from IOM, by which they have been provided community shelter or accommodation located within the urban settlement. This type of support appears to be a contributing factor for the refugees to interact with local community.

In contrast, the majority of refugees in Bogor can be categorized as independent refugees, since they do not get shelter or housing support from international organizations or the government. They stay in rented housings/villas or accommodation among local community. This mode of living enables them to socialize with host society; however, it appears limited entirely to necessity and can only be considered as interaction instead of integration.

The living experience of refugees varies across cities since there have been some factors that both support and hinder their interaction and integration with host communities. Besides, the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/id/en>

<sup>2</sup> Gabriella, D., Putri, R A A K., "Makassar city government's urban refugee policy: filling in the gap?" (2018) IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science

willingness of local government on refugee issues and the cooperation level with international organizations, local NGOs, and other groups affecting the refugee management model of each city. Accordingly, a thorough discussion regarding the various refugee management in Indonesia is needed to find out more about refugees' experiences in different urban areas of Indonesia.

The objective of Pop Up Discussion (PUD) No. 2 provided knowledge and experiences from the speakers regarding refugee management in several cities in Indonesia to the intended audiences (academics, researchers, observers and advocates of refugees, refugees community, other groups/stakeholders and individuals) and a networking platform for speakers and audiences.

This second PUD was held on 28 August 2020, 15.00 - 17.00 Western Indonesia Time (GMT +7). This series was attended by 96 participants on Zoom, including 7 host/moderator/speakers, and 171 viewers on RDI YouTube channel<sup>3</sup>. The PUD was structured in an introduction, four presentations, each followed question from moderator and participants, as well as polls and Q&A session.

This report presents a summary of the presentations, discussions from Q&A session and online Q&A platform dedicated to specific questions around the contents of the webinar.

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<sup>3</sup> Pop Up Discussion Series No. 2: <https://youtu.be/IWxKf24G9PO>



## Summary of Presentations

### 1. “Are We There Yet?: Peculiarities of Transit Locality: Aceh”

*Presented by Ainul Fajri, MA*

Ainul Fajri explains the situation of refugees and their experience with the locals in Aceh from locality perspective. Locality is an accumulation of various factors, external and internal processes, that occur in a region and has implications on the refugee management in that region or city as well as on the lives of refugees. For instance, in the country of origin, there are several unpleasant factors such as persecution, conflicts, human rights violation, which affect the lives of refugees. In transit country, factors that influence the locality are social culture of host community and their level of acceptance towards the refugees, which subtly transform refugees' current life and influence the decision-making processes in projecting their future (e.g., changing the destination country due to their experiences during waiting period in transit country).

Furthermore, Ainul describes several other factors, known as external processes, that affect the locality of a region or a country. The external processes can be seen through the policies and bilateral relationship between Indonesia and Australia which slightly influence Indonesia's immigration policy, Indonesia's membership in ASEAN that affects its bilateral relationship with Myanmar (the Rohingya refugees' country of origin) and other international relations that had given significant influence on refugee management in Indonesia.

Ainul further describes how the Aceh province has undergone tremendous change regarding their locality in social and economic aspects, as a result of internal processes, which in turn define the domain of Aceh's locality. This internal process is a series of events that occur over a certain period of time as well as other noteworthy elements. Starting with Aceh long history of rescuing refugees in 2006 (Sabang), 2015 (Kuala Langsa), and 2020 (Lancok). Another critical point is the anomaly of 'conflict' and 'tsunami disaster' whereby Acehnese people became empathetic towards refugees since they have faced similar situations with refugees. This situation affects the communities and local government to accept the refugees, and further influences the refugee governance from the provincial level to the district level. Those historical events stimulate community solidarity towards the refugees.

Another determining element postulates by Ainul is the existence of Aceh's customary maritime law that is unique, namely 'Panglima Laot' system, whereby fishermen must respect each other and rescue those in distress at the sea. The existing regional law and the act of rescuing the refugees instigated the local government (e.g., Langsa city government) in taking responsibility and initiatives to handle Rohingya refugees stranded in Aceh. This bold movement has influenced the management of refugees in other regions such as East Aceh and North Aceh.

## 2. Refugees and Asylum Seekers Governance: Story from Jakarta

*Presented by Diah Tricesaria, MA (HOST International)*

Diah Tricesaria presents an overview of refugee management in Jakarta from the perspective of stories voiced by the refugees. Diah begins with a brief explanation regarding the status of Jakarta that is quite different from other cities. Jakarta is an urbanized city that which highly connected with surrounding cities (Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi), administered by two levels of government (national and provincial) that strongly influence the management of refugees in Jakarta. Besides, the presence of UNHCR representative office in Jakarta, making it a priority destination for the majority of refugees as they have to register once they arrive in the country.

According to data from UNHCR updated January 2020, there are around 7,158 refugees and asylum seekers in Jabodetabek, both living independently and under the support from IOM and the government. Subsequently, approximately 4,000 – 5,000 urban refugees live independently (rent houses or apartment). Based on stories from the refugees, Diah briefly explains their distress condition including financial crisis faced by the refugees; most refugees heavily rely on personal savings and expect to be resettled to a third country in 2 – 3 years. Nonetheless, the chance for resettlement is under 1%, and it takes more than three years for being resettled to a third country, resulting in refugees being in protracted situation. The situation is becoming more difficult as their savings are running out, and they have no other financial resources due to lack of opportunity to work nor access to livelihood. The explained situation is a general description of refugees who live in Jakarta.

Diah presents a case study of refugees sleeping in the street in front of Kalideres Immigration Detention Center (Rudenim). These refugees decided to relinquish themselves into immigration because they realize that they have little chance for resettlement and there are no more solutions for their financial crisis. This situation triggers a question for the government: how does the government handle the refugees in Jakarta? Based on data from the field, Diah reveals that the response from government is still limited to emergency response or emergency framework. In this case, the government of DKI Jakarta (provincial level) provided assistance such as temporary shelters located at the ex-District Military Command (Kodim) building, food, and access to water and electricity which only lasted until 31 August 2019. Another assistance provided by the UNHCR, including registration/data collection and offering direct cash assistance (BLT). UNHCR also negotiated with refugees regarding their shelter; refugees were asked to look for a new place to live since they were only allowed to stay there temporarily.

The presented case study suggests that the refugee governance in Indonesia still limited to a framework of emergency assistance, considering the refugee issue as a problem that can be solved in a short time. In fact, refugee issue in Indonesia is strongly related to 'uncertainty'; hence, it requires solutions and management that are sustainable. Moreover, strong cooperation between the government (both central and local) and non-governmental institutions or organizations is needed to ensure the fulfilment of basic rights of refugees during their temporary stay in Indonesia.

### 3. The Dynamics of Refugees Social Relation in Bogor Regency

*Presented by Realisa Masardi, MA (FIB UGM)*

Realisa Masardi shares a story of refugees social and relational dynamics in Bogor. Realisa describes Puncak area, Bogor, as an important transit site for refugees before continuing their journey to Christmas Island (before 2013). Areas in Bogor, namely Cisarua, Cipayung, and Ciawi are favorable for Hazara refugees due to their geographical location, close to Jakarta, making it easier for them to get there for the RSD process. Additionally, the atmosphere of those areas is convenient for them due to its climate that is similar to the Afghanistan's, as well as the affordable living cost. Realisa further adds that almost all Hazara communities are familiar with Bogor as it has been an important site for them where the social system and relationships between ethnic communities of refugees from Afghanistan Pakistan, and Iran were established, resulting in their resilience and tremendous self-organization skill.

Realisa explains several challenges faced by refugees in Bogor. Almost all refugees do not receive assistance from humanitarian organization and local government. Similar to refugees in Jakarta, refugees in Bogor are urban refugees who independently supplying their daily needs with their own savings and additional support from families abroad. Consequently, they are confronted with financial problems; run out of savings and economic challenges faced by their families overseas, making it extremely difficult for them to meet their daily needs. As a result, some refugees decided to move to Jakarta, asking for assistance to UNHCR and IOM.

Regarding the role of humanitarian organizations in Bogor, Realisa appreciates the work of JRS as the only non-governmental organization that is consistently providing assistance to the refugees in Bogor since 2014. The provided assistance including health and financial support, accommodation, psychosocial support, facilitating refugees' sports activities, providing training for interpreters, as well as advocacy and legal assistance during the process of refugees' status in Indonesia. Additionally, there is various ad hoc assistance, although not regularly provided to refugees, given by other international communities such as CWS, local churches, and private sectors. Realisa further claims that after the issuance of Presidential Decree 125/2016, the refugee management in Bogor still in status quo, whereby there is an absence of operational regulations that hinders the government role in handling refugees at the district and sub-district level.

Another important point postulated by Realisa is regarding the local's perception towards refugees and refugees' perspective towards host community. Based on interviews with the village headman and local community, it is found that there is a dilemma between legal aspects (government policies) and their empathy as fellow human beings. Hence, a discourse emerged regarding the approaches towards refugees that should not be conducted formally (under legal perspective), but also through acceptance and open-heartedness from the host society to foster interaction with the refugees. In addition, understanding of local community context is essential to build a harmonious social relation between refugees and host community.

Realisa also points out how the national and local media portrays the refugees may influence the opinion of host society towards refugees. Media coverage in 2019-2020 has been way more positive and convivial compared to the 2015-2016 coverage that portrays refugees as illegal

immigrants. The media representation of refugees may contribute to how local people determine their attitudes or treatment on refugees. Furthermore, Realisa explains the refugees' perspective towards local community. The refugees were aware that local people have their viewpoints regarding refugees' existence in Bogor. Nevertheless, the refugees continue to reflect on various observations of the socio-cultural dynamics of local community while trying to protect themselves socially.

Realisa also highlights several important points, including the urgency to gain further knowledge regarding the refugees' perspective on the ideal form of interaction that suits them, due to refugees' segmentation/categorization based on ethnicities and age group. This segmentation leads to various needs of refugees that influence their social interaction process. Lastly, advocacy and negotiation regarding the fulfilment of refugee rights could be implemented from the local government; local government may take initiatives without having to wait for the responses/framework given by the national or central government.

## 4. Migration and Urban Space

*Presented by Dr. Dr. Galuh Syahbana Indraprahasta*

Dr. Galuh discusses the nexus between urban planning, informality and refugees. According to Dr. Galuh, there are two elements that need to be considered by government, policymakers, or relevant stakeholders if they aim to incorporate the refugee issue in the urban and regional planning context, namely path dependency and informality. Path dependency can be traced back from the history of international migration experienced by countries such as United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, in which these countries were 'established' by immigrants, which led to the emergence of 'path dependency' terminology. Path dependency is a factor that causes the policies and practices of those countries to become more open to the migration issue, including the refugee issue.

Furthermore, path dependency is related to the history of cities, whereby the current condition of cities, including the urban, social, economic, and political fabrics, is an assemblage of cities previous conditions. Therefore, this context enables us to assess the future path of the city, whether the city is in a 'locked-in' state; a condition whereby the city's system is fixed, making it difficult to be developed into a new direction, or in a state of 'path creation'; a condition that allows creation of new paths through modification of the old paths or an extension of new paths from the old ones. There are two factors affecting the formation of new paths or modification of old paths into new ones, specifically the exogenous factors (related to crisis, conflicts, disaster) and endogenous factor (innovation, regime change, entrepreneur).

Dr. Galuh further describes informality as city and community resiliency in lessening their burden due to lack of support or assistance from the government. It can be said that informality is a driving factor for community to be more self-sufficient and self-reliance. Dr. Galuh also emphasizes that informality can be seen as a distinct characteristic of cities in transit countries such as Indonesia, which hard to be eradicated but could be adopted and adapted. Dr. Galuh further asserts that adopting and adapting informality may help reduce the negative externalities of uncontrolled informality (e.g., flooding caused by informal settlement in riverbanks, slum by street vendors)

Departing from those two elements, Dr. Galuh provides several alternatives which are potential to be implemented in the urban and regional planning that incorporates refugees within its framework. The first alternative is involving path creation aspect, that is to create a new path starting from the local government. The autonomy regime equips local government with a massive authority which enables the government to take remarkable initiatives, being a facilitator as well as a collaborator within the intended framework. For instance, Makassar city government had signed an MoU with IOM for the advancement of refugee management. This initiative appears as an inclusive and collaborative effort from the government, and could be a starting point for creating new paths. Moreover, this initiative could lead to new opportunities for the government to build network with relevant actors, stakeholders as well as various resources. Thus, various urban issues such as limited space for settlement, and other social and economic issues could be resolved through collaboration with those actors and resources.

Another alternative mentioned by Dr. Galuh is to create new path from niche or the already established social network among refugees and the locals. Various refugee initiatives such as learning centers in Cisarua is one example of social networks that is capable in creating a more conducive living environment for refugees. Dr. Galuh explains that the existence of this niche could provide opportunities for refugees in terms of access to livelihood. It could also become a starting point for transforming the 'uncertain' situation into a 'certain' one by giving opportunities for refugees to be more creative and innovative, able to meet their needs independently without assistance from the government and NGOs.

## Q&A Session

The presentations were followed by Q&A session with the four speakers

### Question to the speakers

#### To Ainul Fajri, MA

1. *Are there any fundamental differences between the refugees in the four areas that you have mentioned earlier? Is there any special case occurred in one of these areas?*

A: Even though the four areas have types of accommodation that are similar, e.g., houses attached to one another, semi-permanent houses with several shared public facilities, but there are some differences regarding accommodation for refugee women. In the Aceh context, it needs to be clarified that there is Syariah law in Aceh which led to several accommodations or refugee camps were designated only for women in Aceh.

Another example is the use of communal kitchen and also one shelter still adopting catering system whereby food in a box of being distributed to each person. The refugees also cook their own food even if they have been given food from the catering.

When I was doing my fieldwork, I found some interesting fact: Rohingya refugees love to eat fish, however, the catering often provides 'luxurious' food e.g., meat or chicken. Since the refugees prefer to have fish as their meals, they were allowed to cook their own food.

Moreover, the refugees love to eat vegetables, e.g., *pucuk labu* (pumpkin shoots). Since it was difficult to find in the market, the refugees decided to grow the vegetables themselves.

In some places, there is a bigger camp (the former building of 'Family Welfare Movement' organization) which then has been reused or repurposed as accommodation: the building interior has been repurposed as rooms for refugees by adding partitions, and there's no new development. For refugee children or unaccompanied minors, they live in the same accommodation with the refugee women.

Another special case occurred during my research is that there were refugees who wanted to get married. It was quite interesting for me because it shows the responses from the consortium of NGOs working in the camp, UNHCR, IOM, and the local government. Based on my observation, Indonesian government was sort of distancing itself whereby the government did not intervene against the social life of refugees. Thus, the marriage was being facilitated by the consortium by providing *penghulu* (leader) for the marriage. Rohingya refugees organized their own customary processions.

2. *If there is already an initiative from Aceh government to coordinate the management of refugees, why are there no regional regulations yet? Are there any politicians who actively voice the importance of local governments in managing refugees?*

A: So far, no politicians have raised the issues of migration, including the interests of refugees at the legislative level. Based on my observation, the reason why they are reluctant to raise

this issue is because the issue is not popular enough to get votes or to increase constituent support. Indirectly, it may also be possible to draw links to regional regulations, without the advocacy towards the legislature, definitely with no initiation of law-making.

3. *You've mentioned about refugees in Bogor and Jakarta who don't want to mingle with Indonesians. What about the refugees in Aceh?*

A: In general, there is a desire to mingle with the locals, however, here are some obstacles such as language barriers, and regarding their activities; for example: refugees also have a lot of activities which require plenty of time, hence they don't have much time to socialize with the world outside. Furthermore, sometimes there are other factors related to security that hinder refugees to come out and to socialize with the locals. For instance, a type of socialization that occurs at school, where some refugee children can attend public schools located near their accommodation, some refugees are also playing soccer with the locals, performing shalat (Friday prayer ritual) together if possible.

4. *I want to ask mba Ainul, who previously mentioned the government laws regarding which do not allow refugees to stay. As far as I know, as a non-signatory of the 1951 Geneva Convention, we are also responsible to accept those who are seeking for asylum in here?*

A: Yes, it is. Although the country did not ratify the 1951 Convention, in general, we abide by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that "Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution" (14 art 1), and this is legally binding. Therefore, we are obliged to accept asylum seekers in Indonesia. Additionally, other international law which regarded as customary law that protects human rights without discrimination against race, gender, sex, age, etc. For example, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was ratified by Indonesia, comprehensively regulates the basic rights for children (including refugee children).

5. *Can you explain how far this 'mingle' is? Is this a joint activity, in terms of language, or something else? Don't they feel like that they are 'strangers' at all?*

A: As mentioned before, the examples of mingle activities (between refugees and the locals) are playing football together, performing shalat (Friday prayers) together, or simply hanging out or watching TV together, having coffee together (in front of the shelter). Still, there is language barrier, but it does not significantly affect them when they play football together or during shalat together. However, I met with some refugees who speak Indonesian quite well and some even speak Acehese language.

## **To Diah Tricesaria**

6. *How about those refugees who have no chance to return to their country and even worse no country is willing to accommodate them? What could be the impact to the host countries (transit countries)?*

A: Based on the experiences and stories of refugees and asylum seekers, they actually have an option to go back to their country of origin safely: they can apply for 'Assisted Voluntary



Return' (AVR) which would help them return to their country. However, if they cannot return to their home country and that the resettlement takes a long time or has little opportunity to be resettled, the decision is up to them. They still can wait for resettlement in Indonesia or to survive by surrendering themselves to the immigration detention center that under support of IOM.

Moreover, from the stories of refugees, there are those who are desperate to leave Indonesia and then decided to escape to other third country, however, they could be at risks of being rejected.

7. *Is the protracted transit (period) of up to 5-10 years still can be considered as transit? Shouldn't Indonesia change its paradigm from seeing refugees as transit migrants to semi-permanent (migrants)?*

A: Initially, refugees and asylum seekers who are currently in Indonesia did not decide Indonesia as their destination country (which is Australia). Nevertheless, during their journey to Australia, Indonesia is one of their 'transit' points. With the global refugee crisis and restrictions on the number of refugees that Australia and other destination countries can accept, this transit period is indeed getting longer, around 5-10 years or even more. This situation is more suitable to be considered as 'sustained displacement' condition. In this context, the response from the Indonesian government and other stakeholders (both government and non-government) should start to consider and to shift from merely an emergency response (which usually lasts for a few months) to new approaches that are inclusive, empowering and sustainable.

8. *For independent (urban) refugees in Kalideres, are they already being registered as refugees at UNHCR or are they still (being considered) as asylum seekers?*

A: Actually, the use of 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker' terminology is more likely to be used by UNHCR and the state as a part of the legal process of individual who claims for international protection. Independent refugees who decide to sleep rough on the street of Kalideres are refugees and asylum seekers. Regarding the exact number (of those refugees), UNHCR is the only organization that has the data since the data collection process was carried out (by UNHCR) during the relocation from Kalideres to the former Kodim building.

9. *Is there any information regarding the rationale of initiating and changing the P2MP2S to a task force (both under the coordination of Menkopolhukam)?*

A: If we trace back, P2MP2S was changed (to a task force) after the enactment of Presidential Decree 125/2016 on Handling of Refugees from Abroad. However, it is better to directly confirm to the government agencies or institutions (including the task force) regarding the reasons why it was changed to a task force.

10. *Do those who receive assistance from the organization undertook a special assessment (to obtain the assistance)? Can those (refugees) who do not get assistance from IOM work to maintain their financial sustainability?*

A: Each humanitarian organization offering assistance to refugees and asylum seekers in

Indonesia has its criteria of (refugees) vulnerability. Some organizations use the vulnerability criteria as defined by the UNHCR, but there are also some organizations that work using their own vulnerability criteria or work in particular areas where there are still some gaps or absence regarding support or assistance.

11. *Refugees have basic rights as stated in the Refugee Convention. How do you fulfill the rights of asylum seekers? Are there any differences as well as similarities in the fulfillment of their rights?*

A: If a country is a state party to the 1951 Refugee Convention, it means that the country is being responsible for the issue of refugees on a global basis. However, in practice, the fulfillment of refugee rights is not always easy. A few Asian countries that signed the 1951 Refugee Convention, such as Japan and even the Philippines have a little percentage of resettlement.

As for the Indonesia context, even though the country didn't ratify the Convention, it still allows UNHCR and IOM to accommodate the needs of refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia. Nevertheless, it still insufficient since the refugees in Indonesia are not allowed to work (to meet their daily needs), while the current condition has made the refugees and asylum seekers being trapped in a condition called 'sustained displacement'. The amount of assistance that can be provided by UNHCR and IOM as well as other humanitarian agencies in Indonesia cannot afford to cover (the needs of) all refugees in Indonesia.

In the education sector, refugees and asylum seekers in Bogor and Jakarta areas are able to empower their communities to manage learning centers aim to accommodate study groups for asylum seeker and refugee children. Meanwhile, UNHCR and IOM also provide preparatory programs for refugee children to attend public schools in Indonesia. This initiative has taken place in several locations but the process took a long time due to language barrier as well as cultural and administrative barriers. As a result, the idea to replicate this initiative (in other locations) is quite difficult.

## **To Galuh Syahbana Indraprahasta**

12. *With the variety or even the absence of (refugee) management from the government, what could be the participatory policy innovation or city governance roadmap recommended by the speakers? What patterns of opportunity available in there?*

A: When we talk about urban and regional planning, sometimes there is any practical planning which fails to consider the non-physical aspects, such as social aspects in the city, including the refugee issue. I think the most feasible and practical way for Indonesia is to look for path creation. From my perspective, looking at two layers: the international and national layers, these two layers are more difficult and rigid. Therefore, the potential layers that could be intervened are the layers of local government and of local communities (either built by refugees and or a combination of locals and refugees). What we can take as lesson or adopt is initiatives or best practices in Langsa city (government leadership), in Cisarua for its (refugees) community development, and in Makassar for the government leadership and initiatives. Those best practices should be informed to other cities through storytelling

approach. Storytelling is important in the outreach context of local governments and the existing community. Besides, storytelling is easier to be understood compared to a mandate letter - although it is still important in terms of legality. For replicating those best practices, storytelling is important for local governments and communities since it may help encourage the spirit of local government and the communities while at the same time conveying the learning points of those practices.

13. *Are there any examples (in Indonesia or other countries) of social innovation or informal entrepreneurial solutions that have successfully improved the lives of refugees?*

A: Since the refugees, legally speaking, are not allowed to 'work', it is difficult to find an example in Indonesia. So far, the successful innovation that can be found in Indonesia is the establishment of learning communities where the refugees become teachers (transferring knowledge and vocational skills) to other refugees. One good example (of learning communities) is in Cisarua, Kab. Bogor, especially those initiated by refugees from Afghanistan. Sometimes, these teachers are 'get paid' through certain mechanism (e.g., payment for transport fees) so that they are not seen as 'get paid' for being teachers. These initiatives can also mobilize 'social funds' from various national and international agencies to help refugees to meet their daily needs.

In the other countries, an example found in Kampala (Uganda) can be a good lesson (for entrepreneurial solutions). In Kampala, refugees are allowed to work, which resulting in approximately 21% of the refugees run businesses. Interestingly, 40% of the workers (who help the businesses run by refugees) are local people.

14. *If the policy is more flexible for refugees, is there any possibility for refugees to live properly in Indonesia?*

A: If policies can be more flexible, especially by allowing refugees to work, there is a greater chance for refugees to be able to have a more decent life, compared to relying solely on limited funds or social assistance.

15. *Does the emergence of ICT under the label of smart city provide opportunities for refugees to be included in the city?*

A: As far as I know, some refugees who possess good digital literacy have an access to 'work' through cyberspace. However, this 'inclusion' is informal in nature. The presence of ICTs does not necessarily include refugees, particularly if government policies (in this case in the regions) have not included them yet.

So far, the issue of inclusiveness (of community) in the smart city program within cities or districts in Indonesia is still limited. There are some areas that have envisioned a smart city framework which aimed to incorporate community from the beginning, however, based on my observation, there are still many cities that prioritizing its framework to the scope of ICT system and network development (instead of try to incorporate community in the framework).

16. *To what extent does xenophobia or the negative paradigm on immigrants affect the path creation process? How to overcome it?*

A: Negative paradigm (or different perception) is formed accumulatively due to lack of experience and interaction with a certain phenomenon (in this case international migration). Thus, it significantly affects the process of creating new pathways in the context of refugee governance. There are several important points that I think need to be considered in order to overcome it: (1) the process of creating a new route must be done gradually (cannot be transformed in a 'big-bang' manner), (2) local government play an important role in the dialogue and collaboration process, to ensure that actors in the regions share similar viewpoint, hence diminishing the conflicts.

17. *Many Indonesian citizens still live 'informally' in cities of Indonesia and the refugees also exist in this informal dimension. Does this phenomenon create a condition that is prone to conflict in theory?*

A: One of government's concerns that causes refugees unable to work is related to conflict that may arise if the refugees are allowed to work. Although this is true and important, it is undeniable that the condition of refugees in Indonesia which becomes more uncertain could also trigger conflict and vulnerability. For now, condition of refugees are getting more uncertain in Indonesia due to changes in Australian policy. Therefore, it is important to mitigate this potential conflict. Also, a shift of paradigm is needed to provide a more inclusive and better refugee management in Indonesia.

If the intended question is related to 'conflict in the context of informal theory', then, in my opinion, there is no conflicting theory (especially urban theory), however, it can be seen particularly in the post-colonial urban theory (this can be found in the literature of Jennifer Robinson, Mary Lawhon, and others).

## **To Realisa Masardi**

18. *Is there any best practice in terms of integration between refugees and surrounding communities who live in Bogor that could be an example/role model for other cities?*

A: In terms of integration between local community and refugee community, the example is not quite obvious in Bogor, however, there are some interactions between individuals (locals and refugees) that can be considered as good example. For instance, there is a landlady who concerns with the refugees (who live in boarding house) from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Ethiopia. The lady maintains a good relationship with them by doing several activities together. The lady facilitated their initiatives to open a learning center by asking the village headman to give permission for that. Many young refugees also build relationship with Indonesian local residents. Based on my observation, refugees tend to have friends who are not direct neighbors, e.g., friends of social media in building relationship, both locals and refugees need to make friends through a context that is free of stigmatization.

There is also an initiative from a local *pesantren* (boarding school), whereby the coordinator invites the refugees in Cipayung to do several activities together with the locals e.g., learning guitar, and refugees teach English to the children in return. These mutual activities complement each other.

In other cities, many refugees live separately with the locals. Thus, that kind of activities seem difficult to be done. I think that kind of social interactions that take place in Bogor have the potential to foster their social integration.

19. *Can you please share about the relationship between independent refugees and supported refugees in Puncak? Is there a mutual relationship (between them) that resulting in refugees being accepted to live there for decades?*

A: In Bogor, all refugees live independently by renting houses for accommodation from local residents so that there are economic benefits to the local community. In addition, the refugees buy food, clothing, and daily necessities at the market and shops owned by local resident; it can be said that the refugees are actively participating in reviving the economy in Bogor. If the Indonesian government allows refugees to work, there would be a lot of potential for them to work together with local residents through micro-scale businesses, for example providing catering services which have more diverse menu choices from various cultures.

Not only in the economic aspect, there are also some aspects that could be pathways for learning and beneficial to both parties. It is important to note that many of these refugees are highly educated and have skills that could be transferred to local communities. Refugees could teach English, computer skills, or knowledge about their country of origin to the local youth. Besides, local residents could teach the refugees musical skills, arts, or Indonesia' social knowledge in return. These activities have been conducted in Bogor in several individual cases, while collective activities of local residents and refugees cannot be said as a "mainstream" story due to doubts that still arise and other obstacles caused by the stigmatization to the refugees.

20. *What are the factors that have caused Indonesia not ratifying the Refugee Convention until today?*

A: I think the Indonesian government still believes that the cost of ratifying the Refugee Convention would be greater than the gain benefits (political, social, or economic). Refugees are often seen as a burden and not as a responsibility that we need to handle global citizens. Based on interviews with several actors in the ministry level, the usual answer is that "there are still many problems occur among Indonesian citizens". However, we need to appreciate the concessions and assistance that have been given by Indonesian government to the refugees. Although Indonesia has not ratified the Refugee Convention yet, it allows refugees to "transit" in their territory. In addition, Presidential Decree No. 125/2016 should be considered in a positive way, in which Indonesia has recognized the presence of refugees and asylum seekers in its territory. This viewpoint should be maintained so that the operational regulation could be formulated immediately in order to fulfil and protect the rights of refugees.

21. *Actually, who decided for the refugees to stay here and there? Was it central government or the regional government?*

A: When refugees were still in the Immigration Detention Center (before 2018), they were settled in the local detention center if the case that they surrendered or were intercepted. Indonesia has 13 immigration detention centers scattered across Indonesia. If the detention center could not accommodate them due to overcapacity, the Director General of Immigration would then decide alternative detention center where the refugees would be transferred to. IOM, UNHCR, and local detention centers could also provide recommendations to the Directorate General of Immigration if there are any factors such as age group, socio-culture, health. that need to be considered prior to relocation.

For unaccompanied minors, they would be transferred to a special UAM shelter under support of CWS in Jakarta or to a special UAM accommodation under IOM and Dinsos (Social services) in Medan. For asylum seekers other than UAM, if the refugee status application has been approved by UNHCR, they can be relocated from the detention center to the community housing under IOM support.

In the case of independent refugees, they may report their cases to UNHCR to be processed, however they have freedom to decide their own accommodation (around Jabodetabek). Refugees in the detention center receive daily support (living expenses) from IOM, whereas independent refugees must fulfil all their needs independently (using their own savings).

22. *Who are the relevant parties in Indonesia responsible for the existence of refugees and asylum seekers? What could be the obstacles in handling refugees and asylum seekers?*

A: From the Indonesian government, the international refugee management has been conducted by the Desk for Handling Overseas Refugees and Human Trafficking (P2LNPM) with Ministry for Political, Legal and Security Affairs as the coordinator. The government of Indonesia has an MoU with UNHCR to process refugee status determination and with IOM to assist the provision of facilities and infrastructure for refugees registered by the Director General of Immigration in Indonesia (or those who has been detained at the immigration detention center). Apart from IOM, UNHCR, and CWS appear as the implementing partners while several local organizations such as Dompot Dhuafa, the Buddha Tzu Chi Foundation, Jesuit Refugee Services, PMI as the operational partners. These operational partners are different in each city.

Presidential Decree No. 125/2016 regulates the involvement of the regional/local Government. However, the main obstacle is that there is a lack of operational regulations, resulting in stakeholders and local government agencies being perplexed regarding how they would play their roles in handling refugees in their regions. In addition, the Ministry of Home Affairs release a mandate letter No. 185/2793/SJ regarding the Role of Local Government in Handling Refugees from Abroad which were given only to 12 mayors/city leaders that have immigration detention centers in their areas and have been received assistance from the IOM. The local governments such as Bogor and Jakarta, in which many urban refugees live independently in there, did not received the letter. This situation shows the inconsistency of the central government in its efforts and mechanisms to deal with refugees in Indonesia.

Regarding the issue of responsibility, in my opinion, all of us as "local people" or "hosts" need to take responsibility in alleviating the burden as well as embracing the lives of others, including the lives of refugees. By treating them well, welcoming and humanizing them regardless of their status is our moral responsibility as human being, apart from the issue of whether our country has ratified the refugee convention or not.

# Appendix

## Webinar participants

Total number of participants: 96 on Zoom of whom hosts/moderator/presenters: 7, and 171 views on RDI YouTube channel<sup>4</sup>

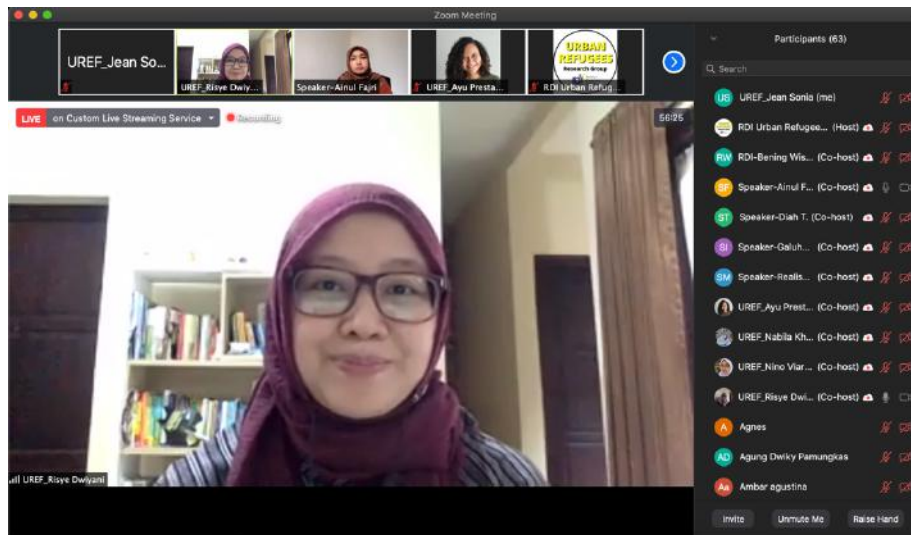


Fig. 1 Risyé Dwiyani, M.Eng as the host

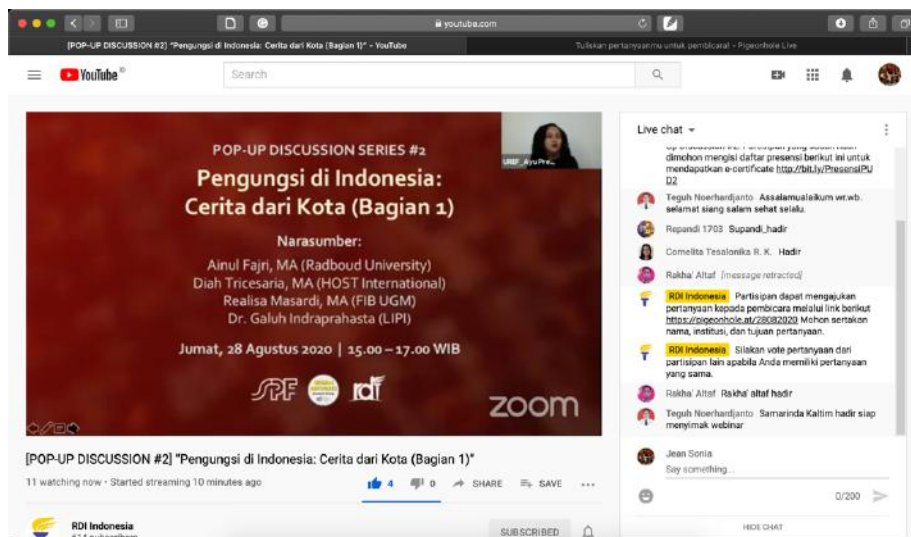


Fig. 2 Introduction on RDI YouTube Channel

<sup>4</sup> Pop Up Discussion Series No. 2: <https://youtu.be/IWxKf24G9PO>



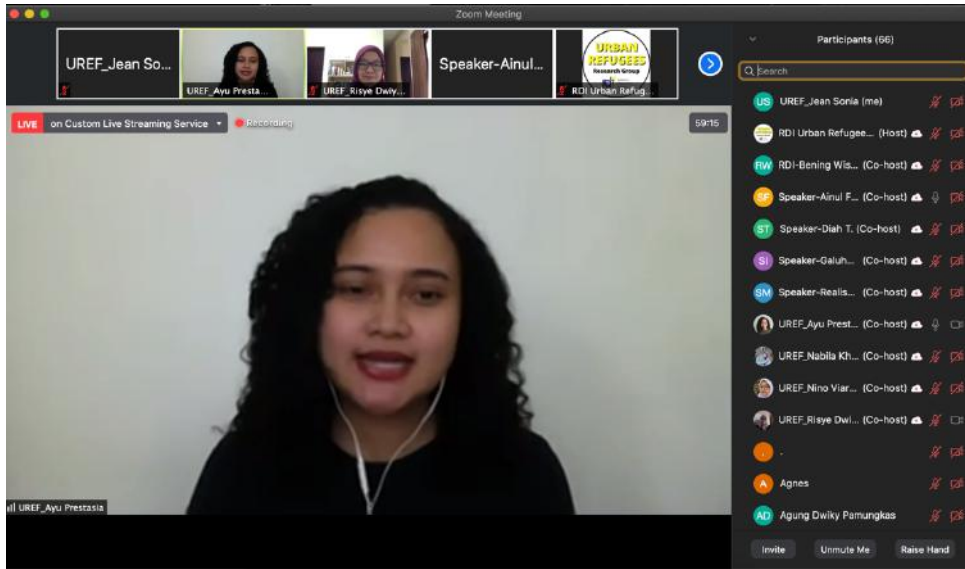


Fig. 3 Ayu Prestasia, M.Sc as the moderator

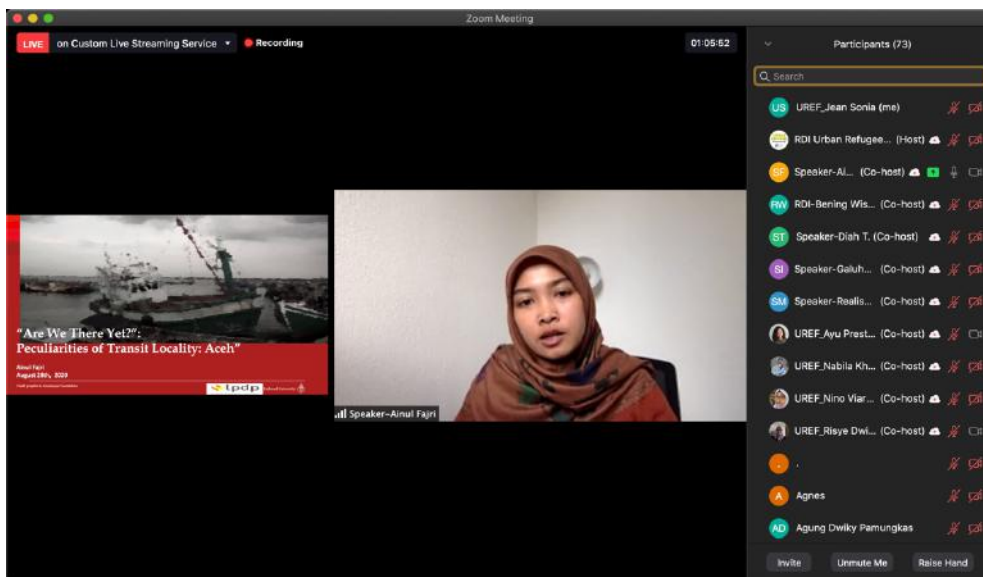


Fig. 4 The first presentation by Ainul Fajri, MA



Fig. 5 The second presentation by Diah Tricesaria, MA

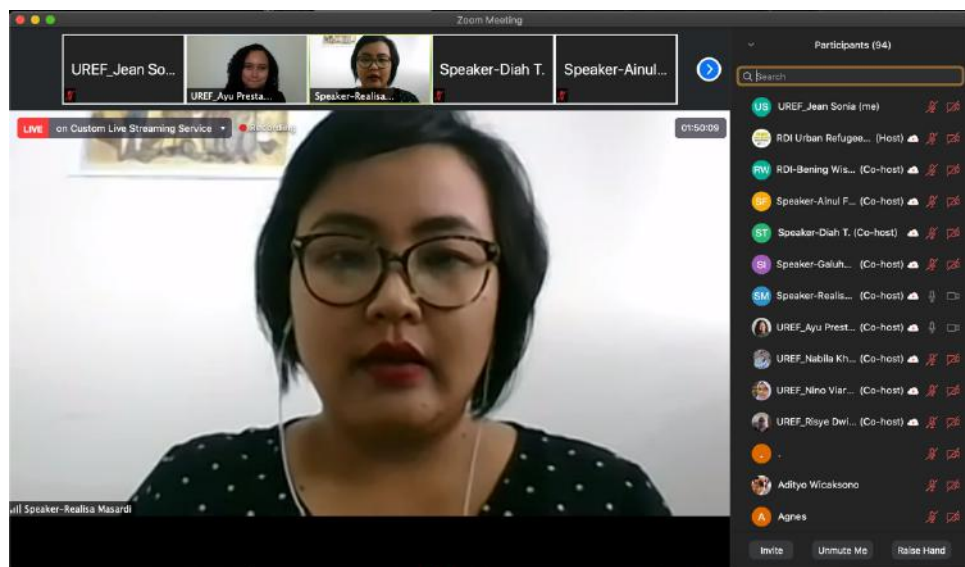


Fig. 6 The third presentation by Realisa Masardi, MA

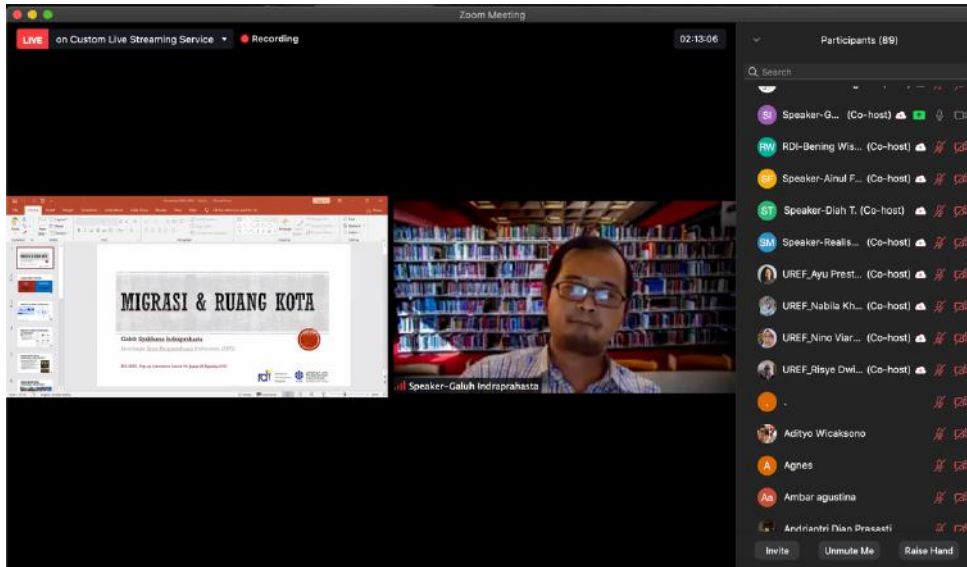


Fig. 7 The fourth presentation by Dr. Galuh Syahbana Indraprahasta

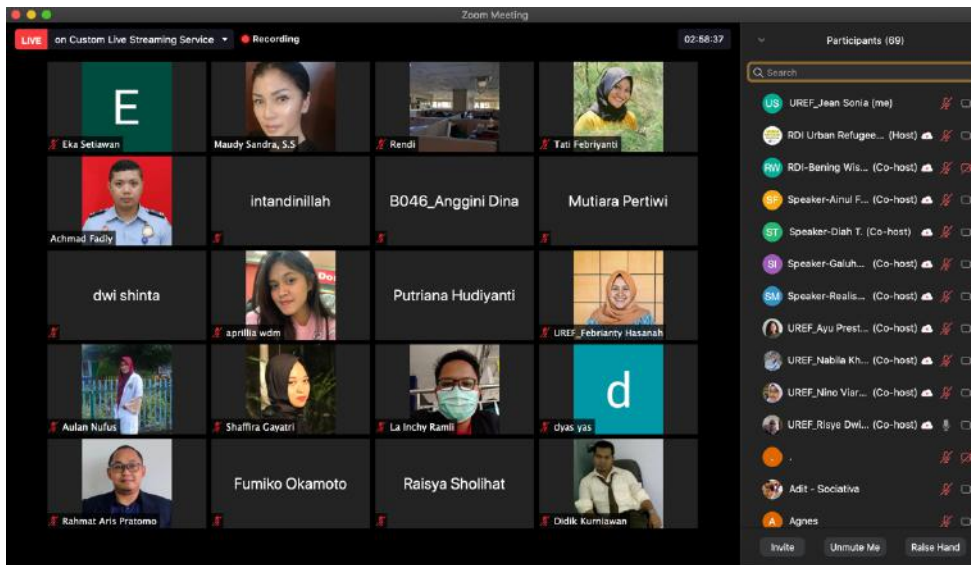


Fig. 8 Group Photo (All participants on Zoom – Screen 1)

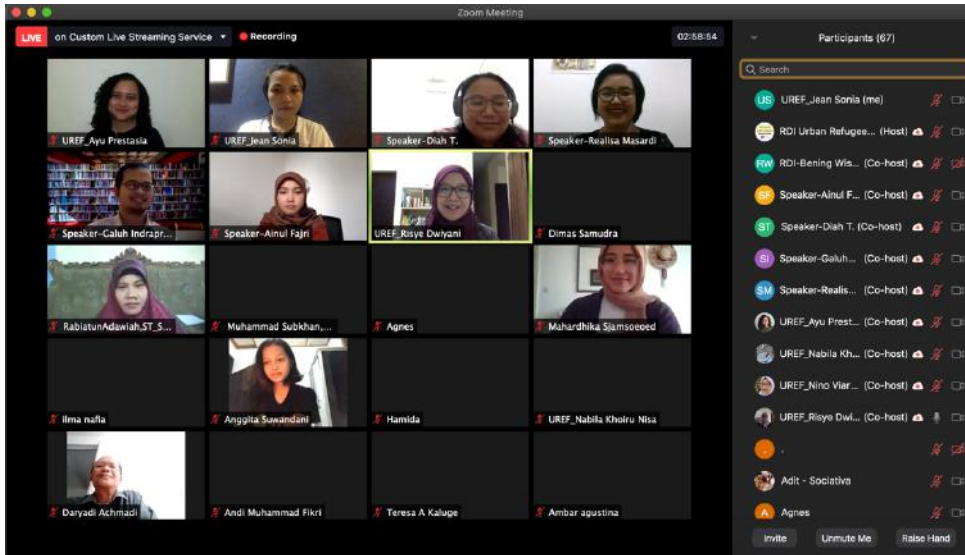


Fig. 9 Group Photo (All participants on zoom – Screen 2)

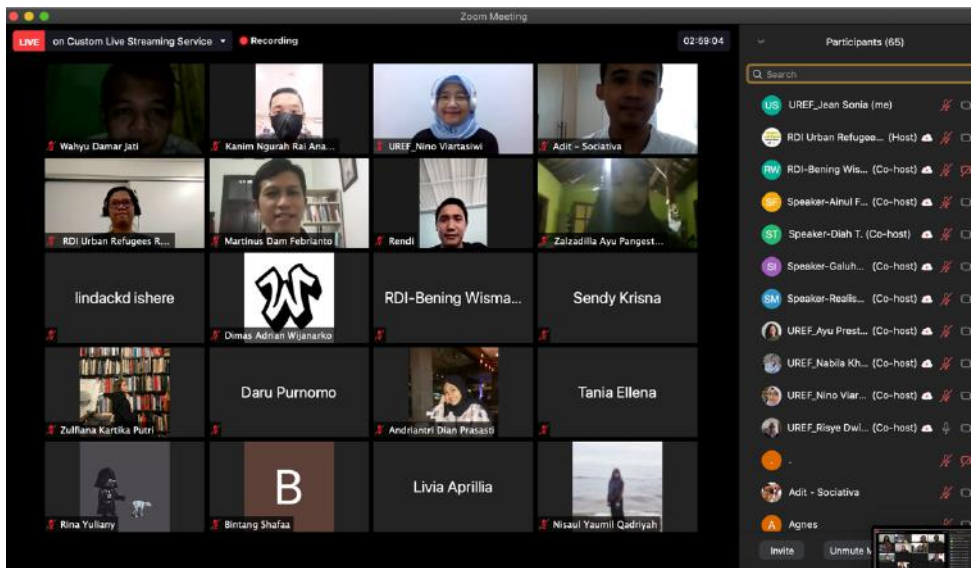


Fig. 10 Group Photo (All participants on Zoom – Screen 3)

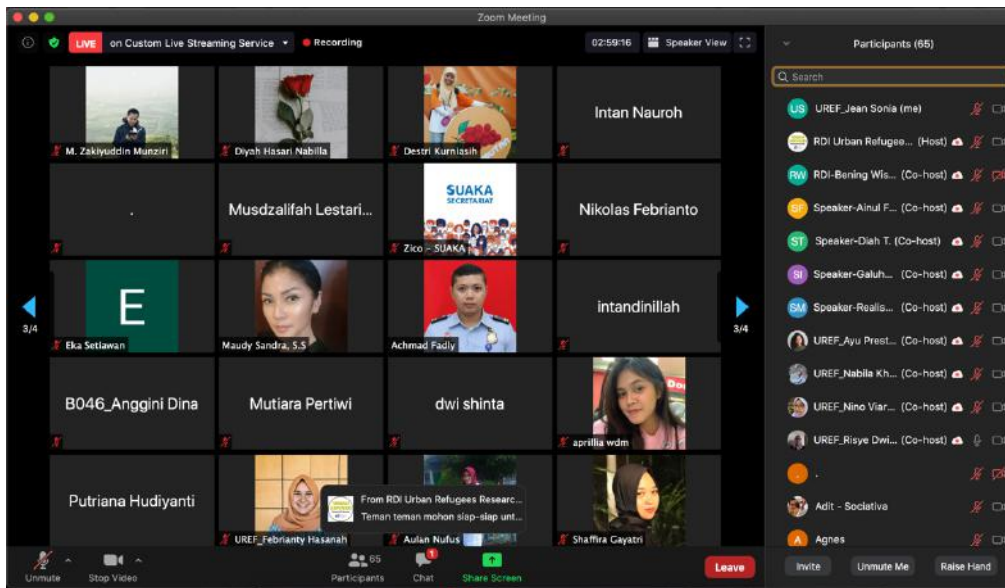


Fig. 11 Group Photo (All participants on Zoom – Screen 4)

## Live Q&A Session and Polling Results

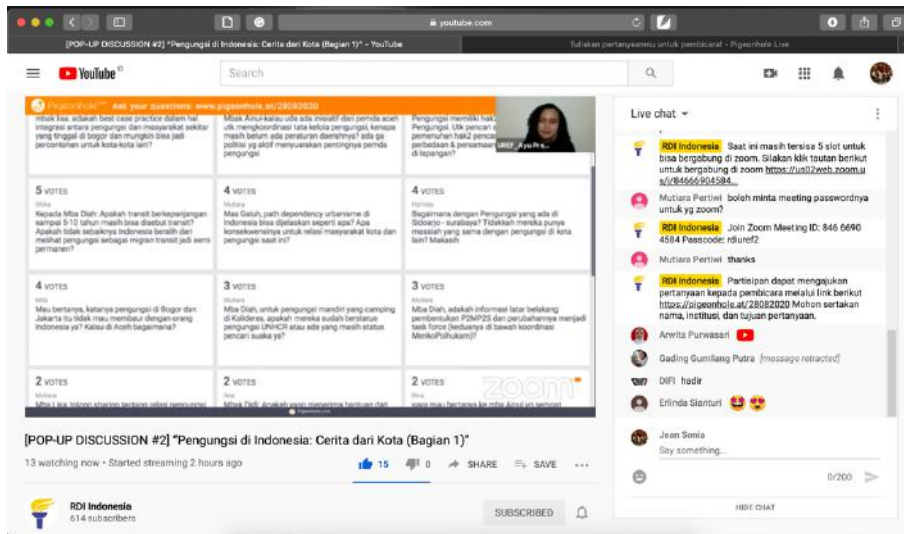


Fig. 12 Q&A session (List of questions at Pigeonhole platform)

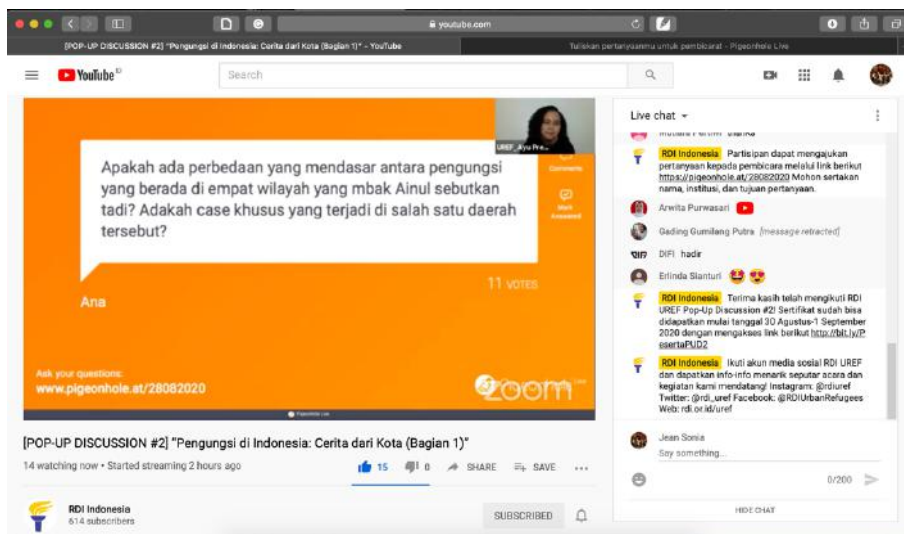


Fig. 13 Q&A session (Moderator presenting the most voted question at Pigeonhole platform)

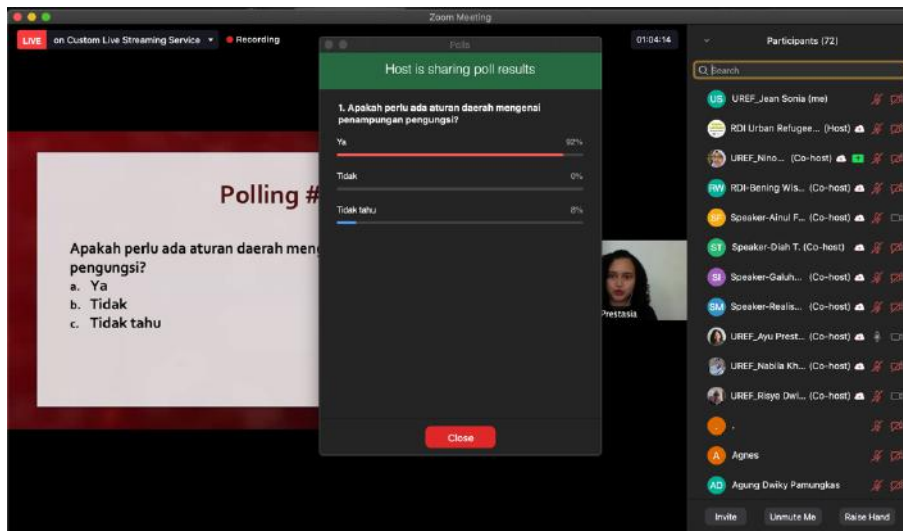


Fig. 14 First poll results sharing by the moderator

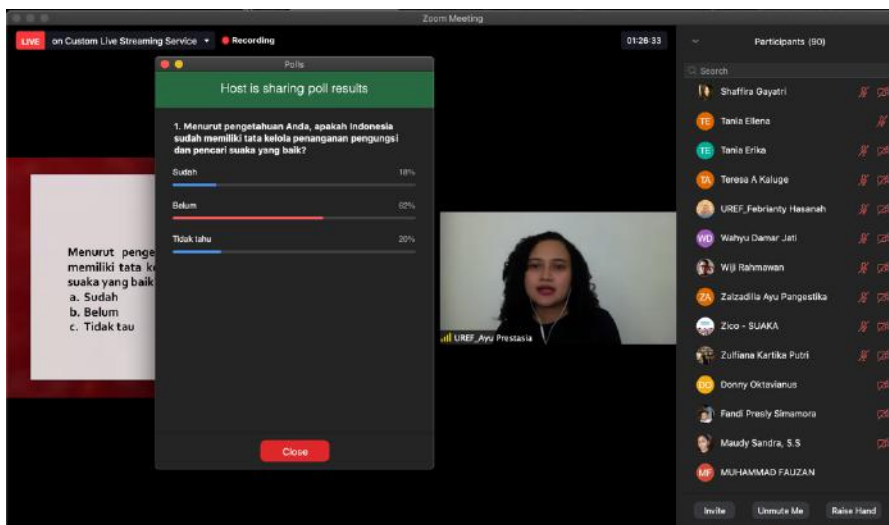


Fig. 15 Second poll results sharing by the moderator

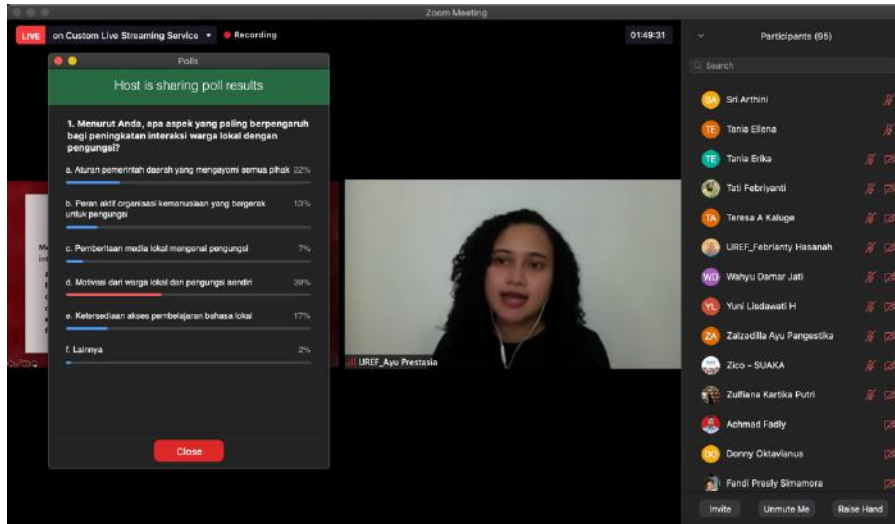


Fig. 16 Third poll results sharing by the moderator

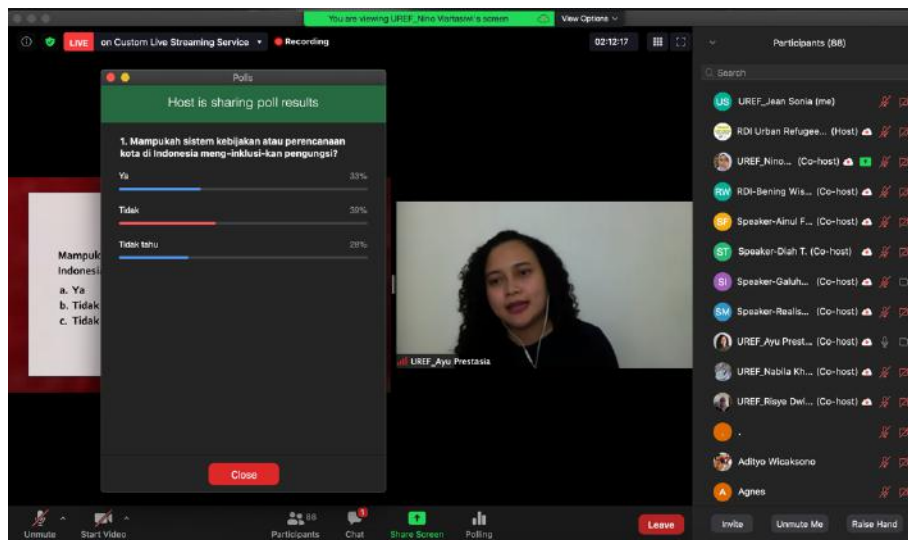


Fig. 17 Fourth poll results sharing by the moderator



