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PUSAT STUDI PENDIDIKAN
DAN KEBIJAKAN



Situation analysis on Foundational Skills, GEDSI, Climate Change Education, and Child Protection in Early and Basic Education sector

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Acronym

AKMI	Asesmen Kompetensi Madrasah Indonesia	MI	Madrasah Ibtidaiyah
APM	Angka partisipasi murni	NGO	A non-governmental organisation
Bappeda	Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah	NU	Nahdlatul 'Ulama
Bapperida	Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Riset Dan Inovasi Daerah	P5	Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila
BGP	Balai Guru Penggerak	PATBM	Perlindungan Anak Terpadu Berbasis
BPMP	Balai Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan	PAUD	Pendidikan anak usia dini
Calistung	Membaca, Menulis Berhitung	PGRI	Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia
DP3A	Dinas Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak	PMM	Platform Merdeka Mengajar
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion	PSPK	Pusat Studi Pendidikan dan Kebijakan
GPE	The Global Partnership for Education	RA	Raudhatul Athfal
HDI	Human development index	RLS	Rata-rata lama sekolah
HLS	Harapan lama sekolah	RPP	Rencana pembelajaran
IGI	Ikatan guru Indonesia	SD	Sekolah dasar
IPM	Indeks pembangunan manusia	TK	Taman kanak-kanak
KKG	Kelompok Kerja guru	TPPK	Tim Pencegahan dan Penanganan Kekerasan
KKKS	Kelompok Kerja Kepala Sekolah	RPJMD	Rencana pembangunan jangka Menengah daerah
KSP	Kurikulum satuan pendidikan		
LEG	Local Education Group		

Executive Summary

Improving literacy, numeracy, character education, social inclusion, and climate change education at school is essential for fostering well-rounded, informed, and responsible individuals who can contribute positively to society. This is in line with the aim of Merdeka Belajar policy, which endeavours to transform education for the realisation of Indonesia's excellent human resources and create a better educational ecosystem where all stakeholders—teachers, students, parents, and the community—can actively contribute to creating a conducive learning environment and supporting students' holistic development.

To achieve this goal, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is partnering with Save the Children Australia and Save the Children Indonesia to provide a GPE multiplier grant in Indonesia. The grant aims to improve student learning outcomes through education practices, systems, and policy, aligning with Indonesian government policy. For program development, the grant agent collaborates with The Center for Education and Policies Study (PSPK) to analyse the situation of foundational Skills (Numeracy, Literacy and Character Building), GEDSI and Climate Change, also Child Protection in Early & Basic Education sector across 4 provinces, 8 districts in Indonesia.

The qualitative study was conducted in eight regions across four provinces from March to July 2024, presenting various findings from good practices and also the challenges to improving learning transformation to align with GPE goals, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. As well, the findings support the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (MoECRT) and The Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) vision. It aims to enhance student competencies on foundational skill (literacy, numeracy, and character). The study involves various key actors in education in the regions. The findings present an analysis of the educational landscape, focusing on key components such as curriculum and assessment, teaching practices, educational leadership, and child protection. The study also examines cross-cutting issues like gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI), and climate change. The analyses reveal good practices in the regions, a commitment to improving education that is evident in policies and programs to improve the quality of education. However, findings from the regions include challenges such as the Human Development Index (HDI) and educational achievements in the studied regions are generally below provincial averages, indicating a need for targeted interventions to enhance educational outcomes. Meanwhile, the achievement of foundational skills based on education report cards (*Rapor Pendidikan*) and AKMI (*Asesmen Kompetensi Madrasah Indonesia*) in eight regions on literacy, numeracy, and a climate of inclusiveness needs to be improved at the primary level. Also, the education report card data reveals that eight districts need to pay more attention to the proportion of early childhood education teachers with bachelor's degree qualifications and the gross enrollment rate (APK) for children aged 5–6 years.

The thematic analysis highlights the best practices in curriculum and assessment, showcasing the potential of Merdeka Belajar reforms to inclusively transform education outcomes. There are schools that have made efforts to implement an inclusive curriculum and engage in professional learning communities. Several districts endeavoured to implement a smooth and enjoyable transition from early childhood education to primary school. GEDSI is accepted and promoted in some districts. This is in line with the data from the education report card. Also, the analysis uncovers a lack of understanding of the Kurikulum Merdeka among teachers, principals and education stakeholders. Learning materials including childrens' reading books are insufficient. In terms of climate change education and GEDSI. The study also identified

insufficient integration of climate change education and GEDSI into the curriculum, and suboptimal professional development system for teachers and principals.

The best practices in teaching practice identified that some teachers implement differentiated learning by managing classrooms based on children's characteristics and needs, applying positive discipline, engaging in professional learning communities, independently finding teaching materials on the internet and discussing teaching methods to assist students with special needs. Result from the education report card also indicates that the classroom atmosphere is becoming more conducive with teachers providing affective support and cognitive activation. The challenges in teaching practice underscored the lack of professional development for teachers, limited utilisation of diverse learning resources, difficulties in understanding and implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka, inadequate classroom management skills, and obstacles in accessing and utilising the PMM or PINTAR. Additionally, challenges such as geographical location, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, lack of trained personnel, and budget limitations hinder the understanding and implementation of GEDSI programs in the regions.

In the aspect of educational leadership, the study identified the good potentials such as involvement in curriculum development, considering elements of inclusive education and climate change, focusing on the professional development of teachers, ensuring physical and psychological safety for students, and guaranteeing equal access to learning opportunities for all students. Some school leaders have started implementing anti-bullying training for teaching staff, policies to promote female student participation. However, there are challenges such as a lack of collaboration among school principals, inadequate understanding of inclusive education, gender equality, and climate change, as well as the need for specific policies to guide education reforms and resource allocation. The absence of instructional leadership training, inadequate collaborations, and difficulties in utilising education report data for data-driven decision-making are also identified in the study.

In terms of child protection, the study identified initiatives including the establishment of regulations aimed at addressing child violence, the formation of working groups to oversee and address child protection issues, the implementation of awareness campaigns and training programs for teachers and caregivers, as well as the provision of support services for children who have experienced violence. However, the analysis revealed a lack of understanding concerning the Child Protection Policy (TPPK) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for handling child protection cases in schools, societal stigma surrounding violence against children, uneven strengthening of stakeholder networks related to child protection, and limited availability of supporting facilities such as inter-island transportation. The study concludes that while local regulations on education and child protection exist, there is a pressing need for more intensive monitoring and evaluation to ensure effective implementation. Furthermore, the study emphasises the importance of enhancing principal, teacher capacity, and local key actors, improving curriculum and assessment support system, practices, and fostering a more inclusive and climate-aware educational environment.

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1. Introduction

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a collaborative partnership and financial platform dedicated to strengthening the education system in developing countries. In their work in specific nations, GPE consistently employs a unique multi-stakeholder partnership approach. They bring together all Local Education Group (LEG) members and all stakeholders to collaborate on transforming the education system, with a focus on areas and individuals facing the greatest needs. One of GPE's unique approaches is called GPE multiplier grants. The GPE multiplier grant is an innovative finance instrument that provides an incentive and the financial resources to support better investment in education. Indonesia has been a partner with GPE since 2022. Last 2023, GPE appointed Save the Children Australia along with Save the Children Indonesia as the Grant Agent for GP multiplier grant starting from July 2024 to July 2028.

The primary objective of the GPE multiplier grant in Indonesia is to expand the INOVASI (The Innovation for Indonesia School's Children) phase 3 program. The INOVASI phase 3 program is a partnership between the Government of Australia (GoA) and Indonesia (GoI) to identify and support changes to improve student learning outcomes through education practice, systems and policy. The program should also align with the roadmap to education transformation, developed by LEG members and written on partnership compact documents.

In crafting the program, Save the Children Indonesia, the grant agent, partners with The Center for Education and Policies Study (PSPK), to analyse the situation related to foundational Skills (Numeracy, Literacy and Character Building), gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI), climate change, and child protection in early & basic education sector across four provinces. PSPK is an institution actively engaged in educational research and educational policy advocacy.

1.1. Merdeka Belajar: The transformation in Indonesian Education System

In 2019 Indonesia initiated an education transformation known as Merdeka Belajar or Emancipated Learning, led by The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (MoECRT). The reform aimed to enhance the learning experience for every student. At the K-12 level, this objective was manifested as enhancing students' reading and maths proficiency, along with various socio-emotional skills crucial for lifelong learning. This objective is formulated in the national curriculum, called Kurikulum Merdeka (Emancipated Curriculum). Officially, the Kurikulum Merdeka is regulated in Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (MoECRT) regulation no 12 of 2024 from March 27, 2023. With the spirit of education transformation, the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) has passed the regulation of MoRA Decree No. 450 of 2024 guiding the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka in RA and Madrasah. This regulation stipulates the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka at all levels of madrasahs.

The Kurikulum Merdeka implements the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (Project Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila or P5) to align students with Pancasila principles.

The project encourages collaborative learning across disciplines, addressing global issues like climate change, health education, and financial literacy. English is introduced in primary schools, with a gradual increase to compulsory by 2027/2028. The aim is to prepare students for communication across cultures and nations, improve literacy skills, and provide access to the latest knowledge, much of which is written in English.

Kurikulum Merdeka was first implemented in academic year 2021/2022, piloted in several schools selected for the MoECRT whole-school development program, namely Program Sekolah Penggerak. The Sekolah Penggerak program aims to promote Indonesia's vision of a prosperous, and self-reliant nation through Pancasila education. Sekolah Penggerak is one of the Merdeka Belajar programs, and another significant program to education transformation is Guru Penggerak program.

The MoECRT recruited teachers to become “penggerak”, leaders who become the driving force for changes. They were equipped with knowledge and skills necessary for supporting other educators to implement student-centred learning. They become a role model and agent of transformation of the education ecosystem. In parallel, to support this endeavour, the MoECRT also revisit the qualifications standard for teachers.

Systemic education transformation is also strengthened by the assessment system. In 2022 the MoECRT launched the National Assessment (known as *Asesmen Nasional*). The *Asesmen Nasional* consists of three parts: the minimum competency for literacy and numeracy skills (known as *asesmen kompetensi minimum/AKM*), the character survey (*survei karakter*) and the learning environment or school climate survey (*survei lingkungan belajar*). The result of the national assessment is reported to schools and district offices through the Education Report Cards (known as *Rapor Pendidikan*). The education report card displays the condition of schools based on data from national assessments and surveys involving schools and regions. Schools and local governments are encouraged to use the education report card as a reference in identifying problems, reflecting on their roots, and improving the overall quality of education. This school-based data-driven decision-making system was first developed and introduced as part of Merdeka Belajar initiatives. The initial impact of national assessment revealed two main findings: first, schools with higher literacy levels tend to be early adopters of the curriculum. Second, schools that adopted the new curriculum also showed higher gains from 2021 to 2023 compared to schools that did not¹.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs, which regulates and organises madrasah, also has a similar assessment, namely AKMI (*Asesmen Kompetensi Madrasah Indonesia*). The AKMI has run since 2021. Similar to the *Asesmen Nasional*, one of the objectives of AKMI is to map the quality of education and measure the competence of madrasah students in reading literacy, numeracy literacy, science literacy and socio-cultural literacy.

¹ Based on the paper by Aditomo, Nino. "Laying the Foundations of Systemic Change in Education: Reflections on Indonesia's Merdeka Belajar Reform." 2024. The paper can be accessed through: https://pskp.kemdikbud.go.id/file/kebijakan/1719449376_file.pdf

Furthermore, to help schools ensure a safe, comfortable and violence-free school environment, the MoECRT issued a regulation on prevention and handling violence in the education institution environment (Ministerial Regulation Number 46 Year 2023). The regulations aim to assist schools in handling cases of violence in schools, including online, psychological and other forms of violence with a perspective on victims. Likewise, there is also the MoRA regulation No. 73/2022 on the prevention and handling of sexual violence in madrasahs. The regulation regulates the mechanism for preventing and handling sexual violence in madrasahs.

To date the aforementioned policies are implemented in the majority of schools under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology and madrasah under the Ministry of Religious Affairs². The systemic approach for education transformation. The MoECRT monitoring and evaluation data show that schools and administrators at the region and district levels need support to fit all the policies together and bring about the expected outcomes. This study is conducted to explore further about the needs as well as the potential the schools and districts have for education transformation.

1.2. Objectives of this study and methodologies

It has been agreed by Mitra Pembangunan Indonesia (MPI/LEG) that GPE Multiplier Grant will be utilised to support education transformation in eight districts, they are Nias Utara, Nias Selatan, Ketapang, Kayong Utara, Halmahera Utara, Kepulauan Morotai, Tanggamus, and Pesisir Barat. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to:

- a. Identify the quality of foundation skills in the eight districts;
- b. explore challenges, opportunities, and aspirations to improve the implementation quality of curriculum & assessment, teaching practice, educational leadership, child protection as well as gender equality and climate change education in the eight districts;
- c. identify strategies to enhance the foundation skills quality, and the support needed in the eight districts.

In order to comprehend the situation analysis on the curriculum & assessment, teaching practice, educational leadership, child protection as well as GEDSI and climate change education in the early and basic education. The study was guided by key questions, including:

1. How is the quality of curriculum & assessment, teaching practices, educational leadership, child protection as well as gender equality and climate change education mainstreaming experienced by local stakeholders?
2. What are the challenges, opportunities, and aspirations to improve the implementation quality of curriculum & assessment, teaching practice, educational leadership, child protection as well as gender equality and climate change education in the regions?
3. What are the concepts, and strategies that need to be implemented by each local stakeholder to achieve improved competency-based learning in accordance with the context and characteristics of the regions?
4. What support do they need to implement the strategies?

² In this report the term “schools” is used to represent both *sekolah* (schools) under MoECRT and madrasah under MORA.

The study applies a qualitative approach, with the data collected through workshops, school observations, interviews, and desk studies on national and local education policies. The workshops utilised an appreciative inquiry approach³ to identify strength, successes, and empower participants to participate in the change process. During the workshop the key stakeholders in the regions were identified for their potential contributions and roles. The participants represented three different groups of education stakeholders. First, the Education Quality Assurance Center (BPMP), the Change Agent Teachers Center (BGP), Regional office of the Ministry of Religious Affair, Development planning agency at district level (*Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah/Bappeda* or *Bapperida*), the Education Office, and the Environment Office, the Office of Public Works and Regional Settlements (*Dinas PU Perkim*), the Office of Women's Empowerment and Child protection/DP3A. Second, the school's representative, they were head of regular schools and madrasah, from early childhood education to primary schools, school supervisors and teachers. The third were local education organisations and teachers' associations. Representatives from this group were, Children's Forum, Community-based Integrated Child Protection/PTABM, Indonesian teacher association/PGRI, Indonesian teacher forum/IGI, Islamic organisation/*majelis dikhlasmen and PNF* of Muhammadiyah, Islamic organisation/*Ma'arif* NU representatives, Association of Indonesian early childhood educators and education personnel/Himpaudi, Disability and Women's Organisation Representative, Village Head Representative and Non-governmental organisations/NGOs.

Observations and school visits were conducted at early childhood education and primary schools from both regular and madrasah. Desk studies were also carried out by reviewing the human development index, education achievements (expected years schooling, average years schooling, net enrollment rate in primary school), education report cards, AKMI, national and regional policies such as regional strategic planning/RPJMD, strategic planning of regional offices, such as the Education Office and DP3A, school/madrasah curriculum, learning plans, and various related regulations such as local regulations on the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka and child protection. The data were subsequently analysed to obtain comprehensive understanding by comparing and contrasting findings from various sources including the first and second workshops in eight districts.

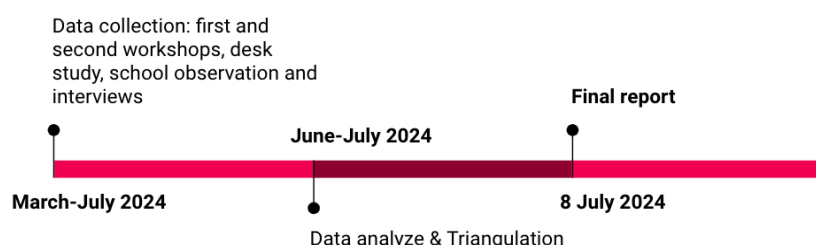
The findings were triangulated with the education report card. The adjustment was made based on the 3-colour spectrum on the education report card that labels the data values. Those 3 colour spectrums were green means the achievement is good or high. Yellow, which means the achievement is moderate, and red, which means the achievement is less or low. For literacy and numeracy, good achievement means more than 70% of students have achieved minimum competency, moderate means only 40% - 70% of students have achieved minimum competency, low means less than 40% of students have achieved minimum competency for literacy and numeracy.

The same adjustment was also made to triangulate the findings with AKMI assessment. In AKMI the achievement are divided four categories, they are: : (1) Needs special intervention

³ Appreciative Inquiry Workshop is a positive approach to institutional development and change that focuses on appreciating, and building on the strengths and successes that already exist within an organisation or individual.

means the scores below a certain percentile (for example, below the 25% percentile) indicating that students have significant difficulties in that category; (2) Basic means a score between the 25% and 50% percentile which indicates that the student has basic understanding but needs improvement; (3) Proficient means a score between the 50 and 75 percentile indicating that the student has adequate competence; (4) Advanced means the scores above the 75 percentile indicating that the student has excellent understanding and skills in the category.

The study timeline spans from March to July 2024. The following timeline illustrates the study process.



The time available for conducting the study becomes the main limitation of this study. In a restricted period for data collection and the need to adjust with the school calendar, the number of schools observed was limited, which subsequently influenced the opportunity to explore more deeply through observation and in-depth interview. Despite the limitation, this study shed light on the complexity of education transformation particularly in the districts with limited resources and geographical challenges, as explained in the subsequent part of this report.

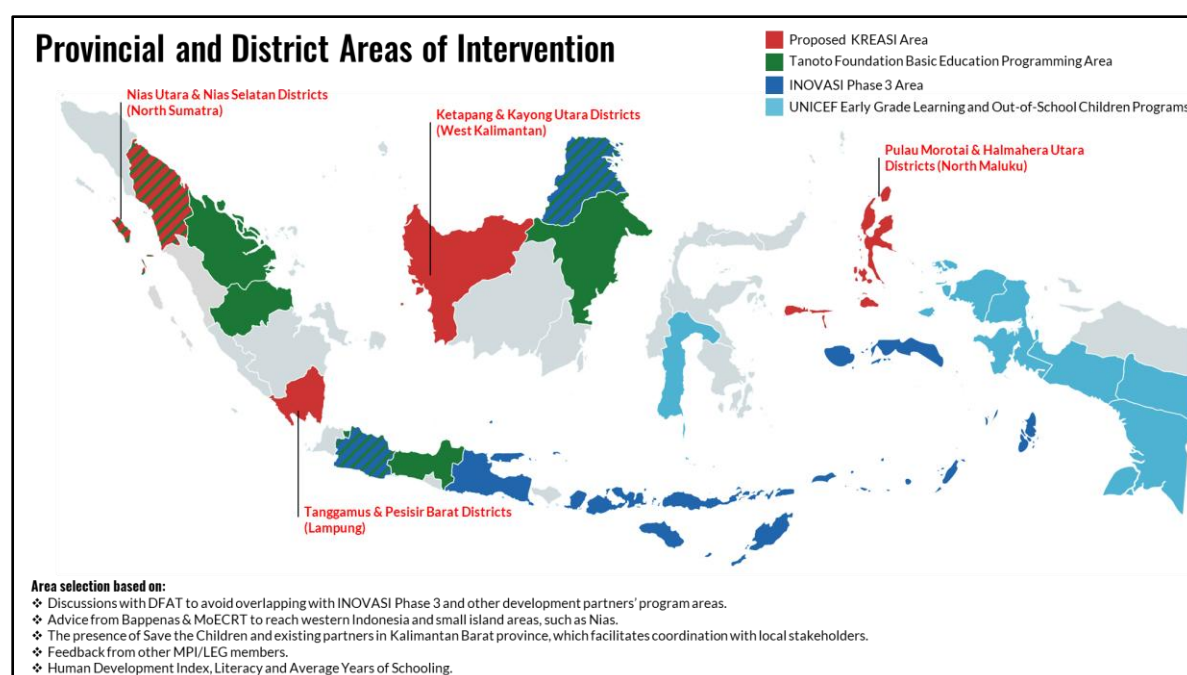
2. Findings

The research took place across eight districts in four provinces, namely Tanggamus and Pesisir Barat in Lampung Province, Nias Utara and Nias Selatan in Sumatera Utara Province, Ketapang and Kayong Utara in Kalimantan Barat Province, and Halmahera Utara and Kepulauan Morotai in Maluku Utara Province. The map below illustrates the study locations in four provinces in Indonesia.

To answer the questions, the findings focus on four components: curriculum and assessment, teaching practices, educational leadership, and child protection. The analyses of every component took into account four cross cutting issues, they are: gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI), and climate change. To grasp the context of the current state of education in each region, we also examined education report cards and AKMI (Indonesian Madrasah Competency Assessment) at the primary school level.

Thematic analysis of the curriculum and assessment component resulting from the analyses of curriculum policies at the national and sub-national level. The examination also included the education unit curriculum (*Kurikulum satuan pendidikan/KSP*), the school's vision and mission, the learning objectives, the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka, the implementation of curriculum and learning resources that strengthen learning outcomes (literacy, numeracy, and character) in schools/madrasas, and the implementation of assessments at both the

kindergarten/primary school and school/madrasa levels, and cross cutting issues such as GEDSI and climate change.



Thematic analysis on the teaching practices component is derived from the analysis of local policies related to teacher capacity building, learning implementation, teacher training and the role of professional learning communities in facilitating teachers in teaching at the kindergarten/primary school and school/madrasah levels as well as cross cutting issues (GEDSI and climate change).

Thematic analysis on the educational leadership component includes the development of policies to enhance the capacity of principals in instructional leadership, initiatives to foster an inclusive school culture and the engagement of principals in professional learning communities and working groups at the kindergarten/primary school and school/madrasah levels. It also encompasses cross-cutting issues such as GEDSI and climate change.

Finally, the thematic analysis concentrated on the child protection component was drawn from child protection policies at both the local and school levels. It considers the implementation of MoECRT Regulation No. 46 of 2023 regarding the prevention and handling of violence in education units and MoRA Regulation No. 73 of 2022 on the prevention and handling of sexual violence in education units within the MoRA's authority at the kindergarten/primary school and school/madrasah levels, along with cross cutting issues such as GEDSI and climate change.

The findings in four provinces containing eight districts are as follows.

2.1. Tanggamus and Pesisir Barat Districts

Tanggamus and Pesisir Barat districts are two regions located in Lampung province. There are 464 early childhood educations and 404 primary schools in Tanggamus district and 88 kindergartens and 126 primary schools in Pesisir Barat district. Meanwhile, there are 17 *Raudhatul Athfal*-Islamic Kindergarten (RA) and 56 *Madrasah ibtidaiyah*-Islamic primary schools (MI) in Tanggamus District. Pesisir Barat District has 9 RA and 16 MI. Both districts have also committed to improving the quality of education and child protection. This is evident in the regulations governing education provision, support for disabilities, inclusive education and students from poor families. Implementation of those regulations is still facing challenges in terms of its practice. The same situation also applied in the implementation of regulations related to child protection and child rights.

The achievements of the human development index and education in Tanggamus and Pesisir Barat in Table 1 show that the HDI⁴ achievements of both districts are still below the achievements of Lampung Province. Meanwhile, the achievements of the expected years of schooling and net enrolment ratio in primary school are still below the achievements of Lampung Province. However, the average school years of Pesisir Barat is higher than the achievements of Lampung Province and Tanggamus. These facts show disparities of HDI within one province, and the need to accelerate improvement in those two districts. Table below summarises the HDI and education achievement of Tanggamus and Pesisir Barat.

Table 1. HDI and education achievements of Tanggamus and Pesisir Barat

Aspect	Tanggamus	Pesisir Barat	Lampung Province
Population	670,37 (thousand) people	172,32 (thousand) people	9,05 (million) people
Human Development Index in 2023	68,79	68,79	71,25
Average years of schooling in 2023	7,36	8,70	8,29
Expected years of schooling in 2023	12,31	12,14	12,77
Net enrollment rate in primary school in 2023	88.97	80.87	91.37

Source: BPS, 2024

The finding of four components and regulations in Tanggamus and Pesisir Barat is as follows.

⁴ The human development index (HDI) is a measurement based on the calculation of life expectancy, education, and standard of living.

2.1.1. A large number of schools have implemented Kurikulum Merdeka; however, there is a lack of understanding of Kurikulum Merdeka principles, and ways to eliminate calistung⁵ tests in the students' enrolment process.

The emphasis on inclusive education, gender equality, and character education, highlight the strengths of current educational practices within the framework of Kurikulum Merdeka. However, these strengths are counterbalanced by significant challenges, including incomplete curriculum design at school level, limited understanding of Kurikulum Merdeka principles, and resource constraints. In the 2023-2024 academic year, there were only eight schools implementing Kurikulum Merdeka. Since Kurikulum Merdeka is officially launched as a national curriculum, in the new 2024-2025 academic year, there are 464 PAUD and 404 SD implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka at this moment in Tanggamus. With this in mind, the district will need support on strategies to assist schools in the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka.

For literacy and numeracy, Tanggamus district has shown their commitment to improve literacy and numeracy level. The district has a Regional Literacy Movement (*Gerakan literasi daerah/GLD*) policy. This policy is regulated through District Head Regulation no. 4 of 2020. It aims to foster a culture of literacy in the education ecosystem starting from families, schools and communities, and in the context of lifelong learning as an effort to improve the quality of life. At school level, this regulation has been stipulated through the School Literacy Movement (*gerakan literasi sekolah/GLS*). Schools have their own independence to implement GLS in curricular, co-curricular and or extracurricular activities. The activities can be carried out either in the classroom or outside the classroom, and in partnership with parents and or the community. There is also an initiative by local residents in Tanggamus to improve the literacy of children in the village through program called reading houses⁶.

In Pesisir Barat District, there are currently 68 PAUD and 119 primary schools that have implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka. This indicates that not all schools In Pesisir Barat have implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka. Similarly, the government in Tanggamus district, Pesisir Barat will require support in developing strategies to effectively implement the curriculum in their area.

To strengthen the education ecosystem among various stakeholders in Lampung Province, there are various universities or Educational Institutions for Educational Personnel (LPTK). Some of these campuses are Raden Intan Lampung State Islamic University, Lampung State University, STKIP-PGRI Bandar Lampung. These campuses have the potential to become partners to improve the quality of education in the district, through pre-service teacher education, research, and service to community programs.

⁵ Calistung, which stands for reading, writing and arithmetic, is usually considered a key indicator of children's learning success. This test is usually conducted for new admissions at the elementary level. There is misconception in the community and teachers about calistung, so the calistung test has been banned through MoECRT regulation No. 17/2010 on Education Management and Implementation, and MoECRT regulation No. 1/2021 on New Student Admission.

⁶ See <https://www.kompas.id/baca/tokoh/2023/09/19/sosok-tamar-widadi-memupuk-literasi-di-pelosok-tanggamus>

The analysis of curriculum and assessment aspects reveals several key issues in the education system. Firstly, there is a lack of understanding among teachers regarding the Kurikulum Merdeka. This may be related to another finding that teachers are still not optimally utilising the digital platforms provided by the government, namely PMM⁷ and PINTAR⁸ so that they are not quite well-informed about how to implement the new policies in the Kurikulum Merdeka. Second, in relation to the use of the digital platform, limited access to the internet and a lack of motivation to use technology, hinder the understanding of curriculum demands. This highlights the need for improving support programs to enhance teachers' comprehension of the curriculum. Strategies used by the government for introducing the new curriculum also need improvement. Geographical issues such as the distant location of the teachers' working group meetings become a major challenge for teachers to continuously participate in the working group sessions. Meanwhile, some other teachers have a lack of motivation to participate in the professional learning community.

For literacy and numeracy, Pesisir Barat District also has a District Head Regulation No. 44/2016 on School Literacy Movement, which indicates commitment to improving the quality of literacy skills. However, there is a need to develop strategies for improving reading and numeracy since the education report card advises the government to focus more strategically on assisting students in achieving their minimum basic competency, particularly in numeracy.

In relation to early literacy, teachers in early childhood education still teach *calistung* although the government suggested otherwise. The practice persists due to parental expectations and literacy assessment required in some elementary schools, based on the respected school policy. It is essential to enhance the awareness about the transition from kindergarten to elementary school. Proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic (*calistung*) is not a compulsory skill for early childhood education students, as mandated by government policy. The enrollment of early childhood education learners in public primary schools follows a zoning system that considers the child's age and proximity to the school. Formal instructions in *calistung* competence are reserved for students at the primary school level.

In order to understand the importance of the need for climate change education, it is essential to understand the resource landscape of a region. Lampung is well known for its rich biodiversity, making it a province of significance regarding issues related to climate change. The region has various natural resources such as fisheries, coffee, cacao and banana plantations. Lampung is home to dolphins and elephants living in their natural habitat. Climate change has the potential to impact the lives of all individuals. Therefore, for the integration of climate change education is crucial. Field data indicates a lack of understanding about climate change and climate change education among participants. They were aware of the lengthening of the dry season and the changing seasonal pattern, but were unsure how to address this issue in the classroom. Similarly, challenges exist concerning GEDSI. While all schools are

⁷ The Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) platform is a technology platform provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture to serve as a learning medium for teachers and principals in teaching, learning, and professional development. PMM can be accessed by madrasahs.

⁸ PINTAR (Training & Learning Information Center) is present as a place to learn together online and open to all civil servants at the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Indonesia. PINTAR consists of two categories of learning, namely, training and knowledge, all available in the form of articles, videos, and materials to improve the skills and capacity.

required to accommodate children with special needs, there is a deficiency in competency to support them effectively throughout the learning process.

To prepare for the transition to introducing English as a compulsory subject in all primary schools in Indonesia in the 2027/2028 academic year, some primary schools have been teaching English as local content for grades 4, 5 and 6. Schools have hired honorary teachers⁹ to teach English because the government has not recruited English teachers for primary schools. The obstacle faced in preparing English learning is the limited number of teachers' handbooks and supporting books for students. To overcome this obstacle, teachers create worksheets to use in learning. Thus, there is a need for fundamental support for learning English subjects, such as policies for the fulfilment of adequate teachers, as well as the use of various learning resources.

2.1.2. Teachers are prioritising literacy, numeracy, and character while incorporating environmental awareness; but a lack of professional development and limited resources become the major challenges to their effectiveness.

At the elementary school level, teachers engage in various best practices to enhance literacy, numeracy, and character. These practices include conducting diagnostic assessments, establishing classroom agreements, and using innovative, student-centred teaching methods. Meanwhile, at the early childhood education level, teachers demonstrate best practices by considering students' backgrounds, readiness, and learning styles to determine the most suitable and engaging teaching methods for them. Furthermore, on the aspect of climate change education, both educational levels have displayed practices focused on integrating environmental awareness into the curriculum. These findings regarding quality of learning are also reflected in the education report card that shows that the classroom atmosphere is starting to become conducive and the presence of affective support and cognitive activation from the teacher.

The teaching practice aspect highlights the importance of improving teaching quality in the areas of GEDSI and climate change. It identifies challenges such as the lack of professional development for teachers and limited utilisation of diverse learning resources. Teachers have not fully accommodated children with special needs in learning and do not understand their teaching strategies. Some teachers respond to climate change only in relation to Adiwiyata¹⁰ schools because climate change education has not been integrated into the curriculum and learning. Teachers have limited ideas and learning resources to implement climate change education.

Regarding the access to teaching practice from digital platforms in place to support teachers' professional development, this study finds that some teachers are still not familiar with using digital platforms such as PMM or PINTAR. This may explain their struggle to effectively teach

⁹ Honorary teachers are contract teachers with non-civil servant status who are usually recruited and paid by schools.

¹⁰ Adiwiyata is one of the programs of the Ministry of Environment in order to encourage the creation of knowledge and awareness of the school community in environmental conservation efforts.

complex topics such as GEDSI and climate change, and further impacting the quality of education provided to students.

In terms of the learning resources, there is limited access and utilisation of diverse learning resources in teaching practices. The schools have very limited facilities and programs to support literacy and numeracy such as reading books and reading corners, while some schools still do not have a library room. The use of SIBI¹¹ and PMM, which can support literacy and numeracy learning are not found. While collaborative teaching is encouraged by Kurikulum Merdeka policy, it is found that the lack of cooperation between teachers is also a barrier to the exchange of ideas and learning resources. Another challenge is distance between each school that hinders collaboration through KKG or between-school collaboration.

2.1.3. Principals support curriculum development, professional development of teachers, and ensure physical and psychological safety for students. Nevertheless, the principals have not yet explained how data is used to make decisions regarding planning and budgeting.

Principals have demonstrated various best practices in supporting curriculum development by actively engaging in developing and monitoring the curriculum, considering elements of inclusive education and climate change, both in policies and school programs. They have also focused on the professional development of teachers by setting, monitoring, and evaluating teacher performance. In creating an ideal learning environment, principals ensure the physical and psychological safety of students and guarantee that all students have equal access to learning opportunities. The principals have supported curriculum development, professional development of teachers, and ensured physical and psychological safety for students. For instance, some principals implement anti-bullying training for teaching staff and policies to ensure all students feel accepted and valued. They also stated that they have already introduced policies and programs to encourage female students' active participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) subjects, promote female student leadership, and provide leadership training, social projects, or extracurricular activities that foster collaboration, honesty, and empathy. This finding is confirmed by the achievement of the education report card 2024 that instructional leadership has led to the school's vision and mission, practice and assessment of learning to be oriented towards improving learner learning outcomes with programs, incentive systems or resources that begin to support teachers to reflect on and improve learning.

When it comes to school planning, however, there are many principals who have yet to take advantage of the valuable data from education report cards (Rapor Pendidikan) for planning and development. Some even do not know it exists and this lack of awareness may explain the ineffectiveness of the current strategies for enhancing literacy and numeracy skills. Many school principals have not adopted evidence-based approaches and provide teachers with the necessary professional development to ensure students are equipped with these essential skills. The implementation of teacher capacity-building programs is incomplete. A few school leaders encourage self-directed learning through platforms like PMM or PINTAR, webinars, and school discussions, yet this practice is not widespread.

¹¹ SIBI is the Indonesian book information system, an official platform of the MoECRT to access various books, both textbooks and non-textbooks, reading. The SIBI website can be accessed through: <https://buku.kemdikbud.go.id/>

The performance of principals as instructional leaders also indicates the need for improvement. The application of student well-being programs such as social emotional learning and positive discipline are suboptimal. These programs are not implemented in all schools, hindering the development of student agency and leadership skills. There is an absence of clear mechanisms for monitoring learning activities and student progress towards established goals. This results in a gap between stated goals and actual implementation. Some principals struggle to fully integrate new curricula and lack clear monitoring systems, making it difficult to track progress and adapt instruction as needed. Principals demonstrate insufficient efforts in implementing programs related to GEDSI and climate change. While principals express a commitment to inclusivity, they often lack concrete actions and plans to support students with special needs. In addition, climate change education has not been integrated into school curriculum planning.

The findings show that school leaders need support to understand education report cards for making informed decisions and developing appropriate strategies to improve student literacy and numeracy. The lack of commitment and support from local governments is an inhibiting factor in capacity building for school principals. Also, there is a lack of policies and programs at the district level to encourage data-driven school improvement planning.

Furthermore, the finding points out that the strategies currently being used to improve literacy and numeracy in schools may not be yielding the desired results. This highlights the importance of school leaders continuously evaluating and adjusting their approaches to address the specific needs of their students effectively.

2.1.4. Schools conduct awareness and training sessions on child protection, yet strict policies on bullying, sexual violence, and intolerance remain absent.

Schools have conducted awareness and training sessions on child protection, but less binding policies exist for bullying, sexual violence, and intolerance. Teachers are employing more engaging methods to educate students about bullying, sexual violence, and intolerance. However, there are less binding internal school policies related to these issues. Based on the finding, there are unclear regulations and prevention mechanisms regarding violence against children. Due to inconsistent implementation of child safeguarding policies across schools, with some schools not initiating development processes, weakens the effectiveness of safeguarding efforts. This lack of clarity can lead to inconsistencies in how cases of violence are handled and may result in gaps in providing adequate protection for children. Without well-defined regulations and effective prevention strategies in place, children remain vulnerable to various forms of violence within the school environment.

The study also finds that administrative services for children in schools are not operating at an optimal level. It suggests that there may be inefficiencies or inadequacies in the way services are being delivered to ensure the well-being and protection of children. It mostly happened due to the difficulty of obtaining identity documents for children born out of wedlock (not recognized by the state for various reasons). This suboptimal performance of administrative

services could hinder the timely and appropriate response to child protection issues that arise within the school setting.

Furthermore, the study highlights the minimal readiness of schools to respond to disasters and disease outbreaks. This lack of preparedness can have serious implications for the safety and well-being of children, especially in emergency situations. Several schools have been affected by floods multiple times, yet they recognize the need to enhance their capacity to manage floods and other disasters, as well as to collaborate effectively with the community. Without proper planning and readiness measures in place, schools may struggle to effectively protect children during crises, potentially putting their lives at risk. The analysis also identifies a lack of awareness among the community and human resources as a significant factor contributing to the suboptimal protection of children in schools.

2.1.5. Local governments are committed to education provision and child protection and monitoring and evaluation is necessary to improve practices

The districts of Tanggamus and Pesisir Barat have established educational policies governing the implementation of education, particularly for students with special needs and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Both districts regulate teacher qualifications, curriculum, child protection, and access for special needs students. However, Tanggamus district is more specific in regulating the capacity development of teachers and school principals, an aspect that Pesisir Barat has not yet addressed. Hence, there is a need for more intensive monitoring and evaluation to ensure that educational policies and practices are effectively implemented at both Districts.

Recommendations to address the challenges of improving education quality in Tanggamus and Pesisir Barat as follows.

Curriculum and Assessment:

1. Collaborate and establish partnerships with universities or educational institutions (LPTK) to improve the quality of pre-service teacher programs, conduct research, service to community programs, as well as Kampus Merdeka program. This approach at the same time will strengthen the education ecosystem among various stakeholders in the region.
2. Enhancing the support system for schools to implement Kurikulum Merdeka, including to use various learning resources, to continuously access the digital platforms provided by the government to improve the quality of learning, and to develop contextual learning resources for the students.
3. Provide adequate reading resources for literacy and numeracy in kindergarten and primary school and encourage teachers to develop literacy-oriented creative and fun learning activities.
4. Integrate climate change education into the school curriculum and increase support system and collaboration with the environment office and Adiwiyata school.
5. Improve support to integrate GEDSI within school curriculum and policy, e.g. school-level policies to support teachers to build capacity on inclusive education.

Teaching Practice

1. Strengthening the teacher professional development through the learning community (*komunitas belajar*), PMM, KKG and other relevant programs, including to provide training to teachers on inclusive education and gender equality perspectives.
2. Improving the *Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila* (P5) and provide adequate learning resources to support of GEDSI and climate change education implementation.

Educational leadership

1. Bappeda leads the reflection of the education program with stakeholders and develops data-based joint planning that is appropriate to local conditions.
2. Improve training for principals and teachers in understanding and using data for effective decision-making.
3. Strengthen commitment and support from the local government in terms of budget, policies and programs related to data management in schools.
4. Strengthen principals' instructional leadership to improve the quality of learning and provide mentoring for performance evaluation.

Child Protection

1. Clarify regulations and mechanisms for preventing child abuse and increase public awareness on child protection through education and socialization programs.
2. Strengthen school capacity to handle child protection in schools and to initiate child protection programs.
3. Strengthen coordination and communication between parents, students and teachers in child protection efforts.
4. Improve school preparedness for disasters and disease outbreaks through training and simulations. The education office facilitates cooperation between schools and the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) and NGOs concerned with disaster and climate change issues.

2.2. Halmahera Utara and Kepulauan Morotai

Halmahera Utara and Kepulauan Morotai districts are expansion districts in Maluku Utara Province. Halmahera Utara was established in 2003 while Kepulauan Morotai was established in 2008, which previously merged with Halmahera Utara District. Halmahera Utara District has 74 kindergartens and 211 primary schools while Morotai Islands has 93 kindergartens and 70 primary schools. Meanwhile, there are 73 RA and 138 MI in Halmahera Utara District. Kepulauan Morotai District has 8 RA and 14 MI. All early childhood and primary schools in Halmahera Utara have implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka starting in the 2024-2025 academic year. However, the number is lower in Kepulauan Morotai. Currently 65 primary schools in Morotai Islands have implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka, commencing in the 2024-2025 academic year. Therefore, schools require support to ensure the optimal implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka.

Table 2. HDI and education achievements of Halmahera Utara and Kepulauan Morotai

Aspect	Halmahera Utara	Kepulauan Morotai	Maluku Utara
Population	202.755 people	78. 270 people	1 319. 338 people
Human Development Index in 2023	69,05	64,73	70,21
Average years of schooling in 2023	8,17	7,55	9,26
Expected years of schooling in 2023	13,68	12,99	13,74
Net enrollment rate in primary school in 2023	83.43	85.59	97,36

Source: BPS, 2024

Table 2 generally demonstrates that HDI and education achievements in both districts are still lower than Maluku Utara Province. As a result, both local governments have a responsibility to improve health, economy and education in their respective regions.

The findings regarding the four components and regulations in Halmahera Utara and Kepulauan Morotai are as follows.

2.2.1. The school curriculum has been developed to cater to the needs of primary and early childhood students, promoting a contextual approach and inclusive education; however, teachers need to improve their understanding of the Kurikulum Merdeka

At the primary and early childhood level, some schools have developed the curriculum and assessments in the school curriculum. The focus is on enhancing learning methods based on the age and objectives of the students through a contextual approach. To maintain a good learning environment, some schools have made efforts to implement inclusive education. In addition, teachers have received technical assistance for students with special needs. Also, the school has made efforts to adapt and modify the curriculum. Meanwhile, for literacy development, a reading corner program, reading 15 minutes before learning activities, literacy competitions, and literacy campaigns have been carried out. The types of assessment that have been developed are portfolio assessment, poetry/short story assessment with summative and formative assessment. In relation to climate change, teachers make efforts through socialisation such as through stickers, banners, and the like to encourage awareness of climate change and the practice of utilising used waste for recycling.

To improve literacy outcomes, there are various literacy communities and volunteers in Halmahera Utara and Morotai islands¹². The presence of these communities is crucial for engaging in the development of an educational system that includes a variety of stakeholders.

This study also finds challenges in the education system including teachers' lack of understanding of the Kurikulum Merdeka. Teachers do not understand the principles of the Kurikulum Merdeka, such as designing lessons according to students' developmental stages and achievement levels. Also, teachers lack understanding of the importance of conducting assessments at the beginning of learning to design learning according to students' readiness.

The finding underscores the importance of addressing these challenges to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum and assessment supporting policy and practices in schools. Another issue raised in the finding is the pressure from parents and the emphasis on reading teaching at kindergarten. Also, this study finds that administrators do not inform parents about the policy regarding transition from kindergarten to primary school.

To enhance students' English language proficiency, a study observed a school that valued the importance of students to start learning English. The school has taken initiative to allocate additional 2 hours/week for English subjects, with the teacher sourced from local English language institutions, working as part-time teachers. The challenge lies in accessing learning materials, with budget limitations preventing the purchase of student handbooks and English reading books for students. Other schools have not taken initiatives like this.

Maluku Utara has great potential and need for climate change education. The province is rich in biodiversity, famous for various natural resources such as spices, fisheries, mangrove forest, gold, and banana. Maluku Utara is also home for some endemic species such as blue-eyed, cuscus and shark. Furthermore, Maluku Utara is a region with four active volcanoes that are prone to eruption. The region is an archipelago, consisting of numerous small islands. Hence, connectivity between regions primarily relies on sea routes. Climate change has an impact on the weather, disrupting sailing activities and all living things. Therefore, the integration of climate change education is important. Data from the field indicated that there's a lack of understanding about climate change and climate change education among schoolteachers. Teachers mentioned encountering bad weather conditions like high waves and storms, putting them at high risk during sailing. However, they lack ideas on how to address this issue to the classroom. Thus, given the increasing challenges posed by climate change and natural disasters, it is crucial to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to understand and address these issues. Integrating climate change education into the curriculum and assessment can help raise awareness, build resilience, and empower students to contribute to sustainable development.

The similar situation is observed on GEDSI. While all schools are required to accept children with special needs, there is a lack of competencies to assist them effectively in the learning process. The principals do not yet have a policy to design an inclusive curriculum and a system to motivate teachers to overcome these challenges. Thus, supporting systems on curriculum

¹² See <https://kantorbahasamalut.kemdikbud.go.id/index.php/2024/03/18/kegiatan-bengkel-keterampilan-anggota-komunitas-literasi-di-kabupaten-pulau-morotai/>

and assessment on GEDSI issues can be provided with policy encouragement at the regional, school and classroom levels to assist teachers in accommodating all students.

2.2.2. Teachers' teachers use various methods to teach literacy and numeracy; however, their capacity for effective teaching needs continuous improvement.

Teachers are implementing best practices to improve literacy, numeracy, and character development, including instilling habits like prayers, providing student-centred assessments, promoting climate change awareness through simulations, and enhancing literacy skills through mandatory reading systems. These strategies are supported by capacity building and performance evaluations. For literacy development, initiatives such as setting up reading corners, literacy trees, a 15-minute reading session before lessons, literacy competitions, and literacy campaigns have been implemented. Also, there is the School Literacy Movement (*Gerakan Literasi Sekolah*/GLS).¹³ However, the GLS program has not been implemented optimally, and the use of learning resources such as textbooks and non-textbooks is still limited. To support the potential literacy initiative, at the elementary level, the 2024 education report card indicates that teachers have begun to actively improve the quality of learning after reflecting on past learning, exploring new teaching references, and innovating lessons that stimulate student engagement.

Also, the analysis indicates that the quality of teaching in terms of performance appraisal, needs improvement. Issues such as lack of teacher professionalism development and underutilization of diverse learning resources are identified. The performance appraisal has not been linked to the training attended. Teacher performance evaluation has not been running optimally. Teachers haven't been introduced to the practice of setting goals, reflecting on their progress and dialogue with their school leaders to oversee their professional growth. Although there are teachers who have attended training in PMM and webinars, they have not been linked to performance appraisals, as the concept is still being introduced in the year 2024. Many teachers have also not accessed PMM or PINTAR to improve their performance evaluation. Some of the constraints are facilities and infrastructure, geographical conditions, and teachers still consider the administrative burden to be one of the reasons for not following up on the training to be used as a performance assessment.

The study also identified that climate change education, the implementation of climate change education varies. While some schools have begun integrating aspects of climate change into their curriculum and co-curricular activities, such as promoting healthy eating habits and environmental cleanliness, others show limited evidence of such initiatives. In some instances, climate change education is sporadically mentioned in a few subjects or school documents, primarily focusing on issues like school cleanliness and local wisdom. Collaborations with external agencies, such as disaster management authorities, demonstrate efforts toward

¹³ The school literacy movement (*gerakan literasi sekolah*/GLS) is an effort or activity that is participatory in nature by involving the school community (learners, teachers, principals, school staff, and school administrators). (learners, teachers, principals, education staff, school supervisors, school committees, school administrators, school administrators) education personnel, school supervisors, school committee, parents/guardians of students parents/guardians of students), academics, publishers, mass media, the community. The goal of GLS is to create a school as a learning organisation whose citizens are literate lifelong is the habituation of reading learners.

community engagement and preparedness. However, the overall integration of climate change education across energy efficiency, waste management, transportation, and school policy remains inconsistent or absent in some schools. Therefore, highlighting areas for improvement in comprehensive climate change education are needed.

On the aspect of GEDSI, the analysis indicates the teaching practices in GEDSI have not been well integrated. Teachers have not fully accommodated student diversity or implemented gender equality in learning. The teachers employ diverse teaching methods tailored to individual student needs, demonstrating a commitment to personalised learning and intensive communication with parents. However, in other instances, teachers primarily rely on teacher-centred instruction, indicating a need for further exploration and implementation of student-centred approaches and to accommodate the special needs students across schools. Thus, there is a need to foster teacher skills to implement differentiated learning and inclusive learning for student learning across all schools.

2.2.3. School leaders' capacity in instructional leadership need to be enhanced with the use of data for decision-making processes.

Educational leaderships have demonstrated various effective practices in supporting curriculum development. At the early childhood education (PAUD) level, the principal has created a child-friendly learning environment and approach, implementing a participatory curriculum that emphasises religious education and positive reinforcement for children. At the elementary level, the principal creates a learning environment that prioritises character education, tolerance, discipline, accommodates children's needs and interests, and develops interactive and enjoyable teaching methods. The principal at the PAUD level uses teacher competency data and quarterly learning reports. It is also confirmed from the 2024 education report card that educational leadership has started to lead to visionary instructional leadership by consistently referring to the school's vision-mission and attempting to communicate it to the school community.

However, the analysis of educational leadership aspects reveals several key challenges that need to be addressed for effective school management. Firstly, it is noted that the utilisation of education report data is not being optimised within schools. This indicates a potential gap in leveraging data-driven decision-making processes to enhance educational outcomes. Also, the study highlights that some principals have used education report card data to develop strategic plans and improve school quality. However, there are still many who have not done so. This situation shows that the utilisation of education report card data is not optimal. Principals' limited understanding of the education report card is one of the main reasons for not utilising the data optimally.

Secondly, the supervision of teachers is highlighted as being uneven, suggesting a need for more consistent and thorough monitoring and support mechanisms for educators. Factors that explain because there are still principals who do not understand the managerial role. It is validated from the results of the education report card which states that school leadership that is not supported by appropriate competencies (not having a teaching certificate) hinders the performance of school principals.

Furthermore, the qualifications of school principals are mentioned as not meeting the required standards. Because the appointment of school principals is not done selectively through examinations/tests. This inadequacy underscores the importance of ensuring that school leaders have the essential expertise and qualifications to lead the school effectively. Additionally, the integration of climate change education and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) within the school curriculum (*Kurikulum satuan pendidikan/KSP*) is identified as suboptimal. This highlights the necessity for a more comprehensive and unified strategy to integrate these critical topics into the school curriculum and activities.

Parents in Maluku Utara have a culture of using violence to discipline kids, therefore child abuse is often unreported. If reported, it would be a disgrace to the family. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce positive discipline and involve religious or traditional leaders in this process. To ensure safe schools and conducive learning, principals should encourage the implementation of positive discipline. The positive discipline approach is a non-punitive building of student character and developing behaviour that is responsible for choices. In some cases there is still punishment in schools. Thus, educational leadership needs to promote positive discipline in schools and parents.

2.2.4. Child violence regulations and working groups are established, yet the current support strategies for child protection in schools are insufficient.

There are various good practices in child protection, as evidenced by regulations specifically addressing child violence. There are working groups tasked with monitoring and handling child violence cases, such as DP3AKB, which operates according to SOPs for handling violence cases. The achievement at the primary school level in the 2024 education report card indicates that the school has a safe environment, with good psychological well-being and low cases of bullying, corporal punishment and sexual violence. Currently, TPPK has been established, but there is still a lack of understanding about TPPK due to insufficient socialisation, so schools do not yet have appropriate SOPs to address child protection issues. Additionally, societal stigma remains an obstacle, as cases of violence are still considered family shame. The community prefers customary law over existing regulations. Programs related to child protection that have been implemented include *Ceria* (Preventing Child Marriage), DP3A Goes To School, and involvement of the Child Forum, head of village and religious leaders.

The first major issue identified in the analysis is the suboptimal support strategies for child protection in schools. Halmahera Utara is a volcanic disaster zone. Some schools are taking these issues seriously, such as providing masks and collaborating with parents during disasters. However, these good practices are not yet implemented in all schools. This suggests that the existing measures and mechanisms in place to protect children within the school environment are not fully effective or efficient. It implies that there may be gaps or inadequacies in the policies, procedures, and practices currently being implemented to safeguard children from harm or abuse while at school. This highlights the need for a comprehensive review and potential overhaul of the existing child protection framework within educational institutions.

The second issue revolves around the lack of understanding concerning the Child Protection Policy (TPPK) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for handling child protection cases in schools. This points to a crucial knowledge gap among school staff, administrators, and possibly even students and parents regarding the protocols and guidelines to follow when addressing child protection concerns. Without a clear understanding of the TPPK and SOP, there is a risk of mishandling or overlooking child protection issues, potentially putting children at further risk of harm or neglect.

The third significant issue highlighted in the analysis is the societal stigma surrounding violence against children. This stigma may manifest in various ways, such as victim-blaming, disbelief in the prevalence of child abuse, or reluctance to report suspected cases of abuse or neglect. The presence of such stigma can create barriers to effectively addressing and preventing child abuse within the community and may contribute to underreporting and underrecognition of child protection issues.

2.2.5. Kepulauan Morotai Education Office appeals for smooth transition from PAUD to SD, halting *calistung* tests and the use of education report cards in elementary schools; however, there is a lack of robust regulation for stakeholders to support this initiative effectively.

The analysis of the policy highlights that the two districts do not yet have a local regulation on education provision. However, there are other regulations governing education. These include local regulations on child protection and child-friendly cities. Thus, to ensure better education implementation and child protection, local governments should develop regulations on education implementation and child protection. The Head of the Kepulauan Morotai Education Office has issued a circular letter in the form of an appeal for the smooth transition from PAUD to SD, so that elementary schools do not conduct *calistung* tests and the use of education report cards. However, this regulation is not yet robust as it does not regulate the roles, duties and sanctions of all stakeholders.

Recommendations to address the challenges of improving education quality in Halmahera Utara and Kepulauan Morotai are as follows.

Curriculum and Assessment

1. Enhancing the support system for schools to implement Kurikulum Merdeka and the use of education report card through activating professional learning communities.
2. Improve support systems for schools to integrate GEDSI and climate change through activating professional learning communities. As well as supporting the use of Awan Penggerak in 3T areas.
3. Socialisation of parental awareness of literacy and numeracy and implement holistic Integrative PAUD.
4. Socialising MoECRT regulations No. 17 of 2010 concerning Education Management and Implementation and endorsing policies that facilitate inclusiveness and address climate change within educational institutions.
5. Collaborate with literacy communities and volunteers to improve literacy outcomes and build an education ecosystem with various stakeholders.

Teaching Practice

1. Strengthen the school literacy program in all schools by ensuring optimal implementation.
2. Increase the use of various learning resources and text/non-text books in learning and provide training to teachers to implement student-centred learning with various fun teaching methods.
3. Encourage teachers to implement student-centred learning and avoid providing worksheets as the only source of learning.
4. Provide teacher training to integrate climate change education in teaching, including collaborating with the Environmental Office and the Adiwiyata school program.
5. Provide training to teachers on inclusive education and the implementation of differentiated learning.

Educational leadership

1. Bappeda leads the reflection of the education program with stakeholders and develops data-based joint planning that is appropriate to local conditions.
2. Improve the utilisation of education report card data for identification, reflections, strategic planning, and enhancing school quality.
3. Strengthen principals' understanding of the managerial role of human resource and the importance of teacher supervision and strengthen government policies on teacher performance evaluation.
4. Mentoring principals, teachers' working groups and teachers in data-driven school management, teacher supervision, integration of climate change education in KSP and GEDSI implementation.
5. Encourage the involvement of various stakeholders in supporting the implementation of inclusive education and climate change.
6. Encourage school principals to promote and implement positive discipline in schools.

Child Protection

1. Strengthen socialisation and education on the TPPK, SOPs for handling child protection cases, child rights and child protection to all relevant parties. Increase the budget for child protection programs in schools and utilise available experts, religious leaders, village chief, traditional leaders to support child protection programs in schools.
2. Foster partnership among the local government, schools and other stakeholders to support regulations, facilitate socialisation efforts, and enhance coordination among pertinent organisations.
3. Utilise information and communication technology to strengthen networking and communication among stakeholders.

2.3. Ketapang and Kayong Utara

Ketapang and Kayong Utara District are located in Kalimantan Barat. Ketapang District has 464 kindergartens and 543 primary schools while Kayong Utara District has 48 kindergartens and 107 primary schools. Meanwhile, there are 183 RA and 439 MI in Ketapang District. Kayong Utara District has 5 RA and 10 MI. There are 33 kindergartens, and 76 elementary schools

designated as “*Sekolah Penggerak*” in Ketapang. Meanwhile, in North Kayong, there are 2 kindergartens designated as “*Sekolah Penggerak*” with none at the primary school level. This situation presents both an opportunity and a concern for local governments to support schools in improving the quality of education.

The HDI and education achievements of Ketapang and Kayong Utara are still lower than those of Kalimantan Barat Province (see Table 3). This condition needs the attention of local governments to improve health, education and economic development in order to raise the HDI. Particularly in terms of the net primary enrollment rate, Kayong Utara is performing better than Ketapang and Kalimantan Barat province.

Table 3. HDI and education achievements of Ketapang and Kayong Utara

Aspect	Ketapang	Kayong Utara	Kalimantan Barat
Population	592 521 people	132 855 people	5 623 328 people
Human Development Index in 2023	68,68	64,79	69,41
Average years of schooling in 2023	7.55	6.35	7,71
Expected years of schooling in 2023	11,96	12,12	12,67
Net enrollment rate in primary school in 2023	97,38	98,14	97,70

Source: BPS, 2024

The findings regarding the four components and regulations in Ketapang and Kayong Utara are as follows.

2.3.1. The Merdeka Belajar reforms have the potential to inclusively transform education outcomes. Strengthening professional learning communities and providing school support for children with special needs are crucial aspects that require attention and assistance.

Many schools began to implement Kurikulum Merdeka in 2023, and despite their high enthusiasm to learn, there is a need to assist schools to understand the principle of Kurikulum Merdeka. After teaching time, teachers collaborate to prepare the lesson and design their classroom for a fun learning environment. However, their lesson plan document doesn't yet show a strong connection between learning objectives, assessment and the methods used. It indicates that the concept of backward design in Kurikulum Merdeka has not been applied. Backward design in lesson planning is an instructional design approach where teachers start with the end goal (desired learning outcomes) and work backward to develop instructional strategies and assessments to ensure those goals are met (Wiggins and Mc. Tighe, 2005).

There was an effort to apply interactive learning techniques, promote the development of critical thinking skills and character development, and the teachers are aware of the existence of PMM. However many teachers are unaware that all lesson plans stored in PMM are accessible for use or adaptation in the classroom. In other words, in the beginning of Kurikulum Merdeka implementation, when teachers need time to grasp the principles of Kurikulum Merdeka, they can save time in developing lesson plans by utilising those available in PMM and PINTAR. This enables teachers to focus more on the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Geographical conditions in remote areas, causing limited access to information and the internet also need to be addressed. Thus, teachers can obtain adequate information and learning resources to improve their understanding of assessment. The use of Awan Penggerak in remote areas is advised. A stronger commitment and greater efforts from government and all stakeholders is also needed to enhance the quality of Kurikulum Merdeka implementations. In addition, there is good potential to improve literacy outcomes in Ketapang and Kayong Utara. Various communities and literacy activists in Ketapang such as Rumah Literasi Indonesia and reading houses, contribute to these efforts. Thus, developing networks with literacy activists can strengthen the education ecosystem.

One major finding is that teachers' understanding of assessment needs enhancement. This is crucial as assessment plays a significant role in gauging students' learning progress and understanding. Without a strong grasp of assessment principles, teachers may struggle to accurately evaluate their students' knowledge and skills, leading to potential gaps in learning outcomes. Some schools have conducted assessments at the beginning of the learning process. However, the assessment mostly aimed to identify students' learning style and level of students' competencies. There is still a common misconception about learning style. Many believe that individuals have one dominant learning style (e.g. visual, auditory and kinesthetic), and that teaching to that preferred style will lead to improved learning outcomes. This misconception needs to be addressed, since learners often benefit from a variety of instructional approaches rather than being restricted to one particular style.

Furthermore, some schools require teachers to have notes or documentation about students' progress, but the use of these notes has not been employed to adjust teaching methods. Meanwhile, some others do not document students' learning progress. Some of them have notes or documentation about problematic students, but the use of these notes has not been employed to adjust teaching methods. Meanwhile, some others do not document students' learning progress. This indicates that the implementation of formative assessment requires support and guidance from the government.

In light of the spirit to improve literacy and numeracy, certain schools have set up reading corners and offered reading materials. However, there is room for improvement in the variety of books provided. These schools are unaware of *Sistem Informasi Perbukuan Indonesia (SIBI)* or Indonesia Bookkeeping Information System, a website that offers age-appropriate books across different genres and reading levels to cater various interests and reading abilities.

Professional learning communities such as KKG and KKKS exist, however, to enhance the quality of their meeting time, the government needs to assist the groups to encourage collaborative lesson planning sessions where teachers can share ideas, resources and feedback,

fostering the culture of collaborations and innovations. Establish mentorship program, pairing experienced teachers with newer colleges to offer guidance, support and professional development opportunities. Implement monitoring and evaluation, to provide input on areas for improvement.

Access to education for children with special needs including disabilities is regulated in child protection regulations. There are both public and private special needs schools in Ketapang and Kayong Utara. But data on inclusive schools has not been found. Furthermore, the study indicates the weak strategies in inclusive education in schools. Inclusive education aims to provide equal opportunities for all students, including those with disabilities or special needs. However, the analysis suggests that current strategies in inclusive education are lacking.

On the other hand, the effort to assist students with special needs is also highlighted in Ketapang district. Yet, there is a need to help schools conduct early screenings and assessments to identify potential signs of special needs or learning difficulties, carry out students' observations and communicate with parents or guardians to gather information about students' development and any concerns they may have.

To raise awareness on climate change, it is essential to infuse climate change education into the curriculum and school system. The Adiwiyata schools program initiated by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry is dedicated to promoting environmental awareness and sustainability to school students. With numerous schools already participating in this program, collaborating with Adiwiyata schools is advised to integrate climate change education effectively.

There are several NGOs that have collaborated with schools for climate change education, like Pongo ranger or Yayasan Alam Lestari. This good potential needs to be developed thus helping schools integrate the issues such as forest fire, mining, the extinction of OrangUtan and other endangered species due to climate change into the classroom. Partnership in developing learning material for teachers and or reading materials for students. By linking learning activities with climate change education, schools can raise awareness and empower students to take action against climate change. It is essential for schools to incorporate climate change education into their teaching practices to prepare students for the challenges of the future.

Numbers of teachers in these two districts have not yet met the standards required for teachers. Therefore, collaborations with Higher Education Institutions for the teacher certifications program or pursuing further studies at local universities or Open University.

For the English subject in elementary school, many schools had English as a local content subject when they implemented the 2013 curriculum. Most of them expressed their joy at English being a compulsory subject in the Kurikulum Merdeka. For schools that didn't implement English subjects, the challenge for them lies in teacher competency and availability. However, they are making efforts to introduce the English subject by implementing material for students from year to year 3. This is a good sign of the implementation of differentiated instruction.

2.3.2. Teachers apply differentiated learning, project-based learning, and P5. However, it needs improvement on utilising PMM/PINTAR and P5 programs, formative assessment, incorporating inclusive education strategies, and integrating learning activities with climate change education.

In these two districts, teachers have conducted diagnostic assessments to assess students' readiness and manage differentiated learning through grouping students according to their learning styles and interests. This finding is in line with the achievement of the 2024 education report card at the primary school level. The education report card stated that learning is starting to lead to improved quality. It is indicated by a more conducive classroom atmosphere and affective support from teachers.

There is a need to assist teachers in the use of Merdeka Belajar Platform (PMM). Since many teachers are in the beginning phase of understanding the principle of Kurikulum Merdeka, it is important for them to understand that they are not required to develop their own lesson plan. They can just use the one available on PMM or PINTAR. Once they are familiar with the principle of Kurikulum Merdeka, they can adjust the lesson plan to their students' needs. Professional learning communities are the best vehicle for teachers to learn and share good practices.

Another area that requires attention is the lack of understanding in formative assessment among teachers. Formative assessment is essential for monitoring student progress and adjusting teaching strategies accordingly. The analysis indicates that there is a need to enhance teachers' understanding of formative assessment practices to improve student learning outcomes. By providing teachers with the necessary training and resources, schools can ensure that formative assessment is effectively integrated into the teaching process.

In the implementation of P5, the teacher' paradigm on the P5 process needs to shift their paradigm towards focusing on the learning process rather than just on products. Teachers can familiarise themselves with assessment indicators and rubrics in P5 to travel students' development in Pancasila values. There are some samples of P5 available on PMM for teachers to refer to. Professional learning communities such as KKG both at school and district level, or teachers' associations, are the best place to learn about PMM independently.

Performance evaluation of teachers is carried out using the BKN e-performance system and PMM, with supervision from school supervisors and principals.

Kalimantan Barat has an area of 14.6 million hectares, 56.65 percent of which is forest area and has large rivers such as the Kapuas River¹⁴. Its forests have a variety of biodiversity such as orangutans, proboscis monkeys, sun bears, and various types of birds live in them. Their existence is almost extinct which threatens the ecosystem and conditions are exacerbated by climate change. Hence, climate change education is important for future generations. Teachers understand the importance of mitigating and adapting to climate change but have a lack of

¹⁴ The Kapuas River is the longest river on the island of Kalimantan and also the longest river in Indonesia with a length of 1,143 km. There are various endangered endemic fish such as Belida fish, and Bala Shark fish in this river.

ideas on how to integrate it into their teaching and learning. Additionally, the finding highlights that there is a disconnect between learning activities in schools and climate change education. Teachers led students on a clean-up school program, but they are struggling to link the activities with climate change issues.

2.3.3. The principals have improved curriculum development, environmental collaboration, child-centred learning, and teacher professionalism, but needs training and professional development for leadership competency, reflective practices, and K3S meetings integration.

The school principal has led curriculum development, promoting collaboration with environmental education organisations, ensuring child-centred learning, and maximising their role as a change leader. The analysis is also consistent with the achievement of the 2024 education report card, at the primary school level, that principals' leadership is improving. This is evidenced by principals having started to consistently refer to the school's vision and mission and communicate the vision and mission to the school community. They have implemented literacy programs, conservation initiatives, and utilised educational report cards for planning. They prioritise teacher professionalism through training, budget allocation, and performance assessments. They also established a Child Protection and Safety Committee.

The analysis of educational leadership aspects in Ketapang and Kayong Utara districts reveals several key areas that require improvement. Firstly, leadership competency needs to be enhanced among educational leaders in the region. The competency of the leaders to collaborate in developing the program based on educational report cards. Collaboration to synchronise the program are factors that need to be improved. There may be gaps in the skills and abilities that need to be addressed through training and professional development initiatives.

Secondly, the integration of reflective practices into leadership approaches is identified as an area that is not yet fully ingrained in the leadership culture of schools in the two districts. Reflection has not yet become a reference in school development even though regular K3S (*kelompok kerja kepala sekolah*) meetings are held every month. This indicates a need for school leaders to engage in more reflective practices to enhance their decision-making processes and overall leadership effectiveness. Improve the quality of learning community forums where principals share experiences, challenges, strategies, and create space for collaborative learning. This type of forum can also be utilised as a place to discuss the concept of teacher appraisal through Manajemen Talenta or E-Kinerja, as well as the concept of Sekolah yang Kita Cita-citakan (the school of our dreams).

Thirdly, there is a call for a stronger commitment to gender equality and social inclusion (GEDSI) among school leaders in Ketapang and Kayong Utara. The admission policy generally accepts all students regardless of their socioeconomic background. However, some schools do not have training programs on inclusive teaching methods to help teachers prepare learning strategies for diverse students especially for students with special needs. This highlights the importance of promoting gender equality and social inclusion within the school environment and ensuring

that school leaders are actively working towards creating a more inclusive and equitable educational setting.

Fourthly, the regulation surrounding educational leadership in the two districts is deemed to be in need of strengthening. This implies that there may be gaps or inconsistencies in the existing regulations governing school leadership, which could impact the overall quality of leadership in schools. Local governments need to develop policy related to school leadership. This is not only limited to the technical aspects but also the principal aspects, including efforts to develop the competencies of school principals that refer to the school leadership competency model.

2.3.4. The school has enhanced violence management through initiatives like the Indonesian Children's Friendship Company Association and establishing Child Protection Committee, however additional improvements are needed

The school has demonstrated an understanding of regulations regarding the handling of violence in the school environment. Initiatives such as forming the Indonesian Children's Friendship Company Association and establishing a Child Protection and Safety Committee (TPPK) have been undertaken. Supportive activities like faculty meetings and school regulations improvements have also been conducted. The 2024 education report card indicates that the school provides a safe environment and promotes psychological well-being and has minimal incidents of bullying and corporal punishment.

The analysis reveals that the enforcement and procedures for child protection still need improvement, the mitigation of child violence cases needs to be strengthened, misconceptions in teaching body protection need to be evaluated, and the commitment of local governments to child protection needs to be reinforced. It is recommended that efforts be made to provide technical guidance, develop case management systems, evaluate teaching methods, and advocate for local government commitment to child protection.

The findings highlight the importance of enhancing the enforcement and procedures for child protection to ensure that children are effectively safeguarded from various forms of harm. This includes improving the reporting mechanisms for child abuse cases, strengthening the coordination between relevant stakeholders in handling such cases, and ensuring that appropriate legal measures are taken against perpetrators. By enhancing the enforcement of child protection policies, it is possible to create a safer environment for children and prevent instances of abuse and violence.

Moreover, the study underscores the need to strengthen the mitigation of child violence cases through proactive measures that focus on prevention and early intervention. This can be achieved through the implementation of awareness campaigns, training programs for teachers and caregivers on identifying and addressing signs of abuse and providing support services for children who have experienced violence. By strengthening the mitigation of child violence cases, it is possible to reduce the prevalence of such incidents and protect the well-being of children in the community.

The finding also highlights the importance of evaluating misconceptions in teaching body protection to ensure that children receive accurate and age-appropriate information on safeguarding themselves from harm. This includes reviewing existing educational materials such as a song which is used for training educators on effective teaching for body protection. By addressing misconceptions in teaching body protection, it is possible to empower children with the knowledge and skills they need to protect themselves and seek help when faced with threats to their safety.

Furthermore, the finding emphasises the need to strengthen the commitment of local governments to child protection by allocating sufficient resources, implementing comprehensive policies, and monitoring the implementation of child protection initiatives. This includes establishing committees within local government structures to oversee child protection efforts, conducting regular evaluations of child protection programs, and engaging with stakeholders to garner support for child protection initiatives. By reinforcing the commitment of local governments to child protection, it is possible to create a sustainable framework for safeguarding children's rights.

2.3.5. Ketapang and Kayong Utara Districts are committed to improving education quality, child protection, character education, and social inclusion. However, concrete steps are needed for effective policy implementation

The local governments of Ketapang and Kayong Utara have shown a proactive approach to improving the education sector, focusing on enhancing the quality of education, child protection, character education, and social inclusion. However, effective policy implementation is crucial for translating intentions into tangible outcomes. To ensure successful implementation, local governments should focus on monitoring and evaluating the implementation of their education policies, engaging with stakeholders, and prioritising capacity building among education professionals. Adequate funding and transparent resource management are also essential for effective implementation. Collaboration and knowledge sharing with other stakeholders, such as non-governmental organisations, academic institutions, and international partners, can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of their education initiatives. In conclusion, while the local governments have shown commitment to addressing education and child protection issues, concrete actions are needed to ensure the successful execution of their policies.

Recommendations to address the challenges of improving education quality in Ketapang and Kayong Utara are as follows.

Curriculum and Assessment

1. The local government allocates resources for professional development program for all key education leaders
2. Provide technical guidance on assessment and Kurikulum Merdeka, and utilising resource persons from school supervisors, *guru penggerak*, BPGP, BPMP or education practitioner.

3. Encouraging schools to make English a compulsory subject, mapping and allocating teachers, enhancing their capacity in teaching English, and providing various learning resources to engage learning.
4. Reactivate professional learning communities as a place for teachers and school leaders to independently learn, share and collaborate.
5. Strengthening capacity related to inclusive education and climate change and collaborating with NGOs concerned with inclusive education and environmental issues.
6. Develop networks with various literacy activists to strengthen the education ecosystem.

Teaching Practice

1. Provide training and assistance for teachers to utilise PMM or PINTAR in teaching and learning activities. This includes assisting teachers to utilise “Awan Penggerak” in remote areas, like Simpang Hulu sub district.
2. Establish professional learning communities for teachers to learn about the principles of Kurikulum Merdeka, assist students with special needs and facilitate collaboration among inclusive education experts.
3. Increase collaboration with NGOs to improve the quality of education, this includes developing learning materials both for teachers and students.

Educational Leadership

1. Bappeda leads the reflection of the education program with stakeholders and develops data-based joint planning that is appropriate to local conditions.
2. Organise professional development for educational leaders, especially on educational report cards.
3. Allocate resources for inclusive education training for teachers to improve competencies related to GEDSI.
4. Encourage local governments to develop regulations on educational leadership and involve stakeholders in the process.

Child protection

1. Mentoring and providing technical guidance on TPPK duties to improve the effectiveness of child protection enforcement.
2. Encourage contributions from Bappeda to ensure child protection is in local planning documents and support from the education office through BOS funds and school programs.
3. Develop case management SOPs supported by optimizing TPPK performance and providing parents with an understanding of the importance of understanding the law related to child abuse.
4. Provide professional development for teachers and key stakeholders on child protections.
5. Collaborate with various stakeholders to advocate and support the implementation of comprehensive child protection regulations.

2.4. Nias Utara and Nias Selatan

Nias Utara and Nias Selatan are two districts that were expanded from Nias District. Nias Utara District gained official status as an autonomous region in 2008 while Nias Selatan District has been an autonomous region since 2003. Both districts are located in Sumatra Utara Province. Nias Utara District has 20 kindergartens and 166 primary schools while Nias Selatan has 86 kindergartens and 356 primary schools. Meanwhile, there are 1 RA and 3 MI in Nias Utara District. Nias Selatan District has 3 RA and 4 MI. There are 1 kindergarten and 2 primary schools in Nias Utara and 4 kindergartens and 19 primary schools in Nias Selatan that are Sekolah Penggerak, who have potential to spread effective practices in enhancing foundational skills.

Table 4. HDI and education achievements of Nias Utara and Nias Selatan

Aspect	Nias Utara	Nias Selatan	Sumatra Utara
Population	155 873 people	382 539 people	15 386 640 people
Human Development Index in 2023	64,64	64,12	73,37
Average years of schooling in 2023	6,85	6,48	9,82
Expected years of schooling in 2023	13,36	12,78	13,48
Net enrollment rate in primary school in 2023	95,40	94,24	97,95

Source: BPS, 2024

The data in Table 4 illustrates that the HDI and education achievements in both districts are still lower compared to those of Sumatra Utara Province. Hence, it is important for the governments of both districts to enhance their essential services, particularly in education and health.

The 2024 education report card indicates that the local government of Nias Utara needs to pay attention to literacy and numeracy indicators as top priorities for basic education. In addition, the disability services, facilities for students with disabilities and support for gifted talented students -factors representing in inclusivity- are considered to be one of the priorities other than literacy and numeracy. It's worth noting that school safety and diversity exhibit stronger achievements compared to school inclusivity. Meanwhile, in early childhood education, enhancing the proportion of educators with a minimum S1/D4 diploma, improving the school School Participation Rate for the 5–6-year age group, and focusing on the proportion of accredited PAUD Units Minimum B are critical areas that require attention and enhancement.

The findings of four components and regulations in Nias Utara and Nias Selatan are as follows.

2.4.1. Teachers somewhat adjust curriculum to meet children's needs, implement differentiated learning, and promote equality in learning. However, there are persistent misconceptions about differentiated learning, and challenges in integrating literacy and numeracy skills effectively.

The teachers have adjusted the curriculum and assessment by accommodating the principles of meeting children's needs, differentiated learning, equality-based, while still striving for fun learning to improve children's literacy and numeracy. While the curriculum has included character education and environmental issues and climate change, the implementation is still limited. Teachers still hold misconceptions in terms of differentiated learning and use learning styles as the only reference to differentiate their teaching methods. The improvement of learning through curriculum adjustment are also depicted in the education report card achievement.

In addition, Teachers in Nias Selatan are committed to improving student learning by emphasising professional development and innovative teaching strategies. The integration of technology, such as the Merdeka Mengajar platform and Chromebooks, is increasing. This is in line with government efforts to promote digital literacy. Additionally, the district has collaborated with universities to improve educational resources through community engagement. However, there are areas needing attention, such as the enhancement of inclusive education for children with disabilities, the quality of learning (including teaching methods, psychological support, and classroom management) and the strengthening of climate change education in schools as evidenced by initiatives like waste segregation and recycling.

There have been good practices in Nias communities to improve literacy. For example, *Lembaga Ya'ahowu* and *Taman Bacaan Masyarakat* (TBM) Lentera Ono Niha in Nias Selatan have taken initiative by providing books, establishing small libraries in villages. In addition, there is also the University of Nias Raya which is developing education as well as LPTK on Nias island. The potential involvement of higher education institutions is in service, research and *Kampus Merdeka*¹⁵ such as student internships in schools, teaching campus programs in kindergartens and elementary schools to support the improvement of literacy, numeracy and student character. Thus, the involvement of various literacy communities and universities is important to develop the education ecosystem.

The study sheds light on various challenges and areas for improvement in the education system, particularly concerning curriculum and assessment practices. One of the key findings is the minimal understanding of the Kurikulum Merdeka among educators and stakeholders in the region. Teachers tend to assume that improving literacy and numeracy skills is separate from the daily learning process. Literacy programs such as mobile library cars have limited types

¹⁵ *Kampus Merdeka* is a policy issued by MoECRT by giving students the right to take courses outside the study program for 1 semester and activities outside the university for 2 semesters. Universities are given the freedom to provide *Kampus Merdeka's* activities that suit the needs and interests of their students. Examples of types of *Kampus Merdeka* program activities, namely: internships, teaching campus, community service (*kuliah kerja nyata/KKN*), humanitarian projects, research and so forth.

of books and limited fleets. However, the lack of understanding of this curriculum hinders its effective implementation and limits its potential benefits.

Also, in Nias Selatan the curriculum and assessment in early childhood education face numerous challenges, including funding constraints, difficulties in commitment and monitoring, and the selection of appropriate resources. A significant issue is the lack of technological skills among teachers and a reliance on verbal assessments that often reflect students' interests rather than standardised measures. The inconsistent implementation of the curriculum underscores the need for improved guidance, while gaps in assessment practices hinder effective student progress monitoring. Additionally, there is a pressing need to cater to increase the amount of schools that have minimum B accreditation, teachers education qualification, and the support for disabilities and those from marginalised backgrounds to promote equity and inclusion (Education Report Card, 2024).

Another significant issue identified in the study is the need to enhance the implementation of differentiated learning in schools. Differentiated learning is an approach that recognizes and accommodates the diverse learning needs and preferences of students. By tailoring instruction to individual students, differentiated learning can improve student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes. However, the study reveals that the current implementation of differentiated learning in regions is inadequate, highlighting the importance of strengthening this aspect of teaching and learning.

Furthermore, the analysis points out the weak education on climate change in schools in the region. However, the study indicates that the education on climate change in the regions is lacking, emphasising the need to integrate this important topic into the curriculum and provide teachers with the necessary training and resources to address it effectively.

Additionally, the analysis reveals misunderstandings about the utilisation of PMM. Due to the misconception that they have to use computers which causes teachers to not use PMM to design and implement lessons. However, the misconceptions and misinterpretations regarding the use of PMM, indicate a need for clarification and guidance on how to effectively utilise this assessment tool to support student learning and development.

The findings on the implementation of English language learning at the primary level have shown good practices. Some public primary schools have been teaching English as local content since the 2022 academic year. The teachers are honorary teachers with a background in English education who are recruited by the schools. English language learning has been taught to students from grade 1 to grade 6. One of the obstacles faced is the challenge of local culture. Most students still use Nias local language, making it difficult for teachers to introduce the English alphabet and dialect. To overcome this challenge, teachers try to adjust students' abilities by introducing English from a basic level. This strategy is considered to be able to overcome the challenges as some students can follow the learning well. Thus, policy and system support is needed for teacher fulfilment and learning resource support so that obstacles can be addressed for the target transition to English as a compulsory subject in primary schools beginning in the 2027 academic year.

Moreover, the analysis highlights the discrepancies between regulations and implementation in the education system. While there are established policies and guidelines governing curriculum and assessment practices, the study identifies a lack of alignment between these regulations and their actual implementation in schools. This mismatch can lead to confusion, inconsistency, and inefficiency in the education system, underscoring the importance of ensuring coherence and consistency between policy directives and on-the-ground practices.

2.4.2. The Teachers have practised to enhance literacy, numeracy, and character, but they face challenges in prioritising these skills and implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka

There are a variety of good teaching practices that have been implemented with the aim of improving literacy, numeracy and character ranging from storytelling activities, mentoring children with disabilities and preparing supporting books. Learning has sought to facilitate children's needs, especially in stimulating children's active participation and motor skills, while ensuring gender equality. Same as the previous findings, these findings are also depicted in the education report card that shows a presence of conducive and affective support and cognitive activation from the teacher.

Teachers in Nias Selatan exhibit a good commitment to enhancing their teaching practices through professional development by participating in various training programs and professional development activities provided on PMM and the program conducted by the regional office of MoRA. Innovative approaches through adoption of student-centred teaching methods that align with the Kurikulum Merdeka. And they have active involvement in professional learning communities, fostering collaboration to improve the overall learning environment through KKG. These findings align with the achievement of teachers' reflection and improvement of learning, which have shown an increase from the previous period, as indicated by the education report card. Climate change education is introduced through the activities of implementing habituation to students about cleanliness, and getting used to bringing drinking bottles, and sorting waste (recycle). In addition, there are schools that plant *Sansevieria* flowers at school to absorb carbon dioxide.

Teachers play an important role so professional development is carried out through training and curriculum guidance. To ensure quality, performance evaluation has been carried out through periodic supervision. However, the educational office of Nias Utara has budget constraints that hamper the teacher supervision process.

The study highlights several key challenges in the teaching aspects. One of the main issues identified is that the literacy and numeracy levels of students have not been the primary focus of the education system. This lack of emphasis on foundational skills can hinder students' overall academic development and future opportunities. Additionally, teachers are facing difficulties in understanding and implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka, which suggests a need for more comprehensive training and support in this area. The majority of schools are just starting to implement Kurikulum Merdeka with only 1 PAUD and 2 SDs involved in the *Sekolah*

Penggerak program in Nias Utara. Meanwhile, there are 4 PAUD and 19 SDs that have become *Sekolah Penggerak* in Nias Selatan.¹⁶

Another significant challenge is the lack of effective classroom management skills among teachers. Classroom management is essential for creating a conducive learning environment and maximising student engagement and achievement. Without proper training and support in this area, teachers may struggle to maintain positive discipline and facilitate effective learning experiences for their students. Also, the challenges in Nias Selatan on teaching practice primarily stem from insufficient professional development, and resource constraints. Many teachers lack the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively utilise technology and implement innovative teaching methods. Additionally, there are issues related to limited access to technology, poor internet connectivity, and a lack of support for teachers in rural areas. These factors hinder the effective implementation of training programs and innovative practices in education, highlighting the need for a more systematic approach to teacher professional development and capacity building. The results of the 2024 education report card also show that learning quality by teachers needs to be improved. One of the factors is that teachers have not consistently managed their class to a conducive learning experience, psychological support, and learning methods.

Furthermore, teachers are encountering obstacles in accessing and utilising the PMM. Many teachers have not accessed PMM due to reluctance and have not implemented differentiated learning and developed one worksheet for all students and have not accommodated students with special needs. Improving teachers' digital literacy and providing ongoing support in using educational technology could help address this challenge.

The study also highlights the lack of support for enhancing teacher capacity. Professional development opportunities are crucial for teachers to stay updated on best practices in education, improve their teaching skills, and enhance student outcomes. Without adequate support for continuous learning and growth, teachers may struggle to meet the evolving needs of their students and the education system. Therefore, activating KKGs to conduct training is necessary.

Gender equality and inclusive education are identified as areas that need attention in the regions. Teachers' understanding of diversity and inclusiveness is still limited. Geographical location, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, lack of trained personnel, and budget limitations are inhibiting factors in the understanding and implementation of the GEDSI program. Ensuring equal access to education for all students, regardless of gender or ability, is essential for promoting social justice and inclusive development. By addressing barriers to education and creating a more inclusive learning environment, schools can better support the diverse needs of their students and foster inclusive society.

Climate change education is another aspect that has not been integrated into the school curriculum in the region even though it is necessary for Nias islands. The position of Nias Island

¹⁶ Data of *Sekolah Penggerak* is accessed from <https://psp-web.pauddikdasmen.kemdikbud.go.id/#/implementasi-psp>

is located in the Indian Ocean, the Islands have abundant biodiversity such as various fish, pigs, goats, parrots as well as rubber, coconut, clove and patchouli trees. In addition, connectivity between regions through flights and sea routes whose conditions are affected by the weather. One of the impacts of climate change in addition to threatening ecosystems is also extreme weather that disrupts flights and shipping. Thus, climate change is important to be integrated in the curriculum.

There is a misconception that climate change education is synonymous with hygiene programs. This indicates the lack of understanding of climate change education in schools. Based on the school observations, it seems that a disaster mitigation program is also needed. Teacher mentoring and training on climate change education is needed. Local governments need to provide adequate budgets and the necessary infrastructure to support climate change education.

Also, the study points out that policy support for teacher capacity development is not specific in the regions. Clear and targeted policies are essential for guiding education reforms and ensuring that resources are allocated effectively. By providing more specific policy support for teacher training, professional development, and other capacity-building initiatives, policymakers can help improve the overall quality of education in Nias Utara.

2.4.3. School leaders' practices enhance student character development and learning environment. However, challenges include a lack of collaboration, limited understanding of inclusive education, gender equality, and climate change.

In educational leadership, there are currently a number of good practices in place. These good practices focus on supporting learning that is centred on student character development and accommodating a safe learning environment. The principal considers that the school has a directed vision and mission strategy with other stakeholders. There are a number of impacts of success that have been felt, ranging from improved student learning outcomes, a sense of longing to go to school by students, increased collaboration, to active participation of parents. The school principal best practices are consistent with the education report card where school leadership have adequate communication, system, and program.

Effective educational leadership is crucial for fostering an environment that promotes student success and teacher development. The strengths identified in Nias Selatan, such as the presence of guru penggerak and principal's commitment to self-development, are vital components in achieving these goals. By emphasising data-driven decision-making, prioritising principal professional development, and maintaining a clear vision for inclusivity and engagement, school leaders can align their practices with government objectives for evidence-based education. This alignment not only enhances principal competency but also creates a more effective and supportive learning environment for students. Ultimately, strong educational leadership is essential for driving systemic improvements and ensuring that all students have access to good-quality education. This finding is in line with the results of the 2024 education report card, which showed good achievements and improved from the previous year in instructional leadership.

However, the observation of educational leadership aspects shows several challenges that need to be addressed. These challenges include less collaborative efforts from school principals, inadequate understanding of inclusive education, gender equality, and climate change, as well as the need for strengthening instructional leadership. Additionally, there is a lack of specific policies for the development of school principals' capacities in the region. To improve the quality of school leadership in the area, it is essential to provide training, socialisation, and supportive policies.

The findings suggest that schools face various obstacles in effectively leading their schools. School leadership faces challenges such as lack of collaboration. Lack of knowledge about Kurikulum Merdeka, teacher loyalty, poor relations between principals and committees and parents, and lack of assistance and supervision from the education office are obstacles to optimising school leadership performance.

Also, in Nias Selatan, educational leadership faces significant challenges that hinder effective school improvement. These include limited resources, such as budget constraints and insufficient qualified personnel, as well as the need for a shift in the leadership paradigm among school leaders. Additionally, frequent leadership changes and a lack of technological proficiency among some leaders further complicate the situation. To overcome these challenges, it is crucial to enhance collaboration among stakeholders and provide targeted guidance for developing essential leadership competencies, particularly in change management and instructional leadership.

Another significant challenge highlighted in the analysis is the lack of understanding of key educational concepts such as inclusive education, gender equality, and climate change. Inclusive education aims to provide equal opportunities for all students, including those with disabilities or special needs. School principals need to have a deep understanding of inclusive practices to create a welcoming and supportive learning environment for all students. Similarly, promoting gender equality in education is essential for ensuring that both male and female students have equal access to educational opportunities. Additionally, addressing the impact of climate change on education is crucial for developing sustainable and resilient school systems.

Further, the study identified that principals' instructional leadership still needs strengthening. Some principals still have difficulty scheduling meetings, directing teachers, and supervising programs to improve student-centred learning. Principals also have not used data in decision-making. The inhibiting factors are the lack of instructional leadership training, the lack of good cooperation between teachers and principals, and the arrogance of leadership. Therefore, enhancing the capacity of school principals to provide effective instructional leadership is essential for enhancing the overall quality of education in the region.

Moreover, the analysis reveals that there is a lack of specific policies for the development of school principals' capacities in Nias Utara. Having clear policies and guidelines for the professional development of school leaders is essential for ensuring consistency and quality in leadership practices. These policies can outline the expectations for school principals, provide

guidance on leadership competencies, and offer opportunities for ongoing training and support. Establishing specific policies for the development of school principals can help create a more structured and effective approach to leadership development in the region.

2.4.4. The strategy for handling sexual violence cases requires support from child protection laws and rules, as well as training for teachers and students. However, there is a lack of awareness and prioritisation of child protection issues, which leads to potential harm to children, highlighting the need for stronger policies and regulations.

The best practices in child protection in Nias Selatan are characterised by the implementation of a child-friendly district program¹⁷, the establishment of child protection committees, and collaboration with religious leaders, which foster community engagement. Additionally, initiatives targeting child nutrition, partnerships with NGOs, police cooperation, and support from social services contribute to a comprehensive approach to child welfare. This collective effort reflects a growing awareness and commitment to child protection among educators and community members, emphasising the importance of collaboration among various stakeholders. This is in accordance with the achievement of the 2024 education report card on the aspect of a good safety learning climate. The school environment is safe as evidenced by good psychological well-being and low cases of bullying, corporal punishment and sexual violence.

Also, the strategy of regulation of handling cases of sexual violence, activation of discussions on handling cases of sexual violence has been carried out and needs support through laws on child protection and rules that strengthen schools on the preparation of child protection policies and need training/socialization for teachers and students on violence prevention.

The findings indicate a lack of awareness and prioritisation of child protection issues. Stakeholders are aware of the need for a Violence Prevention and Handling Team (TPPK), but do not clearly understand the position of the TPPK, which is actually at the school level, not at the district level. This lack of understanding can have detrimental effects on the well-being and safety of children in the region. Without a strong emphasis on child protection policies and regulations, there is a risk that children may be exposed to various forms of harm.

One of the key issues highlighted in the analysis is the presence of unsafe classroom environments for students. Unsafe school conditions put children at risk of dog bites that cause rabies¹⁸ because the school does not have a fence. In addition, the lack of toilet safety facilities is a place that is prone to violence. This is a critical concern as schools should be a safe and secure space for children to learn and grow. The existence of unsafe classroom environments not only puts children at risk of physical harm but also hinders their ability to focus and excel

¹⁷ Districts/cities that have a child rights-based development system through integrating the commitment and resources of the government, community and business world, which are planned thoroughly and sustainably in policies, programs and activities to ensure the fulfilment of children's rights and protection. Examples of child-friendly programs such as the availability of public spaces and children's playgrounds in offices and public places, parents can process children's identity without obstacles.

¹⁸ See <https://medan.tribunnews.com/2024/05/23/2-pelajar-di-nias-selatan-luka-luka-diserang-anjing-peliharaan-warga-yang-bebas-berkelian>

academically. Addressing this issue should be a top priority for policymakers and education authorities in the regions.

In addition, child protection in Nias Selatan, is currently facing numerous challenges, including insufficient funding, and inadequate disaster preparedness simulations. There is a pressing need for a systematic approach to child protection in schools, as existing efforts are often isolated and inconsistent. Additionally, resource constraints and coordination issues among various levels of government further complicate effective implementation and service delivery.

Furthermore, the absence of specific local regulations governing child protection and child-friendly cities is a significant gap that needs to be addressed. Local regulations play a crucial role in ensuring that child protection measures are effectively implemented at the grassroots level. Without clear guidelines and regulations in place, there is a risk of inconsistency and inadequacy in the protection of children's rights in the region.

2.4.5. Nias Utara and Nias Selatan governments are committed to education and child protection, but they lack specific child protection regulations

The governments of Nias Utara and Nias Selatan have made efforts to demonstrate their commitment to education and child protection. However, these two regions do not yet have child protection regulations. Education affairs are regulated in the regional development plan (RPJMD) policy, as well as other regulations. For example, Nias Utara has a local regulation No 14 of 2013 on education implementation, but this regulation needs to be reviewed to make it relevant to current policy dynamics. Regulatory support is needed so that the government has a basis and guidelines in implementing policies to improve the quality of education.

Recommendations to address the challenges of improving education quality in Nias Utara and Nias Selatan as follows.

Curriculum and Assessment

1. Provide professional development for educational stakeholders on Merdeka Belajar and Kurikulum Merdeka. This includes the utilisation of education report cards for planning programs and monitoring the implementation.
2. Provide adequate resources to support the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka in schools, including supporting teachers in remote areas to use “Awan Penggerak”.
3. Many children in Nias still use Nias language as their mother tongue, therefore English should ideally be taught in year 3 or phase B, because at that age children usually already have sufficient foundations in their mother tongue and are beginning to be ready to learn a foreign language.
4. Provide professional development for key stakeholders on how to effectively implement differentiated learning, inclusive education and climate change education.
5. Support local governments and legislatures to develop regulations on education implementation.
6. Establish partnerships and collaborations with various literacy activists and universities to develop an educational ecosystem that enhances students' foundation skills. The

cooperation can be implemented through community service, research and Kampus Merdeka's program.

Teaching Practice

1. Providing teacher professional development on Merdeka Belajar and Kurikulum Merdeka, including applying differentiated instruction, how to use PMM, and incorporating gender equality and inclusive education.
2. Encouraging teachers to use "Awan Penggerak" especially for teachers who have barriers to accessing the internet and conducting supervision and supervision from supervisors and principals to utilise PMM.
3. Strengthening the teacher professional development through the learning community (*komunitas belajar*), PMM, KKG and other relevant programs, including to provide training to teachers on inclusive education and gender equality perspectives.
4. Conducting systematic and continuous teacher performance evaluations and assessments to improve teaching quality.
5. Develop learning materials on climate change appropriate to the level of education and provide adequate facilities and infrastructure for climate change education.

Educational Leadership

1. Bappeda leads the reflection of the education program with stakeholders and develops data-based joint planning that is appropriate to local conditions.
2. Provide professional development for government and school principals in various aspects of leadership, including inclusive education and gender equality.
3. Strengthen principal selection and placement mechanisms and develop more effective methods of evaluating principal and teacher appraisal.
4. Building a culture of collaboration and open communication between principals, teachers, school committees and parents.
5. Provide infrastructure and learning media that are appropriate to the needs of children with special needs and build school networks or partners in handling and serving children with special needs.
6. Increase collaboration with various related community-based organisations who are concerned about climate change education, GEDSI and education in general.

Child protection

1. Conduct socialisation and education on child protection to all stakeholders and develop case management SOPs supported by the optimal performance of the TPPK.
2. Improve collaboration between government, schools, teachers, NGOs and committees in child protection and provide adequate human resources and TPPK establishment.

3. Conclusion & Recommendation

3.1. Conclusion

This study demonstrates the potentials and challenges to improving the quality of education faced by educators in eight districts of Indonesia, they are Tanggamus, Pesisir Barat, Halmahera Utara, Kepulauan Morotai, Ketapang, Kayong Utara, Nias Utara, and Nias Selatan. They have shown several good initiatives and practices in the areas of curriculum & assessment, teaching practice, school leadership and child protection.

The schools and policy makers at the district levels show their efforts to implement Merdeka Belajar policies. Some schools are striving to develop school-based inclusive curricula, activating teacher learning communities, and utilising school report card data for improvement. Some teachers also show interest in participating in professional learning communities and to improve their teaching practices by accessing various resources despite challenges. Several districts attempt to ensure that the transition from early childhood education to primary school is seamless and is encouraging students to enjoy learning. In certain districts, GEDSI is promoted and approved, which is consistent with the report card data. Furthermore, teachers are willing to explore strategies to improve literacy, numeracy, and character. These practices include diagnostic assessments, classroom management, and using innovative, student-centred teaching methods. They also begin to incorporate environmental awareness into subjects, fostering behavioural changes towards climate adaptation. This study also finds good practices in school leadership including active engagement in curriculum development processes, considering elements of inclusive education and climate change, focusing on the professional development of teachers, ensuring physical and psychological safety for students, and guaranteeing equal access to learning opportunities for all students. Key policymakers at the district levels also have established regulations specifically addressing child violence, forming working groups to monitor and handle child protection issues, indicating commitment to provide a safe school environment for children.

This study also identified challenges to quality improvement of education in the eight districts. The limited use of diverse learning resources in teaching practices and the use of PMM or PINTAR, could explain the suboptimal impact of the learning process to literacy and numeracy skills. The understanding of Kurikulum Merdeka and P5 still needs to be improved. This highlights the need for improvement in the utilisation of education report card, PMM, PINTAR, SIBI, webinar programs to provide a more comprehensive and impactful learning experience for students. There is also a lack of cooperation between teachers or teaching working groups (KKG), which is a barrier to the exchange of ideas and learning resources. Geographical conditions further challenge access to learning resources and contribute to a lack of teacher concern for literacy in developing a reading culture at school.

Educational leadership faces several challenges, including uneven teacher supervision, inadequate principal qualifications, and suboptimal integration of climate change education and GEDSI. There is a need for enhanced capacity and an inclusive culture. The analysis reveals that the utilisation of education report card is not being optimised within schools, indicating a

gap in leveraging data-driven decision-making processes to enhance educational outcomes. Some principals have used report card data to develop strategic plans and improve school quality, but many have not, due to a limited understanding of the education report card.

The study points out that learning that meets the special needs of students and education for climate change have not been well integrated. Climate change education has been introduced through clean and healthy living behaviour (PHBS) but has not been integrated into the school curriculum, teaching modules, and extracurricular activities. There are also challenges in promoting gender equality and social inclusion within the school environment.

Child protection policies lack understanding and implementation, leading to societal stigma and unclear prevention mechanisms. Local regulations are needed to enhance, and budget constraints hinder effective implementation. To create a safer environment for children in schools, local governments should enhance support through education and child protection regulations. Addressing these challenges is crucial for effective child protection efforts.

Furthermore, the lessons learned that we could deduce from the eight districts are: firstly, the commitment of different districts to improve the education quality is evident through their regulations and policies. For instance, Tanggamus and Pesisir Barat districts have established policies to govern the implementation of education policies, teacher qualifications, curriculum development, child protection and inclusive education. However, in terms of teacher capacity building, district governments need to establish a framework and regulations to ensure their continuous improvement. Secondly, In some districts, it is found that the current policies do not effectively address key education issues such as continuous professional development. This is partly due to the limited capacity of the district government in identifying the core problems and utilising the education report card system to develop education plans and programs. Specific areas requiring attention include parental engagement to promote children's learning, ensuring equitable access to education in urban and rural areas, and developing affirmative policies for individuals from vulnerable groups to increase educational participation.

3.2. Recommendation

The recommendations to address the challenges in improving the quality of education and child protection in the eight districts are as follows.

Curriculum and assessment

Several recommendations for implementing a curriculum and assessment strategies in schools. These include improving support systems for schools to implement Kurikulum Merdeka, including the integration of GEDSI and climate change as well as to support English language learning in primary schools as it could contribute to the development of literacy necessary for children in a globalised context. Allocating learning materials and supporting the use of Awan Penggerak in 3T regions, and activating the learning community (*Komunitas belajar*), KKG, and KKKS, and providing regulations and guidelines. In addition, it is important to establish partnerships and collaborations with various literacy activists and universities to develop an educational ecosystem that can improve students' foundation skills. The involvement of

universities is through the *Kampus Merdeka* program, research and community service. Meanwhile, for LPTK through pre-service teachers and training for teachers and school principals. These recommendations aim to improve students' literacy and numeracy skills, promote climate change adaptation, and enhance the quality of education.

Teaching practice

The recommendations include teaching and training for teachers, developing professional development through PMM or PINTAR, improving inclusive education training, enhancing teacher professionalism through KKG, and other relevant programs, mentoring teacher to use “Awan Penggerak” and other resources necessary for supporting their teaching as well as to develop localised teaching and learning materials, promoting school literacy and literacy, developing collaborations between teachers, teachers and students, and teachers and parents, evaluating and teaching teacher performance, and collaborating with NGOs to integrate climate change into curriculum and teaching activities. These practices aim to improve inclusive education, gender perspective, and differentiated education, enhance digital literacy, and promote a supportive learning environment. These practices are crucial for promoting inclusive education and addressing the needs of diverse learners.

Educational leadership

The recommendations for educational leadership include improving quality education and data utilisation, encourages the role of Bappeda to involve various stakeholders in data-based education planning, involving school communities in planning for performance improvement , supervising teachers to improve learning quality, collaborating with school communities and local community-based organisations, promoting gender inclusion and gender diversity, providing training to the education for climate change. These recommendations aim at enhancing the quality of education and promote a culture of cooperation among school, teacher, and community members.

Child protection

The recommendations for child protection include implementing social regulations and child protection mechanisms through TPPK, enhancing community support through education and socialisation programs, advocating local government to regulate child protection and rights, enhancing human resources and capacity building, fostering coordination and communication among parents, teachers, and school staff, improving school integration, and utilising technology for effective communication and education on child protection.

~ End ~

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Policy papers

Peraturan Mendikbudristek Nomor 12 Tahun 2024 tentang Kurikulum pada Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Jenjang Pendidikan Dasar, dan Jenjang Pendidikan Menengah

Peraturan Mendikbudristek Nomor 46 Tahun 2023 tentang Pencegahan dan Penanganan Kekerasan di Lingkungan Satuan Pendidikan

Peraturan Mendikbudristek Nomor 17 Tahun 2021 tentang Asesmen Nasional

Keputusan Menteri Agama (KMA) Nomor 450 Tahun 2024 Pedoman Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka pada RA dan Madrasah

Peraturan Menteri Agama (PMA) Nomor 73 Tahun 2022 Tentang Pencegahan dan Penanganan Kekerasan Seksual di Satuan Pendidikan Agama lingkup Kementerian Agama

Annexes



First workshop in Nias Utara,
15 March 2024



School visit in Nias Utara



Group discussion in Nias Utara



Second workshop in Nias Utara, 1 July 2024



First workshop in Ketapang, 25 March 2024



Group discussion & presentation in
Ketapang



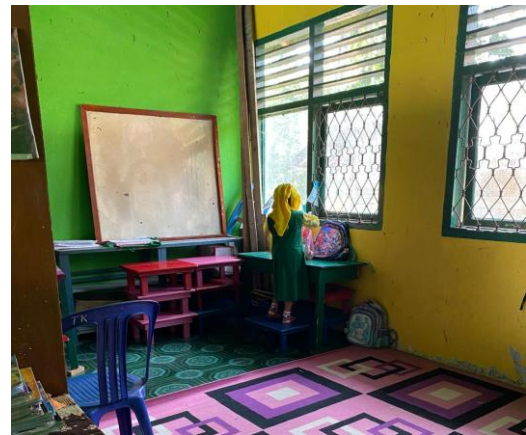
School observation in Ketapang



Second workshop In Ketapang,
20 June 2024



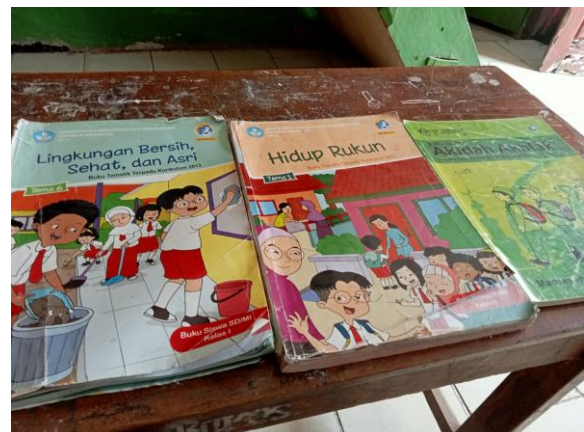
First workshop in Tanggamus, 27 May 2024



School visit in Tanggamus



Second workshop in Tanggamus,
30 June 2024



Although they have implemented the Merdeka curriculum, teachers still use the 2013 curriculum book as their only resource, madrasah observations in Tanggamus



First workshop in Halmahera Utara,
3 June 2024



Second workshop in Halmahera Utara,
7 June 2024



Reading and writing learning in RA, RA
observation in Halmahera Utara



Library room at a public madrasa in
Halmahera Utara



Workshop activities in Nias Selatan



Discussion session during the workshop
activity in Nias Selatan