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MESSAGE FROM THE UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR

In what will be the last newsletter of 2021, I would like to thank all of you, from the bottom of my heart, for your diligence and indomitable spirit over the course of a year that has tested us unlike any other.

Your steadfastness and flexibility have been integral to our many successes this year. And as we close the chapter on 2021, I'm sure you'll agree it is encouraging to see signs of hope on the horizon, in the form of new commitments towards a better, greener recovery from COVID-19.

Indeed, at the end of COP26 in November, member states ultimately arrived at a deal that—though far from perfect—just about keeps the possibility alive of limiting global heating to a 1.5-degree Celsius rise above pre-industrial levels. Make no mistake about it—this is a lifeline for our planet.

In his speech at COP26, President Jokowi reaffirmed Indonesia's determination to tackle climate change. Indonesia was among more than 40 nations to sign up to a commitment to halt and reverse deforestation. Indeed, work has already begun on plans to rehabilitate mangrove forests covering an area of 600,000 hectares by 2024—the largest such mangrove rehabilitation globally. Indonesia also joined commitments to phase out coal. However with an array of new coal power plants in the pipeline, this resolution warrants our scrutiny as well as our applause.

The UN team has joined forces with Indonesia's government on a range of initiatives designed to heal our planet. We are supporting the government towards its target of restoring 2.6 million hectares of degraded peatlands in the country, and we helped the development of a tool to enable budget tagging for Climate Change and Gender in the national climate financing system—part of an initiative to encourage climate financing efforts to be gender-sensitive.

Colleagues, the rate at which COVID-19 is spreading has declined since this summer, but we are not out of the woods yet. Over the holiday season and into the new year, I urge all of you to remain vigilant, and to continue following public health protocols to minimize the risk to yourselves and your loved ones.

The recent emergence of Omicron—the new variant of concern—is another reminder of the importance of vaccine equality. That's something our UN team has been working on continually, through the COVAX mechanism, and through its efforts to bring vaccines to refugees. In this month's newsletter, you can read about other ways we are striving to tackle inequalities: from improving access to safe drinking water, to partnering with female religious leaders for better sexual and reproductive health, to supporting batik producers in rural areas.

It has been a great honour to work alongside you all this year as we uphold our obligation to humanity and our commitment to leave no one behind. I wish you and all of your families a safe and happy holiday season, and I look forward to seeing what we can achieve together in 2022.

Valerie Julliard

UN Resident Coordinator in Indonesia



Companies Pledge to Advance Gender Equality Through Gender-Responsive Business Practices in Indonesia

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Tackling gender inequality is everyone's business. As a critical social and economic issue, businesses have a fundamental role in promoting women's leadership and entrepreneurship. In recognition of companies contribution to the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment, six companies received Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) Awards in late October 2021.

The WEPs Awards are organised by the WeEmpower Asia programme of UN women with support from the European



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Union. This year's awards saw a significant increase of application submissions, up to four times higher than last year's applications including state-owned enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across different sectors. This initiative serves as a momentum to celebrate business leaders and companies that promote gender-responsive business practices in their efforts to empower women to live up to their potential. [Find out more about the WEPs Awards and national winners here.](#)

Restoring Indonesian Peatlands, Protecting Our Planet



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Indonesia is home to more than 24 million hectares of peatlands – making up approximately 36 per cent of the world's total tropical peatlands. In its natural state, tropical peat occurs in flooded swamps and is one of nature's most effective ways of removing carbon from the atmosphere, helping to mitigate global warming.

Recognising the important role peatlands have in storing carbon, biodiversity conservation, water resource management and livelihoods, the government of Indonesia established the Indonesian Peatland Restoration Agency (BRG). The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) manages the programme and supports the BRG in its development of an efficient and integrated peatland restoration model focusing on the effective restoration of

peatlands in seven priority provinces – Jambi, Riau, South Sumatra, Central Kalimantan, South Kalimantan, West Kalimantan and Papua.

The programme works to restore peatlands while simultaneously improving education, raising awareness, strengthening institutional and local capacity and supporting environmentally sustainable livelihood options that utilise commodities native to peatlands. For example, providing assistance to village authorities to develop medium-term village development plans and budgets that integrate peatland restoration activities, promote cooperation to exchange knowledge, and boost community preparedness to prevent and overcome peat fires. [For more information on this partnership, click here.](#)

Promoting Gender-Sensitive Budgeting to Tackle Climate Change



The adverse impact of climate change has disrupted farmers' livelihoods across Indonesia, as they could no longer forecast the weather and crop yield due to changing climate patterns. Local farmers need to diversify their crops to adjust to the changing climate, and women also need to deal with a double burden to juggle their domestic tasks and as farmers. As

such, gender-sensitive budgeting is increasingly more critical for the government to respond to the climate crisis.

As part of Indonesia's contribution to the [Paris Agreement](#) – the government commits to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 29% nationally and up to 41% with international assistance by 2030. To achieve these targets, UNDP–UNEP Poverty-Environment Action for Sustainable Development Goals (Poverty-Environment Action) launched the Climate Budget Tagging (CBT) to support the Ministry of finance to increase the transparency of public climate funding. As the impact of climate change on women has not been fully known, more programs that combine gender and climate change and mainstreaming gender in state budgeting are needed. To start, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection have already worked to develop the Technical Guidance for Gender-Responsive Climate Budget Tagging, which will assist the technical ministries in implementing double-tagging (gender and climate change). [Click here for more information.](#)

Female Religious Leaders as Champions of Sexual and Reproductive Health in Indonesia

Dai'yah, female Muslim leaders, are critical figures in religious education in communities in Indonesia. However, the scope of their role and impact of their work expands beyond religious teaching. Nia Qolbunia, a 45-year-old dai'yah who is also a teacher at an Islamic junior high school, is actively championing sexual and reproductive health and family planning. "I want to fight for the rights of women and children, especially in reproductive health and education for women, to make gender equality a reality in the family and the society," said Nia.

Dai'yahs are among UNFPA Indonesia's critical partners in achieving the [Three Zeros](#) (Three Transformative Results), an agreement that seeks to end preventable maternal deaths, unmet need for family planning, and gender-based violence and harmful practices against women and girls. Making the Three Zeros a reality will also support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, ensuring that no one is left behind.

UNFPA Indonesia also works with Nia's organisation, Fatayat NU (a Muslim women's organisation), as one of the implementation partners of UNFPA's "[Leaving No One Behind \(LNOB\)](#)" project supported by the Government of Japan. The partnership focuses on increasing da'iyah's capacity to promote the sexual and reproductive health and well-being of women and girls during the pandemic. [Learn more here.](#)



© Fatayat NU



Vaccinating Refugees in Indonesia, for the Benefit of All



Refugees in Indonesia, many of whom have fled Afghanistan's mounting crises, have lagged far behind the rest of the population when it comes to COVID-19 vaccinations. However, in late September 2021, a new decree from the Ministry of Health promised to dramatically increase access to vaccinations for the 13,273 refugees in Indonesia, reflecting broader steps towards greater inclusion for one of the most vulnerable groups in the country. In response, UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF and the Resident Coordinator's Office jointly held a vaccination program for refugees in Jakarta through a private scheme in early October 2021.

The decree allows refugees with UNHCR-issued identity documents to access both private sector vaccination schemes and the national COVID-19 vaccination scheme in areas where at least 70% of the population have received a first vaccine dose. That means that refugees in up to six of



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Indonesia's 34 provinces are now eligible for the COVID-19 shot. To date, UNHCR calculates that more than 4,800 of Indonesia's population of 13,273 refugees, or about 36%, have received at least one COVID-19 vaccination dose.

Although COVID-19 has devastated both advanced economies and the developing world, refugees are among those who have been hit the hardest. An equitable access to COVID-19 vaccinations benefits both refugees and the communities that host them, better access to education and employment for refugees, and an important step towards greater inclusion and a decent life for refugees. UNHCR continues to work closely with the Indonesian government to ensure the refugees can live in dignity while they are waiting for a more permanent solution, from advocacy for refugee children to enroll in national schools, providing digital entrepreneurship training, and advocating for access to health services and COVID-19 vaccines. [Find out more here.](#)

Improving Access to Safe Drinking Water in Indonesia

In Indonesia, water safety is a major public health concern; seven out of ten Indonesian households consume drinking water contaminated with E.coli. Therefore, improving drinking water quality requires implementing water safety plans (WSPs) and strengthening capacity for water quality surveillance.

The World Health Organization (WHO) took part in auditing the WSP implementation in two drinking water providers in 2017 and has since advocated for a refocused approach to water safety and quality over quantity, affordability, and continuity. This year, such efforts have reached a new milestone: the national road map of WSP 2021-2025 was recently issued by Bappenas that includes an implementation roadmap in 190 districts and municipalities by 2024.

The success of WSP implementation requires a trained and skilled water provider workforce. In October 2021, WHO provided technical assistance to a training session organised in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, the Ministry of Health, Bappenas and the USAID Indonesia Urban Water, Sanitation and Hygiene



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(IUWASH Plus). At the training, WHO emphasised that a strong commitment and active high-level leadership are critical to the sustainable implementation of WSPs. Staff and stakeholders need to actively develop plans to ensure success in improving access to safe drinking water across Indonesia. [Learn about the roadmap and highlights of the training here.](#)

Women Cultural Entrepreneurs Bring Color to Indonesia's Heritage



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What do a tour guide, a junior gastronomist and a tailoring business owner have in common? Besides representing this rich diversity of Indonesia, be it in cultural expression or arts professionals, they were all beneficiaries of UNESCO's policies and programs resulting from three major UNESCO cultural conventions, namely [the 2005 Convention for the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions](#), [the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage](#) and [the 1972 Convention for World Heritage](#).

Indonesia's cultural expressions are characterised by colour and flavour, and there is no better testimony to such sensitive diversity than the batik embroidery that Indonesian crafters masterfully create. To boost youth entrepreneurship

and improve the livelihoods of local communities around Indonesian heritage sites, UNESCO has partnered with the Citi Foundation and the Government of Japan to establish [Kita Muda Kreatif](#). Since its inception in 2017, Kita Muda Kreatif has transformed human lives all over the Indonesian archipelago, from Bali and Lombok to the Prambanan Temples in Java and the Toba Lakes in Sumatra. Ceplon, Anastasya, and Repa are three of Kita Muda Kreatif's participants and could see that the program provided them invaluable skills to scale their business, preserve intangible heritage, and develop their local communities. [Click here to read more about these rising female cultural entrepreneurs' journey](#) and their commitment to maintaining Indonesia's priceless intangible heritage for many years to come.

Media Engagement to Improve Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Reporting



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The media are instrumental in shaping public perceptions about labour migration, which can influence policy and practice. Coverage of labour migration tends to focus on cases against migrants and often can unwittingly perpetuate negative stereotypes about migrant workers, especially women, increasing their vulnerability to discrimination and abuse.

In October 2021, the ILO-UN Women Safe and Fair Programme and Alliance of Indonesian Journalists (AJI) Jakarta gathered 25 journalists from national and regional media to participate in the three-day journalist training program. The training was conducted to promote ethical reporting on labour migration, better protect and empower women migrant workers, and reduce negative public perceptions of women migrant workers.

The participating journalists learned about gender-sensitive languages and lens and ethical journalism to provide fair gender portrayal. In addition, a visit to one of the integrated Gender Responsive Migrant Workers Resources Centre (MRC) and the One-Roof Integrated Services (LTSA) in Cirebon, West Java, allowed the journalists to see the kinds of support provided to migrant workers, such as psycho-social counselling service, legal aid, among many others. The training also introduced the [Indonesian version of the media-friendly glossary on migration \(Ending Violence Against Women edition\)](#), which serves as a guide for media professionals when writing or reporting about women's labour migration or violence against women in the context of migration. [Click here to read the full article](#).

The UN in Indonesia Has Announced the Winner of its First Sign Language Dance Choreography Competition



Hearing impairments are the most common impairments among people with severe disabilities in Indonesia, prompting the UN in Indonesia to focus on popularizing sign language among other initiatives around International Day of Persons with Disabilities this year.

Opening in early November, the Show Your Sign contest asked Indonesian social media users to create original choreography for one of ten pre-selected songs using sign language. It was co-devised by the UN in Indonesia and the International Labour Organization (ILO), in partnership with the Indonesian Association for the Welfare of the

Deaf (Gerkatin), and the affiliated Sign Language Center in Indonesia (Pusbisindo).

In an interview with the head of Pusbisindo Laura Lesmana Wijaya, the UN Resident Coordinator explained that the experience of being cut off from our normal networks during the pandemic prompted the UN to focus on people with hearing impairments for this year's campaign. "We could not see the people we loved, the people we worked with. The only thing we had was a screen in order to have communication," Julliard said in the interview, "we need to make sure everybody, whatever their ability or disability, can communicate."

Show Your Sign is part of a series of integrated campaigns the UN in Indonesia organized around the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, which runs from Nov. 25 to Dec. 10. In addition to promoting the use of sign language, the campaign serves as a platform for members of Indonesia's Deaf community to show solidarity with survivors of gender-based violence. [Read more about the Show Your Sign campaign here.](#)

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The UN in Indonesia's 'Comedy for Equality' Showcase Encourages Creativity and Humour to Counter Narratives That Discriminate Against Women



Like in many other countries, Indonesia has witnessed a [tragic rise in violence against women and girls during the COVID-19 pandemic](#), corresponding with nationally enforced restrictions on movement. Research by UN Women [shows that the COVID-19 pandemic affected women and men in Indonesia differently](#), with women disproportionately vulnerable to social and economic pressure.

On 11 December 2021, the United Nations (UN) in Indonesia held its inaugural Comedy for Equality showcase, featuring performances from 10 Indonesian comedians mentored by the multi-award winning Indonesian comic Sakdiyah Ma'ruf. The Comedy for Equality showcase was created as a platform to express creativity and humour to counter narratives that discriminate against women.

Although the UN did not have a hand in crafting any of the comedians' sets, each performer addressed issues related to

gender equality and the global [16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence](#) initiative through their comedy.

"Gender-based violence can be an uncomfortable, painful topic to discuss. But addressing it effectively means being able to have honest conversations," says UN Resident Coordinator in Indonesia Valerie Julliard. "Our Comedy for Equality project challenges taboos and makes conversations about this most serious of subjects a bit less scary."

UN Women and UNFPA Indonesia opened applications for Comedy for Equality on 30 October 2021. The brief asked comics interested in gender equality to submit a short video clip or script of an original joke they had devised. The workshops were hosted by Ma'ruf and featured Devi Asmarani, the co-founder and editor in chief of the feminist [web-magazine Magdalene](#), and Inaya Wahid, a social and cultural activist as special guests.

Ma'ruf says that the Comedy for Equality initiative helps "women and men to reflect their stories of discrimination and marginalization and provides safe spaces for women and men to express themselves." She adds that the platform gives "more opportunity to women and men to speak up by cutting industry gatekeepers that censor people and prevent them sharing their truth."

[Head to Kumparan's YouTube channel to watch the Comedy for Equality Showcase.](#)

What's up with the COVID-19 Vaccination for Refugees & Migrants in Indonesia?



The COVID-19 vaccination at the moment has been rolled out to all groups, not only the elderly or health workers, but also for the general population of productive age and even children with a minimum age of 12 years. However, based on a World Health Organization (WHO) review, migrants and refugees still face various obstacles in accessing the COVID-19 vaccine. WHO found that migrants and refugees are more likely to feel the more severe impact of COVID-19. In addition, the living conditions of this group make them more susceptible to infection with the SARS-CoV2 virus that causes COVID-19.

In [Indonesia](#), according to UNHCR data per October 2021, a total of 13,188 refugees and asylum seekers are registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees or the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in which 71 percent are adults and 27 percent are children. However, migrants and refugees still experience various difficulties in Indonesia. Some of Tirtoid's reports show the [fate](#) of refugees who are waiting for new citizenship status without being able to work, to the difficulty of surviving in the midst of [rejection](#) by local residents.

Until now, Indonesia has not signed the Convention Regarding the Status of Refugees, otherwise known as the [1951 Refugee Convention](#) and its [1967 Protocol](#). However, based on Presidential Regulation ([Perpres](#)) Number 125 of 2016 concerning Handling Refugees from Abroad, Indonesia provides temporary access and protection for internally

displaced persons until long-term solutions are found for them. Based on this regulation, the Government authorizes UNHCR, IOM, and a number of state agencies to help protect and find solutions for refugees.

Migrants themselves are also struggling in the midst of a pandemic. IOM [noted](#) that around 40,000 migrant workers returned to Indonesia in June-July 2021 alone, and they were unable to return to work due to the pandemic. IOM's survey of 2,100 respondents showed that around 72 percent of returning migrant workers were unemployed after their return. However, Indonesian migrant workers who return from abroad are included in the national vaccination program, in contrast to foreign workers who are not directly mentioned in the national vaccination program plan.

Meanwhile, UNHCR, IOM, and local governments have joined forces to initiate the vaccination for refugees and foreign migrants is still being carried out in collaboration. In the midst of these conditions, both UNHCR and IOM have attempted to vaccinate groups of refugees and migrants. On 8-10 September 2021, for example, UNHCR in collaboration with IOM, UNICEF, and the Resident Coordinator's Office (RC's Office) [held](#) a COVID-19 vaccination for refugees aged 60 years and over, and several refugees with comorbidities living in Jakarta and its surroundings. This vaccination activity was attended by nearly 300 refugees.

Refugees and migrants should not be left behind in the COVID-19 vaccination process. They have a human right to health, and the state has an obligation to provide health care services to refugees.

The UN team in Indonesia is scaling up its efforts in fighting misinformation, promoting solidarity, and pushing for vaccine equity through Verified - an online initiative to deliver trusted information, life-saving advice and stories from the best of humanity. To further boost awareness on the importance of fighting misinformation, the UN team in Indonesia is partnering with Tirtoid - an online Indonesian media with 800,000+ daily active users providing news backed by facts and data analysis. Tirtoid is part of Indonesia's Facebook partner, Third-Party Factchecker, a signatory of the International Fact-Checking Network, and won Innovative Cyber Media at PWI 2018 Awards. [Read the full third article on vaccinating refugees and migrants in Indonesia of the series here.](#)

