

Making A Brighter Indonesia Possible

(or, this is why the program is relevant for my beloved country)

I grew up in a country where for more than 30 years, corruption is deemed as a usual practice. I consider myself lucky to be raised by parents who never think so. They taught me about integrity and the ability to change the world, albeit in small steps.

Graft crippled Indonesia for tens of years, and it still does. The fall of President Soeharto in 1998 made corruption a proclaimed enemy of the state, but it still lingers in the corners, consuming the money needed to improve Indonesians' lives: for better education, for better health care, for better public services.

I believe transparency and accountability are the most important keys toward a brighter and cleaner Indonesia. We must closely watch how the government and other stakeholders build the policies and implement it. We have to open fellow Indonesians' eyes, as well as the foreigners, and invite them to oversee the country.

The company I'm working for, Tempo Media Group, which includes PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk (the holding) and PT Tempo Inti Media Harian (the Tempo Daily Newspaper), always aims to fight corruption in Indonesia. The abuse of entrusted power for private gain has been weakening the archipelago for many years.

Media always has the obligation as a watchdog, but what can we do without understanding the public policy? The Public Policy and Management specialization's introduction in International Institute of Social Studies' website raises many questions, the ones that has been around in my thought for a long time:

“In our contemporary world of enormous opportunities and threats, and growing expectations, inequalities, and conflicts, how can public policy and public action be better prepared and implemented?”

What forms of public action are feasible for the state, the market and civil society as complementary agents? Why are reform, implementation and learning often so difficult? What can be learnt from examples of successful innovation, adaptation and reconciliation?”

The program does not promise the students that the questions will be answered satisfactorily. But those questions will surely be discussed thoroughly in the 15-months program, helping the participants to deeper comprehend public policies.

That is why I chose the Public Policy and Management specialization in International Institute of Social Studies' Development Studies program. I will learn a lot of things, the knowledge I will implement and share once I am back in Indonesia. I will get a wider network. I think both the knowledge and the network will help me to shape a brighter Indonesia.

I'm Bunga Manggiasih, a journalist, and I believe Indonesia will benefit from my study in the Netherlands.