



It's project time

Many of our students are now working on ministry projects. Their big goal is to be finished in time for graduation at the end of the year in Surabaya.

To do a project, they have to identify a major need or opportunity in their area of ministry, and devise a solution, which often involves training their team of workers. They then run the program, evaluate it, and write it up as a thesis.

Here's what they're doing ...

Two students are Indonesian missionaries in unreached people groups. Their projects involve creating *platforms*, which are activities that give them access to local people, making them free to visit people that otherwise would be inaccessible to them. These activities also usually support workers as tent-makers.

One student is setting up a playgroup in his community to establish links with local people who would otherwise not associate with Christians and the church.

In similar circumstances, a student is considering establishing a music tutoring program to reach local people in a large new suburb on the outskirts of Jakarta.

Another is pastor of a church that has recently elected new elders. Her role is to train them in their roles, both in personal discipleship and biblical understanding, as well as the governance and administrative aspects of Christian leadership.

Another student is principal of an elementary school that reaches the poor and marginalised, mainly people from other islands who have drifted to the big city looking for work. Many students have not done well in mathematics, so she is devising a training program for her teachers, most of whom have not been trained as general elementary school teachers.

One student is working on a project to improve the teaching plans of early childhood teachers in her network of schools. They first thought about mathematics but then chose language. Teachers thought that they had too often neglected teaching spoken language (listening and speaking) and too

often rushed into teach written language. It's often called language arts. Having basic language skills is preparation for all other subjects, so it looks like it will be a helpful project.

One student is a kindergarten principal and has trained teachers in learning through play. That means that small children do play activities that achieve the learning goals of their curriculum. For example, one lesson was about the five senses. In groups of five, one child was appointed the eyes, another the nose, another the ears, another the tongue, and another the fingers. They had to see how well each one could identify a cup of ice cream. Another game was called "Where does rain come from?" Children played the parts of the sea, the sun, clouds, wind, and rain.

Conference

We ran our first conference in December last year. It was a success, with a range of speakers presenting their work. I have to add that it was a learning experience, and we had to solve a few unexpected problems on the way. I was using a cell-phone and the battery could not cope with a full day conference. A few people wanted to read their papers word for word, and some needed more skills in preparing visual aids.

One paper was most interesting. In the institution in the study, students did as little reading as possible, and the standard of writing was also quite low. He found that some major Indonesian universities also have the same problem. Fortunately, our researcher offered some helpful solutions.

New lecturers

You might remember that we welcomed two new lecturers. Ibu Aprilia has now started helping supervise students' projects. Dr. Harman is taking time off to get married, so he is away on his home island off the coast of Sumatra. We don't expect him and his new wife back until after the honeymoon.

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