

## Towards a Sustainable Future: Environmental Protection, Energy Transition, and Community Welfare



In June 2024, SMERU hosted a series of webinars under the **Forum Kajian Pembangunan (FKP)** initiative, facilitating discussions among researchers, academics, experts, civil society, and policymakers. The forum discussed strategies to balance environmental conservation and community welfare, as well as how to enhance the role of local governments in a just energy transition. Thank you to all participants and speakers of the June 2024 FKP webinars. We hope this discussion sparked valuable insights and paved the way for effective solutions in the areas of conservation area management, community welfare, and a just energy transition for Indonesia.



### Improving Community Welfare in Marine Protected Areas

Series 1 - Thursday, 20 June 2024

Villages situated near conservation areas experience a higher prevalence of poverty and inequality compared to those located outside these marine protected zones. Statistics Indonesia data (2021) indicates that around 1.3 million of Indonesia's 10.86 million poor people reside in coastal regions. It highlights the importance of prioritizing initiatives aimed at improving the welfare of coastal populations in the management of marine protected areas. The FKP SMERU Webinar 2024 Series 1 explores approaches to achieving a balance between environmental conservation and community welfare. [Click the image](#) to watch the webinar.



### Just Energy Transition in Indonesia: Enhancing the Role of Local Governments

Series 2 - Wednesday, 26 June 2024

Indonesia's ambitious target of achieving 23% renewable energy by 2025 is still a long way off and fraught with challenges. Engaging local governments is crucial to accelerate the energy transition. Preliminary findings from a SMERU study suggest that the existing regulatory framework, paradoxically, constrains local governments' role in the energy transition. The FKP SMERU Webinar 2024 Series 2 delved into the essential policies and actions needed for local governments to play a more active role in a just energy transition. [Click the image](#) to watch the webinar.

## Latest Research



### Data Collection and Socioeconomic Analysis of Post-Coal Communities in West Sumatra

Sawahlunto was recently selected as a Just Transition pilot site because the city presents an exceptional opportunity to test and implement fair transition principles in a real-world environment. In the aftermath of mine closure, this former coal mining powerhouse is now diversifying its economy. SMERU examines the impacts of the coal mine closure in Sawahlunto and explores pathways towards a just transition to a post-mining local economy.



SMERU welcomed two Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) pension experts, Wouter De Tavernier (Pension Economist) and Andre Reilly (Pension Analyst), on June 10, for a discussion on the aging population and pension funds in Indonesia. SMERU cites cultural factors and low financial literacy as the primary reasons why Indonesians do not prioritize pension planning. SMERU researchers participating in the discussion included Athia Yumna (Director of Research and Outreach), Ulfah Alifia (Head of Research Department), and Affandi Ismail (Researcher).



SMERU hosted a hybrid seminar titled "China's New Growth Strategy: Implications for Middle-Income Economies" on 19 June, featuring Ian Coxhead, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization (IDE-JETRO). Ian presented his research on the impact of China's new economic growth strategy on neighboring countries. The research predicts that China's new economic strategy will result in developing countries, such as Indonesia, losing their competitive advantage in capital-intensive manufacturing sectors.



Widjajanti Isdijoso, Director of SMERU, was invited as a speaker for a discussion titled "Ten Years of Infrastructure Development under President Jokowi: Hopes, Realities, and Notes" held on 21–22 June. The discussion was organized by the Center for Budget Analysis and State Financial Accountability of the Indonesian House of Representatives Expert Body to gather input on the impact and improvement notes related to infrastructure development in the education and health sectors during the administration of President Joko Widodo (2015–2024). In her presentation, Widjajanti highlighted that while the gap between welfare groups has narrowed, there remains a significant disparity between Indonesia's western and eastern regions.

Latest Publications



**Protecting Our Future: Strengthening Social Protection for Children during the Post-COVID-19 Recovery Period**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant negative impacts on children. These include increased child poverty and disrupted schooling and services for children with disabilities. Existing social protection programs have not reached all pandemic-affected children. This policy brief presents recommendations to strengthen social protection systems for children, particularly to ensure their well-being and lift them out of poverty. [Click the image](#) to read the recommendations.



**Does Decentralisation Promote Learning? Local Political Settlements and Education Policies in Indonesia**

This article delves into the political constraints placed on district heads' discretionary power and their implications for fostering bureaucratic capacity, particularly in enhancing the quality of education. It explores how these constraints manifest and how they impact the work of bureaucrats, specifically in driving educational innovation at the local level. [Click the image](#) to access the article.