What policies are the most effective to promote the future of work that is inclusive? What efforts are necessary to foster people's willingness to learn and become lifelong learners? How can we improve the share of digital dividend for women?

Internet and the Future of Work That Is Inclusive

Jakarta, 30 March 2022–Changes in the global labor market have the potential to widen inequality in the future. Therefore, it is urgent that effective policies be prepared to provide solutions to this issue. The demographic dividend in developing countries and the aging society facing developed countries have posed different sets of challenges to the future of work. What policies are the most effective to promote the future of work that is inclusive? What efforts are necessary to foster people's willingness to learn and become lifelong learners? And how can we improve the share of digital dividend for women?

These questions were discussed at the "Global Summit Solutions 2022: Bridging the Future of Work: Finding Common Grounds for Demographic Dividend in Developing Countries and Aging Society in Developed Countries" organized by Global Solutions Initiative and The SMERU Research Institute (SMERU). Fully supported by the Knowledge Sector Initiative (KSI) and Tanoto Foundation, the event offered some solutions to bridging various interests and reducing labor inequality in the future in both developing and developed countries.

Internet as a basic right to promote the future of work that is inclusive

To make the future of work inclusive, it is necessary that the internet be available and accessible to everyone. "It is now crucial that the discourse of the internet as a civil right/basic right for all citizens be brought up," stated Widjajanti Isdijoso (Director of SMERU). The internet can only be accessible if all levels of the society can afford the data plan. Furthermore, there needs to be policies that can facilitate cooperation between internet providers to reduce operational costs and ultimately make the price more affordable. The government can also design schemes ofaffordable smartphone ownership to optimize the available internet infrastructure.

Widjajanti added, "Digital literacy has to specifically target marginal groups, namely women, the poor, people with disabilities, and the elderly. Thus, the affirmative policies to tackle digital divide and enhance digital literacy will be effective in promoting the future of work that is inclusive".

Designing policies which support lifelong learning

Lifelong learners are open to new discoveries and experiences. They are citizens or workers who view the world as a space for learning and practice deep critical thinking to search for knowledge that matters. To foster people's willingness to learn in the digital world, the education system

needs to be upgraded so that students can learn at the applying level and possess the growth mindset that encourages them to develop innovations.

Skills acquisition becomes a crucial factor which affects the future of work. That is why it is important to design policies that support lifelong learning. "The government can work with edtech start-ups in providing accessible online materials for the workforce to reskill and upskill themselves independently," said Widjajanti. It is true that technology eliminates some jobs, but it also creates new ones. Therefore, efforts to support the learning of new skills in later life will overcome inequality and improve well-being.

Inclusive digital technologies have the potential to break down work barriers that women face.

All over the world, women continue to suffer from unaffordability, lack of connectivity, and lack of access to devices. If not properly addressed, existing gender gaps in access to the internet will likely lead to gender inequalities in the labor market and financial inclusion. Meanwhile, information and communications technologies (ICT) have the potential to provide opportunities to deliver services that can reach the poor and marginalized groups, including women. "Policies aimed at reducing gender gaps in the access to the internet and devices will help empower women, as well as prevent and reduce gender inequalities in many aspects of life," said the SMERU Director, Widjajanti Isdijoso.

Secondly, it is equally important to improve women's digital skills and readiness to utilize technologies. Policies to reduce inequalities in digital literacy and skills need to be tailored to the needs of each demographic group, as everyone embraces digitalization at a different pace.

Furthermore, digital technologies have the potential to minimize or even eliminate barriers to employability faced by women. Some underlying constraints regarding social norms, such as unequal share of unpaid care work between men and women, could lead to women being unable to fully capitalize on what digitalization has to offer. Therefore, reevaluating social norms on how men and women share unpaid care work is deemed necessary so that women can make use of the internet to access more gainful employment.

Lastly, data shows that online and ICT-facilitated violence against women and girls continues to be on the rise during the COVID-19 pandemic. Policymakers should be concerned with the rise in online violence, as it can ultimately impact women's access to online services or their education and employment opportunities. Consequently, the governments of G20 countries must be proactive in strengthening law enforcement to eradicate online violence against women. To note, many developing countries still do not have regulations to address issues of online violence against women and girls.

The shift in the types of work requires an advancement in nontechnical skills so that human resources can effectively work side by side with the latest technology and stay relevant with the

demands from workplaces in the future. The shift in work happens constantly and some types of work can soon become obsolete. Therefore, the government, educational system, and business world can collaborate to (i) help workers develop the skills necessary to meet the latest changes and demands, and (ii) ensure competitive and healthy economic cycle. To close, to recover together and stronger, the governments of developed and developing countries need to share the spirits of solidarity and partnership to prepare for the future of work where no one is left behind.

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About The SMERU Research Institute

The SMERU Research Institute is an independent institution for research and public policy studies. Since its establishment in 2001, SMERU has been a leader in poverty and inequality research in Indonesia. For further information about SMERU, please go to www.smeru.or.id.

About Task Force 5–T20

The SMERU Research Institute is the host of Task Force 5 T20 with the focus on topics of inequality, human resources, and well-being. With Asep Suryahadi as the lead co-chair, together with other co-chairs, SMERU leads the development of 17 policy briefs written by global authors; formulates an integrated policy brief on inequality, human resources, and well-being for T20 and G20; and organizes side events in the near future.