



PUB 13

Together for Justice: Our Collective Action for Transformative Sustainable Development in Indonesia

COVER NOTE

The ACT structure responsible for this statement is the ACT Alliance Indonesian Forum. We have consulted with the ACT Alliance Advocacy and Policy Group in the preparation of this document. This statement primarily discusses the current political situation in Indonesia, the shrinking space for civil society, and the importance of faith-based organisations in the pursuit of social justice. The proposed commitments emphasise the need for faith organisations to retain their critical influence, foster stronger solidarity, and form a robust alliance to amplify prophetic voices in transformative sustainable development.

TOPIC

This public statement highlights the current political and democratic issues in Indonesia, which is the fourth most populous country and the third largest democracy in the world. It also ranks fourth in deforestation, a situation that significantly impacts the environment, biodiversity, and local communities. Furthermore, this statement elaborates on the national quick wins programme of the newly elected president and explores how it can be made more inclusive, transparent, and impactful for the lives of the people. Additionally, it underscores the importance of the ACT Alliance in creating space to influence policy and practice in transformative sustainable development.

STATEMENT

Together for Justice: Our Collective Action for Transformative Sustainable Development in Indonesia

Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country with more than 17,000 Islands with over 81,000 km coastline and is located in the Pacific “ring of fire” volcanic belt. Indonesia is the world’s fourth most populous country with a population of 283 million people and is the third largest democracy. Indonesia has a third of the world’s rainforests, but still ranked fourth globally for loss of primary tropical forest. The loss of forest cover in Indonesia significantly impacts the environment, biodiversity, and local communities. For Indigenous people in Indonesia, the loss of land has greatly impacted their livelihoods including threats to their homes, identity and culture, access to food and water, economic structures, and well-being. This often leads to the forced displacement of Indigenous people to relocate their homes and communities. The country also has already seen the effects of climate change including more intense rains, landslides and floods during the rainy season, and more fires during a longer dry season.

While the contribution of Indonesian civil society in democracy is acknowledged, less progress has occurred in human rights and environmental protection. Indonesia has experienced a shrinking civil society space that threatens civil rights and pressured civil society in performing their functions. 2024 is a political year for Indonesia, with the presidential election being held on 14 February and local elections to elect governors, mayors, and regents in Indonesia to be held on 27 November across 548 regions: 37 provinces, 415 regencies and 93 cities. The 2024 election is a crucial moment for Indonesian democracy, but it also triggers political polarization for the people. Indonesia is witnessing a surge of public outrage over corruption, political and democratic injustices. People are expressing their concerns through a nation-wide campaign that warns of a “democracy emergency” over a possible constitutional crisis following the House of Representatives’ move to subvert a Constitutional Court ruling that lowers the electoral threshold for the November regional head elections.

Aligned with ACT Alliance General Assembly theme “**Hope in Action: Together for Justice**” we, as ACT Alliance, believe that civil society organisations - especially faith-based organisations - play a key role in advancing social justice, community welfare and human rights; as well as participating in policy-related issues by supporting government programs and promoting harmony in the communities. While we believe that the strengths of faith-based organisations come from multi-stakeholder cooperation, challenges in accessing resources due to decreasing international funding and a lack of consolidation in advocacy have made the civil society movement less effective. Additionally, faith-based organizations are in a moral dilemma when government policy grants mining concessions to religious organizations. It is important for ACT Alliance to continue raising faith voices and the voices of the communities, while making sure not to access resources that will put communities at greater risk and put our moral legitimacy at risk.

The new government will continue the previous administration’s natural resource down streaming policies, including granting mining concessions to religious organizations. The

government also plans to launch four “quick wins” programmes. These are: (1) Free nutritious meals for pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, toddlers and students at all levels of education with a budget of IDR 71 trillion for the first phase in 2025; (2) Free health checks for 52.2 million people as well as equipping hospitals with equipment to upgrade type D hospitals to type C with a budget of IDR 197.8 trillion; (3) School renovation with a budget allocation of IDR 20.3 trillion which will include renovation of classrooms, furniture and toilets; and (4) Food security through national food barns in regions and villages with a budget of IDR 124.4 trillion. Despite the ambitious commitment to reach 8% economic growth and to reduce emissions by 32% through its own contributions or 43% with international support, Indonesia’s current national development programme tends to be pragmatic, and capitalism oriented without considering risk perceptions and its impact on people and environment. Collective action is needed to protect civil rights, to promote inclusive democratic governance, as well as transparent and accountable development programs that are foundational to economic, social, and political sustainability.

Commitments & Recommendations

We believe that civil society organisations, especially faith-based organisations, have the power of prophetic voice to create harmony and build peace, and have added values in transformative sustainable development through inclusive and accountable programming.

Our Commitments as ACT Alliance:

- We as the ACT Indonesia Forum members commit to **be strategic partners for the government in transformative development through active participation** in development planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in development, humanitarian and peace building with resources and practices that will not harm the communities or the environment. This includes participation and provides critical inputs in the delivery and monitoring of the quick wins programme of the newly elected President.
- We as ACT Alliance also commit to **effective and strategic resource mobilization within ACT Alliance members**. This includes, but is not limited to:
 1. member-to-member capacity sharing;
 2. inclusive, holistic, and locally led funding platform and programming; and
 3. maintain strategic networking and partnerships with churches which have proven to be effective and powerful in creating political space and echoing the prophetic voices at all levels.

Our Call to States:

- We call upon the Indonesian government to **acknowledge the roles of civil society and continue working together with faith-based organizations and civil society organizations** in the delivery of the “quick wins” programmes and sustainable development programmes in the country. We also call the government to respect constitutional rights and protect civil rights.
- We call upon civil society organisations, specifically faith-based organisations, to **actively participate and contribute to addressing human rights issues and promoting development effectiveness and peace building** with their prophetic voice.

PUB 13 – PUBLIC STATEMENT

A majority of the assembly has declared itself in agreement with the opinions expressed in this statement. While many ACT members agree with the public statement, there are members who have expressed differing perspectives on the content or tone. Their decision reflects the diverse viewpoints within our alliance, and we respect their choice to abstain or vote against. As always, we value the collective dialogue and encourage continued discussions on the matter at hand, recognizing the strength of our unity in diversity.