

Social protection initiatives and their ability to tackle child Labour: examining the case of internal child migrants in Indonesia

Simrin Singh

Abstract:

(i) Research Objective(s)

This paper examines the extent to which Indonesia's social protection system offers security and protection to child migrants and makes concrete recommendations for how it could be made more effective and inclusive in this regard. It focuses on children who migrate within Indonesia, either independently or with their families and either seasonally or permanently. It recognises that while migration is very often a beneficial process with positive outcomes, many poor children migrate in search of work or migrate in ways that make them particularly vulnerable to exploitation. As a consequence, many poor migrant children in Indonesia can be considered at risk of becoming involved in child labour, including the *worst forms of child labour* (a category which is used by the ILO to denote labour that jeopardises the physical, mental or moral well-being of a child, either because of its nature or because of the conditions in which it is carried out and which is targeted for immediate elimination).

The main objective of this research is therefore to offer concrete recommendations for how Indonesia's social protection system can be made more sensitive and responsive to the needs of child migrants, and how social policies might be better harnessed in order to help and support children who migrate within Indonesia.

(ii) Literature Review

A broad range of relevant, existing literature covering the areas of social protection, child poverty and child labour is reviewed. This includes research papers from organisations such as the International Labour Organization, International Organization for Migration, World Bank and Overseas Development Institute, including the forthcoming "*World Report on Child Labour 2012: Economic vulnerability, social protection and child labour*", as well as academic papers from across a number of disciplines.

Within this existing literature, while it is firmly established that social protection; particularly relating to healthcare and education; is vital to ameliorating child poverty and eliminating child labour, it is not always clear how migration might affect these dynamics. As a result, there is an urgent need for more analytical work to fill this significant gap in the literature.

(iii) Methodology

This paper first examines the existing literature on social protection and child poverty and/or child labour, as elaborated above. It then maps the social protection policies and programmes currently in place in Indonesia in order to assess the extent to which they might be appropriate to the very specific needs of child migrants. The analysis will consider both direct and indirect factors that might affect migrant children's access to social protection including registration requirements; the transferability of entitlements between locations; children's physical isolation; children's awareness of their rights and entitlements; and possible language barriers. This analysis also determines the extent to which these dynamics are affected by factors such as age and gender. The assessment is further informed through a quantitative analysis of the relevant existing data (including those from the Indonesian Family Life Survey, SUPAS, RUMiCI and



SUSENAS) and semi-structured interviews with relevant officials from Bappenas, the ILO and other organisations. On the basis of this analysis, the paper then

(iv) Findings and Analysis

This paper finds that poor children who migrate within Indonesia have a number of specific vulnerabilities which are not always adequately addressed within the scope of the existing social protection system. It also identifies specific categories of children who are most at risk of becoming involved in the *worst forms of child labour* and who need special attention, including those who migrate independently and/ or seasonally and those who migrate for the purposes of domestic or plantation work.

(v) Policy Implications

This paper has implications across a range of thematic policy areas, including but not limited to education, healthcare and social protection. It clearly states the case for making social protection policies in Indonesia more inclusive and more responsive toward the needs of internal child migrants and emphasises the need to implement comprehensive, coherent and coordinated social protection policies that guarantee services and social transfers to this vulnerable group.

(vi) Policy Recommendations

This paper sets forth a comprehensive range of policy recommendations designed to overcome the multitude of direct and indirect barriers that migrant children face in accessing social protection that is adequate and appropriate for their needs. The common theme of these recommendations is that social protection policies in Indonesia need to give more thorough consideration to the specific needs of child migrants, particularly with regards to their vulnerability to child labour. This should include the simplification of procedures to allow for rights and entitlements to be more easily transferable between locations and the promotion of greater awareness amongst children in Indonesia of their rights and entitlements.

Key words: child labour; migration; child domestic work; education; social protection; child poverty

