



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IMPLEMENTATION. A REVIEW FORM INDONESIA 2018-2022

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Abstract:

From 2018 to 2021, the global landscape was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Indonesia, which faced the highest number of COVID-19 cases in Asia, demonstrated remarkable resilience in maintaining the Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8) trajectory amidst these challenging times. This study aims to scrutinise Indonesia's sustained commitment to sustainable development during the global economic downturn. Using a qualitative methodology and a comprehensive literature review, this study uses the Voluntary National Review (VNR) reports as its primary source. It assesses the achievement of SDG 8 based on the process step indicators established by Allen et al. (2017). Despite experiencing a recession for four consecutive quarters, the study finds that Indonesia has successfully met all the established indicators, although there are challenges and areas that require further attention.

Keywords: SDGs, Goal 8, implementation, Indonesia, voluntary national review, sustainable development, economic resilience, COVID-19 pandemic.

Titulo en Español: *La implementación de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 8 Trabajo decente y crecimiento económico: Una revisión del caso de Indonesia 2018-2022*

Resumen:

Entre 2018 y 2021, la pandemia de COVID-19 afectó significativamente al panorama mundial. Indonesia, que se enfrentó al mayor número de casos de COVID-19 en Asia, demostró una notable resiliencia al mantener la trayectoria del Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible 8 (ODS 8) en medio de estos tiempos difíciles. Este estudio pretende analizar el compromiso sostenido de Indonesia con el desarrollo sostenible durante la recesión económica mundial. Utilizando una metodología cualitativa y una exhaustiva revisión bibliográfica, este estudio utiliza los informes de la Revisión Nacional Voluntaria (RNV) como fuente principal. Evalúa la consecución del ODS 8 basándose en los indicadores de etapas del proceso establecidos por Allen et al. (2017). A pesar de experimentar una recesión durante cuatro trimestres consecutivos, el estudio concluye que Indonesia ha cumplido satisfactoriamente todos los indicadores establecidos, si bien existen retos y áreas que requieren mayor atención.

Palabras Clave: *Objetivo 8, implementación, Indonesia, examen nacional voluntario, desarrollo sostenible, resiliencia económica, pandemia de COVID-19*

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1. Introduction

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) officially adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a comprehensive framework aimed at addressing critical global challenges by 2030. Building on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the SDGs encompass 17 goals and 169 targets spanning issues from poverty and hunger to health, education, gender equality, environmental sustainability, economic growth, and more.⁴ However, achieving these goals has been complicated by a host of global disruptions, including pandemics, and geopolitical conflicts, such as those in Turkey, and the ongoing crisis between Ukraine and Russia, presenting significant barriers to holistic SDG implementation.

The COVID-19 pandemic, a pivotal global event, has significantly influenced the trajectory of SDG implementation across sectors and nations. Indonesia's government responded to the pandemic by establishing the COVID-19 Handling Acceleration Task Force, designating COVID-19 referral hospitals, initiating remote learning, and implementing various social distancing and new normal measures.⁵ The economic sector, in particular, felt the brunt of the pandemic's impact, with disrupted supply chains leading to global economic instability, inflation, energy price hikes, and interest rate fluctuations, thereby influencing both global and domestic growth.⁶ These developments necessitated significant adjustments in SDG program strategies.

The implementation of SDGs varies considerably among countries, though the vision and objectives are globally agreed upon. The differences are especially pronounced in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, revealing a widening gap in SDG implementation across nations. Remarkably, from 2018 to 2022, Indonesia consistently maintained an “on track” trend for SDG Goal 8, amidst having the highest COVID-19 case count in Asia, surpassing India.⁷ This is illustrated in Figures 1, 2, and 3.

In implementing the SDGs, nations are required to identify specific targets and objectives, improve governance performance, and evaluate target achievements. The SDGs are characterized by a country-led and country-driven quality, necessitating a thorough local and national level review and inclusive implementation.^{8;9;10;11}

To comprehensively report on SDG achievements, global and domestic institutions as well as research bodies conduct studies and publish articles that provide guidelines, reviews, and tools to aid in SDG implementation. Globally and nationally, these assessment guidelines include indicator-based evaluations, development of system models to analyse target

⁴ Bappenas: *Sekilas SDG*, at <https://sdgs.bappenas.go.id/sekilas-sdgs/>

⁵ Gitiyarko, Vincentius: “Upaya dan Kebijakan Pemerintah Indonesia Menangani Covid-19”, *Kompas*, 22 June 2020, at <https://kompaspedia.kompas.id/baca/paparan-topik/upaya-dan-kebijakan-pemerintah-indonesia-menangani-pandemi-covid-19>, (2020).

⁶ Seiler, Daniella: *The Coronavirus Effect on Global Economic Sentiment*, at <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-coronavirus-effect-on-global-economic-sentiment>.

⁷ Sasongko, Teguh: “COVID-19 in Southeast Asia: all eyes on Indonesia”, *The Conversation*, 15 July 2021, at <https://theconversation.com/covid-19-in-southeast-asia-all-eyes-on-indonesia-164244>

⁸ Morita, Kanako; Okitasari, Mahesti; and Masuda, Hiromi: “Analysis of National and Local Governance Systems to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals: Case Studies of Japan and Indonesia”, *Sustainability Science*, Vol. 15, n° 1 (2020), pp. 179–202, at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-019-00739-z>.

⁹ Oosterhof, Pytrik: “Localizing the SDGs to Accelerate the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, *The Governance Brief*, Vol. 33, n° 14 (2018) at <https://doi.org/10.22617/BRF189612>.

¹⁰ Sachs, Jeffrey; Kroll, Christiana and Lafortune, Guillaume and Fuller, Grayson and Woelm, Finn (2022): “Sustainable Development Goals 2022; From Crisis to Sustainable Development: the SDGs as Roadmap to 2030 and Beyond”, Cambridge University Press, at <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009210058>.

¹¹ VNR: “Indonesia’s, Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2021 Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic for the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda, 2021”, at https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2021/280892021_VNR_Report_Indonesia.pdf

interlinkages, and provision of implementation support.¹²

Regarding SDG implementation, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) publishes annual reports covering each country's progress. Domestically, several countries have established independent assessment bodies to evaluate and report on the implementation of the 17 SDGs, which are often reflected in Voluntary National Reviews (VNR). This study examines the implementation of SDG 8 in Indonesia, particularly focusing on the 2018-2022 period as reported in the Voluntary National Review (VNR), to understand how the “on track” trend was maintained over these three years using the tabular process steps outlined by.¹³ The “on track” trends were maintained through (the existence/fulfilment of): governance Cooperation and Mechanism, Multi-stakeholder consultation, SDGs mapping and alignment, Prioritize or adapt targets and indicators, Mainstreaming into existing or new strategies, SDGs roadmap or action plan, Assess interlinkages, synergies, trade-offs, Policy evaluation and design, Monitoring and review arrangements. Which argued by Cameron Allen et al., are the indicators needed to be fulfilled for the SDGs program to succeed.

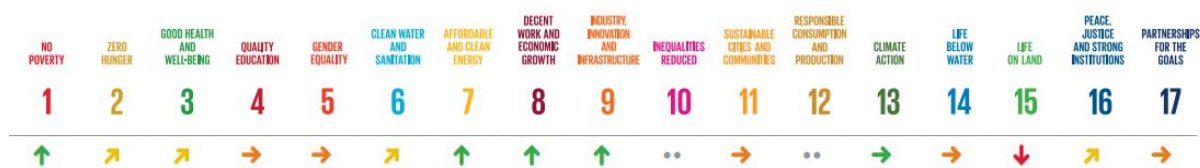


Fig 1: Indonesia Sustainable Development Goals Tren 2018¹⁴

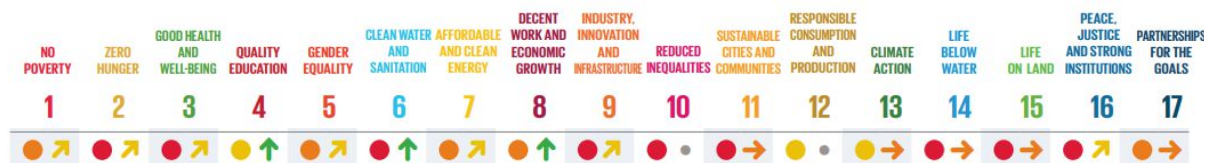


Fig 2: Indonesia Sustainable Development Goals Tren 2021B¹⁵



Fig 3: Indonesia Sustainable Development Goals Tren 2022¹⁶

2. Research Method

To assess the progress of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth, in Indonesia, this study adopts a qualitative research methodology centered around an

¹² Allen, Cameron; Metternicht, Graciela; and Wiedmann, Thomas: “Initial Progress in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): A Review of Evidence from Countries”, *Sustainability Science*, Vol. 13, n° 5 (2018), pp. 1453–1467, at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-018-0572-3>.

¹³ Allen, Cameron; Metternicht, Graciela; and Wiedmann, Thomas: “An Iterative Framework for National Scenario Modelling for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”, *Sustainable Development*, Vol. 25, n° 5 (2017), at <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.1662>.

¹⁴ SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2018, Implementing the Goals, Global Responsibilities, Bertelsmann Stiftung and Sustainable Development Solutions Network, July 2018, at https://s3.amazonaws.com/sustainabledevelopment.report/2018/2018_sdg_index_and_dashboards_report.pdf

¹⁵ Sachs Jeffrey; Kroll, Christian; Lafortune, Guillaume; Fuller, Grayson; and Woelm, Finn: “Sustainable Development Report 2021: The Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals”, *Cambridge University Press*, (2021), at <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009106559>.

¹⁶ Sachs et al., *Sustainable Development Goals 2022*, *op cit*.



extensive literature review. According to Creswell qualitative research aims to explore and understand the perspective of an individual or a group regarding to a social or human problem.¹⁷ The primary source of data for this analysis is the Voluntary National Review (VNR) reports, which provide comprehensive insights into Indonesia's approach and achievements in implementing SDG 8. These reports are instrumental in evaluating the country's progress against the established indicators.

In addition to The VNR reports, this study also analyses a range of academic articles, government documents, policy briefs, and relevant publications. This diverse pool of sources ensures a holistic understanding of the SDG 8 landscape in Indonesia, taking into account various perspectives and interpretations. A key aspect of the methodology is the application of the 'process step taken' framework developed by Allen.¹⁸ This framework offers a structured approach to assessing the implementation strategies and their effectiveness. By applying this framework to the Indonesian context, the study aims to identify the specific steps taken by Indonesia in its pursuit of SDG 8, examining the intricacies of policy decisions, implementation strategies, and their outcomes.

This qualitative approach, with its focus on detailed literature review and application of a specific analytical framework, is designed to provide deep insights into the complexities of SDG 8 implementation in Indonesia. It aims to uncover the underlying factors driving the progress, the challenges encountered, and the strategies adopted to overcome these challenges. Through this methodological lens, the study seeks to contribute a nuanced understanding of Indonesia's journey towards achieving Decent Work and Economic Growth under the SDGs.

3. Theoretical Framework

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established by the United Nations, serve as a global blueprint for dignity, peace, and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. SDG 8, which focuses on promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all, is pivotal in this agenda. The comprehensive framework proposed by Allen offers a critical lens through which the implementation and achievements of SDG 8 can be evaluated.^{19 ; 20} This framework encompasses various dimensions, including governance coordination, stakeholder consultation, and strategic alignment, which are essential in understanding the complexities and interdependencies inherent in the SDGs.

The effective implementation of SDGs at a domestic level is heavily reliant on strong governance coordination and mechanisms. This process demands a harmonized relationship among planning, execution, and catalytic actions across various levels of government. Fyson emphasizes the importance of engaging governmental bodies, NGOs, private sector entities, think-tanks, and other relevant groups in a collaborative manner.²¹ Aligning SDG objectives and targets with domestic policies and strategies is pivotal to avoiding overlaps and conflicts,

¹⁷ Creswell, John: *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (4th ed.)*. Sage Publications. (2014).

¹⁸ Allen et al., *An Iterative Framework*, *op cit*.

¹⁹ *Ibid*.

²⁰ Allen, Cameron: Metternicht, Graciela and Wiedmann, Thomas: "Prioritising SDG Targets: Assessing Baselines, Gaps and Interlinkages", *Sustainability Science* (2018), at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-018-0596-8>.

²¹ Fyson, Sara; Lindberg, Carina; and Morales, Ernesto: "Governance for the SDGs - How Can We Accelerate Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals?", *Dubai Policy Review* (February 2020), at <https://dubaipolicyreview.ae/governance-for-the-sdgs-how-can-we-accelerate-achieving-the-sustainable-development-goals/>

as highlighted by Fuso Nerini et al. and Gong et al.^{22;23} Moreover, from this framework, to adapt and prioritization of SDG targets and indicators, especially in response to global challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, are essential strategies.^{24;25;26} Incorporating SDGs into domestic policy frameworks, whether through the modification of existing strategies or the development of new ones, is a complex yet crucial task.^{27;28;29} Developing an SDG roadmap or action plan is a strategic approach to align national programs with SDG goals and targets, as suggest.³⁰ Understanding the interdependencies within the SDG framework is crucial for effective implementation.^{31 ; 32} Effective policy evaluation plays a critical role in SDG implementation. D'Errico, Eden, Wagstaff, and IED highlight the importance of using various tools and approaches to inform policymaking.^{33;34;35;36} Regular monitoring and review of SDG implementation are imperative for tracking progress and making necessary adjustments.^{37;38}

In short, the multi-dimensional framework developed by Allen et al. (above) is instrumental for evaluating the progress and effectiveness of implementing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8. This comprehensive approach, encompassing governance

²² Fuso-Nerini, Francesco; Tomei, Julia; Seng-To, Long; Bisaga, Iwona; Parikh, Priti; Black, Mairi; Borrión, Aiduan; Spataru, Catalina; Broto, Vanesa; Anandarajah, Gabriel; Milligan, Ben; and Mulugetta Yacob: "Mapping Synergies and Trade-offs between Energy and The Sustainable Development Goals", *Nature Energy*, Vol. 3, n° 1 (2018), pp. 10–15, at <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41560-017-0036-5>.

²³ Gong, Sen; Li, Bingqin; and Shen, Qiu: "Mapping Alignment of the 13th FYP (2016-2020) with The SDGs (2016-2030)", Technical Report, November 2016, DOI:10.13140/RG.2.2.17963.95529.

²⁴ Allen et al., *Prioritising SDG Targets*, *op cit*.

²⁵ D'Errico, Stefano; Geoghegan, Tighe; and Piergallini, Ilenia: "Evaluation to Connect National Priorities with The SDGs: A Guide for Evaluation Commissioners and Managers", IIED (International Institute for Environment and Development), 2020, at <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.35254.24641>.

²⁶ Tremblay, David; Gowsy, Sabine; Riffon, Olivier; Boucher, Jean; Dubé, Samuel; and Villeneuve, Claude: "A Systemic Approach for Sustainability Implementation Planning at The Local Level by SDG Target Prioritization: The Case of Quebec City", *Sustainability*, Vol. 13, n° 5 (2021), at <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13052520>.

²⁷ El-Bilali, Hamid and Palmisano, Giovanni: "Mainstreaming of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Mediterranean: Integration into Policies and Strategies", *AGROFOR International Journal*, Vol. 5, n° 2 (2020), pp. 15–26, at <https://doi.org/10.7251/AGRENG2002015E>

²⁸ Masuda, Hiromi; Okitasari, Mahesti; Morita, Kanako; Katramiz, Tarek; Shimizu, Hitomi; Kawakubo, Shun; and Kataoka, Yatsuka: *SDGs Mainstreaming at The Local Level: Case Studies from Japan*, pp. 1539–1562, at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-021-00977-0>

²⁹ Morita, *Analysis of National and Local Governance Systems to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals*, *op. cit*.

³⁰ Sachs et al., *Sustainable Development Goals 2022*, *op cit.*, (2022).

³¹ Allen et al., *Prioritising SDG Targets*, *op cit*.

³² Santika, Wayan; Anisuzzaman and Bahri, Parisa and Shafiullah and Rupf, Gloria and Urnee, Tania: "From Goals to Joules: A Quantitative Approach of Interlinkages Between Energy and The Sustainable Development Goals", *Energy Research and Social Science*, Vol. 50 (2019) pp. 201–214 at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2018.11.016>

³³ D'Errico, Stefano: "Effective Evaluation for The Sustainable Development Goals", IIED (International Institute for Environment and Development), 2016, at <https://www.iied.org/effective-evaluation-for-sustainable-development-goals>

³⁴ D'Errico, "Evaluation to Connect National Priorities with The SDGs", *op cit*.

³⁵ Eden, Lorraine and Wagstaff, Fernnda: "Evidence-based Policymaking and The Wicked Problem of SDG 5 Gender Equality", *Journal of International Business Policy*, Vol. 4, n° 1 (2021), at <https://doi.org/10.1057/s42214-020-00054-w>

³⁶ OCED: "Annex A Case Studies on Whole-of-Government Coordination and Policy Coherence", *OCED ILibrary*, at <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/06000752-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/06000752-en>

³⁷ Saner, Raymond; Yiu, Lichia and Nguyen, Melanie: "Monitoring the SDGs: Digital and Social Technologies to Ensure Citizen Participation, Inclusiveness and Transparency", *Development Policy Review*, Vol. 38, n° 4 (2020), pp. 483–500 at <https://doi.org/10.1111/dpr.12433>.

³⁸ UNECE: "Measuring and Monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals", Geneva, 2020, at https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/2012761_E_web.pdf

coordination, stakeholder consultation, strategic alignment, and other key factors, is particularly valuable for assessing SDG 8 in the context of Indonesia. By applying this framework, it becomes possible to analyse how Indonesia is addressing the challenges and opportunities related to promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. In the face of global challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the relevance of this framework is accentuated, allowing for a nuanced understanding of Indonesia's strategies and actions in achieving the objectives of SDG 8. It ensures that Indonesia's efforts towards sustainable economic development are not only aligned with the global SDG agenda but are also tailored to meet the specific needs and conditions of the country. This tailored approach is essential for Indonesia to navigate the complexities of SDG implementation effectively and to make meaningful progress towards achieving economic prosperity and sustainable development for its citizens.

4. Result and Analysis

The global economic landscape experienced significant upheaval following the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to drastic changes in the economies of countries worldwide. This section focuses on the Indonesian economy, analysing its performance and strategic alignments post-pandemic. Utilizing data from Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia (BPS) and various Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), the research aims to evaluate Indonesia's economic trajectory and its adherence to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 8.

The post-COVID-19 global economic conditions have seen a substantial decline. In Indonesia, however, according to data from the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the economy showed a remarkable recovery in the second quarter of 2021, with a growth rate of 7.07%. This indicates a positive economic turnaround following a recession during the pandemic, where the economy had contracted for four consecutive quarters. In the first quarter of 2021, the economic growth was at -0.74%, which was an improvement compared to the second quarter of 2020 that recorded a deep contraction of -5.32%.³⁹

This improvement should directly influence the trends of SDGs 8 in Indonesia, despite the targets and barometers experiencing a decline from the set goals. As mentioned above, Indonesia has managed to keep the SDGs 8 trend on track. According to Allen, et.al. (2017), countries are considered successful in implementing the SDGs when they fulfilled the toolkit. The following section will discuss how Indonesia has realized all the mentioned indicators, and thus, maintained the “On Track” trend from 2018 to 2022.

4.1. Governance & coordination mechanism

According to Fyson, this type of coordination is indispensable for fostering a united approach towards SDG implementation.⁴⁰ It involves not only the alignment of policies and strategies across different government tiers but also the integration of SDG objectives into national and local governance frameworks. This integration ensures that SDG implementation is not an isolated endeavour but a part of the broader governance agenda, leading to more sustainable and impactful outcomes.

In 2019, the governance and coordination mechanism were indicated in the implementation of SDGs 8 in Indonesia. The formation of a special task force unit, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), under the Ministry of Economy, was aimed at enhancing the

³⁹ Nurhaliza, Shifa: “Ekonomi Indonesia Vs Malaysia di Masa Pandemi, Mana yang Lebih Baik?” (Indonesia vs Malaysia Economic on Pandemic, which one is Better?), *IDX, Channel Economics*, 24 August 2021, at <https://www.idxchannel.com/economics/ekonomi-indonesia-vs-malaysia-di-masa-pandemi-mana-yang-lebih-baik>

⁴⁰ Fyson, *op cit*.



business and investment climate in Indonesia. EEO also supported gender equality and anti-discrimination based on ethnicity, race, religion, and gender as part of implementing decent work for all parties.⁴¹ Additionally, Law No. 6/2014 about the delegation of responsibility from the Central Government to the Village Governments through the Village Fund program. In 2019, the village fund budget was seventy-three (73) trillion, targeted to improve infrastructure and development programs. In the field of vocational education, the government revitalized Vocational High Schools (SMK) and instructed ministries and local governments to revitalize SMKs to enhance quality and competitiveness of human resources.⁴²

In 2021, the coordination mechanism was found in the government's program to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, where the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration allocated about 72 trillion. The Ministry asked all village apparatus to revise their village budgets and reallocate these funds to village-based labour-intensive programs. These programs were intended to assist marginalized village groups, including the unemployed, daily workers, and underprivileged families. The government also introduced guidelines for Ministries and institutions in the National Inclusive Finance Board (DNKI) to formulate policies related to inclusive finance. This needed to be poured into strategic documents and synergized in the National Mid-Term Development Plan, Regional Mid-Term Development Plan, Government Work Plan, Regional Government Work Plan, and related Sustainable Development Planning in Indonesia.⁴³

4.2. Multi-stakeholder consultations

The success of SDG implementation is contingent on the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders. This diverse consultation is crucial for gaining a comprehensive understanding of the challenges at hand, setting pragmatic priorities, formulating effective policies, and mobilizing necessary resources. Such an inclusive approach ensures that the policies and initiatives developed are reflective of the needs and inputs of all segments of society, thereby enhancing their acceptability and effectiveness.

In 2019, Indonesia, this mechanism was found in several strategic partnerships like with the Indonesia Cooperative Business Development Alliance (ICBDA), The Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Promoting Rural Incomes through Support for Markets in Agriculture (AIP-PRISMA) which moved to improve market efficiency for small farmers in Indonesia. Meanwhile, with Astra Honda Motor (AHM), it became a partner of the Ministry of Industry to intensively support the quality of vocational education. AHM's involvement in designing the Motorbike Technical and Business Curriculum in thirty-four (34) provinces since 2010 with six hundred eighty-six (686) schools and AHM providing training and certification directly. The same was done by PT. Solusi Bangun Indonesia and the Jakarta State Polytechnic to integrate the national curriculum with local content related to the cement industry.⁴⁴

In 2021, stakeholder consultations were found primarily in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. The Confederation of All Indonesian Trade Unions (KSBSI) organized social dialogues and initiated agreements between workers and employers regarding several issues in employment relations. The meetings resulted in agreements on K3 protection, business continuity, and freedom of association. In addition, KSBSI facilitated negotiations between

⁴¹ VNR: "South Africa's Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report 2019. Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality, at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23402RSA_Voluntary_National_Review_Report_9_July_2019.pdf

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ VNR, Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from the COVID-19, *op cit.*

⁴⁴ VNR, Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality, *op cit.*

workers and employers to minimize unemployment during the pandemic. These negotiations impacted 2000 hotel employees who were part of the Kamiparho federation, resulting in an agreement on reduced working hours and wages to avoid layoffs. Besides KSBSI, there was a collaboration between Save The Children Indonesia and Accenture from 2015 to 2020 in implementing the “Skills to Succeed” program, focusing on improving job readiness for youth. The program involved the government and private institutions, including the Work Training Centre, Community Learning Activity Centre (PKBM), labour distribution agency, youth organizations, and rehabilitation institutions. “Skills to Succeed” also facilitated training for 300 disabilities from 15 Special Needs Schools (SLB). “Rumah Muda Terampil” was also a form of implementing Goal 8 SDGs involving various stakeholders. The program was conducted in Mojokerto for 272 participants to prepare youth (including women) to start businesses and become young entrepreneurs. Indonesia Business Links collaborated with Accenture Indonesia and involved the Mojokerto Industry and Trade Office, the Mojokerto Cooperative and SME Office, PT Asia Pacific Rayon, and also gathered aspirations from apparatus and community groups, including village heads and community leaders, youth organizations, PKK, youth mosque groups, IPNU, and IPPNU. As a result, 70% of the participants started a Jumputan business by forming “Juwana Juwono,” and the remaining 30% started their own businesses by selling online.⁴⁵

Additionally, the 2021 report explains the implementation of various programs by both the government and private sector, detailing the achievement of targets and existing gaps, as well as the challenges and actions needed moving forward, including policies and collaborations, to achieve the SDGs by 2030.⁴⁶ International system analysis in inter-state relations includes how external conditions affect a country's domestic policies to align with such external situations. Conversely, it examines how a country's internal conditions are reflected in foreign policy to influence external/global situations. In international relations studies, determining the level of analysis is important to understand the phenomena of international relations at different levels; global, domestic/national, group, or individual. Certainly, when discussing external or global factors, the target for applying the agenda lies at the domestic or national level. Domestic/national levels serve as the arena for global programs to be implemented, necessitating a well-devised and robust strategy for aligning global and domestic agendas.

4.3. SDGs mapping and alignment

This process of alignment streamlines efforts across various sectors, ensuring that SDG initiatives complement rather than compete with national policies. It requires a thorough analysis of existing policies to identify areas where SDG targets can be integrated, thus creating a cohesive and unified approach to sustainable development. The alignment/normalization/implementation of global programs begins with identifying challenges, setting priorities, developing policies, then moving on to resource mobilization and, finally, evaluation. All these can be achieved with communication and commitment among related parties from all fields. Operational commitment is a key tool to encourage stakeholder participation, creating opportunities for active organizations and citizens to achieve SDGs comprehensively.⁴⁷ To reach these stages, a reference framework is needed for involved parties to perform various tasks like identifying fields, aligning actions, evaluating programs, and more. Aligning stakeholders' vision and mission with the goals and targets of the SDGs will avoid overlapping domestic policies with SDG programs. By mapping and aligning, SDG implementation becomes more effective. These actions are then referred to as SDG mapping

⁴⁵ VNR, *Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from the COVID-19*, *op cit.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Fyson, *op cit.*

and alignment.^{48;49}

In 2019, the mapping and alignment of SDGs 8 in Indonesia in 2019 could be seen from Presidential Regulation No. 74/2017 regarding the Road Map of the National Electronic-Based Trading System to facilitate the development of e-commerce in Indonesia. This was a form of government support for the digital economy sector, contributing to creating influential job opportunities in Indonesia. In addition, the government also had a vision to make Indonesia the broadest digital economy in Southeast Asia and involve up to 1,000 technopreneurs by 2020. For example, Gojek contributed up to 44.2 trillion rupiah and a monthly income higher than the minimum wage.⁵⁰

In 2021, the mapping and alignment were found in the concept of a circular economy adopted by the government as a development strategy. The circular economy concept is in line with the narrative of achieving national economic growth targets and encouraging environmental sustainability. The Indonesia 2045 vision also makes the circular economy concept a step-in realization. The adoption of a circular economy in sectors such as food and beverages, textiles, construction, wholesale and retail trade, and electrical and electronic equipment is expected to increase GDP, reduce carbon emissions and water use, and save household expenses in Indonesia. However, there are challenges, including the potential loss of jobs and decreased production demand in these five sectors. For this, a strong action plan is needed to determine the right steps and minimize the risks that will arise.

4.4. Prioritize/ adapt target & indicators

This approach allows stakeholders to concentrate on the most pertinent issues within their specific context. By doing so, it becomes possible to conduct a more detailed and context-sensitive evaluation of the relationship between SDG programs and local conditions, leading to more targeted and effective interventions.

In 2019, the implementation of SDGs 8 in Indonesia focused on targets 8.1 (sustainable economic growth), 8.6 (young labour force), and 8.9 (sustainable tourism) as seen from deregulation for investment ease, strengthening cooperation with the industrial and private sectors for vocational education and training, and the high contribution of tourism to GDP and the continuous development of priority and potential tourism destinations, as well as the marine and ecotourism sectors.⁵¹

Looking at the benchmark for tourism's contribution to Indonesia's GDP, there was a decrease from 5.25% in 2019 to 4% in 2020, continuing to decline to -19.52%. The number of foreign tourists in 2019 reached 16.11 million, while domestic tourists totalled 282.93 million. Both experienced a decrease in 2020, with only 4.05 million foreign tourists or a 75.03% decline, and domestic tourists dropping to 198.24 million. Foreign tourists contributed USD 17.60 million to the country's foreign exchange in 2019 and decreased to USD 3.31 million in 2020.⁵²

In 2021, the government's focus was more on handling the pandemic and economic recovery. This can be seen from the large allocation of funds for the health sector such as medical personnel PPE, building health facilities, and providing vaccines. Government programs such as social assistance and assistance for MSMEs, and the regulation of Bank Indonesia regarding incentives for banks that provide funds for certain economic activities to

⁴⁸ Fuso-Nerini et al., *op cit*.

⁴⁹ Gong et al., *op cit*.

⁵⁰ VNR, Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality, *op cit*.

⁵¹ *Ibid*.

⁵² VNR, Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from the COVID-19, *op cit*.

handle the economic impact of COVID-19 are intended to get the economy running again. However, the government also encourages, especially the development of MSMEs and the tourism sector, such as the launch of working capital guarantees for MSMEs, the establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for tourism, industry, exhibitions, as well as entertainment and recreation. This is done so that these sectors can also help recover the economy after the pandemic.⁵³ It should be noted that prioritizing something does not mean sidelining other parts; instead, the programs that run become more efficient and targeted.^{54;55;56}

4.5. Mainstreaming into new/ existing strategies

This process of mainstreaming necessitates a nuanced understanding of local governance structures and the ability to integrate global objectives with national priorities and capacities. It requires a delicate balance between maintaining the essence of global SDG targets and adapting them to fit the unique socio-economic and political contexts of each country.

Mainstreaming into New/Existing Strategies Under the leadership of Joko Widodo, the initial step in normalizing SDG strategies involved integrating them into the President's Vision and Mission, Nawacita, or the Nine Aspirations.⁵⁷ In the context of SDG 8, several actions have been taken, including the establishment of the Creative Economy Agency (Bekraf), which assists the President in formulating, establishing, coordinating, and synchronizing policies in the creative economy sector.⁵⁸ Another initiative is the launch of Making Indonesia 4.0, aimed at enhancing economic growth and the manufacturing sector by adopting Industry 4.0. For the tourism sector, its contribution to GDP is a target under SDG 8, emphasizing sustainable tourism. This includes integrating airline collaborations and bundling into the 'Wonderful Indonesia' campaign, a major tourism agenda since 2011. All these initiatives have been incorporated into the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2015-2019.⁵⁹

Furthermore, with the advancement of technology and digitalization, the government issued Presidential Regulation No. 74/2017 on the e-commerce roadmap to facilitate e-commerce development in Indonesia, aiming to position Indonesia as a leading digital economy in Southeast Asia. The government has formulated strategic plans in industry and employment, including inclusive job opportunities, improving the quality of vocational education and training, cooperation with private sector and industry, creating harmonious industrial relations, strengthening labour supervision institutions, as well as social protection and fair compensation schemes for formal and informal workers. In the tourism sector, the focus has been on enhancing competitiveness in priority destinations, improving the sustainability of Bali's tourism, and developing eco-tourism and maritime tourism. The government has also strengthened the creative economy and digital economy sectors, as well as entrepreneurship in SMEs.

In 2021, the government adopted a Circular Economy policy involving the 5R principles (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover, and Revalue) in development strategies across five economic sectors including food and beverages, textiles, construction, wholesale and retail trade, and electrical and electronic equipment. The circular economy enables cost savings through resource efficiency and waste reduction, as well as new business models for SMEs

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Allen et al., Initial Progress in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), *op cit.*

⁵⁵ D'Errico et al., Evaluation to Connect National Priorities with The SDGs, *op cit.*

⁵⁶ Tremblay et al., *op cit.*

⁵⁷ Bappenas: "SDGs Knowledge Platform", Press Release, 10 October 2018, at <https://www.bappenas.go.id/files/fe1466a9-9c7b-40eb-9733-d7f54af57179/download>

⁵⁸ Kominfo: *Menuju Poros Maritim Dunia*, 18 October 2016, at https://www.kominfo.go.id/content/detail/8231/menuju-poros-maritim-dunia/0/kerja_nyata#:~:text=

⁵⁹ VNR, Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality, *op cit.*

focusing on recovery and recycling.

The Omnibus Law on Job Creation was also enacted in 2020, primarily to eliminate investment restrictions and facilitate investor activity. This policy is considered to enhance the investment climate in Indonesia, create new jobs, and reduce poverty. In response to the pandemic, the government developed new schemes to maintain economic activity, including economic recovery plans for businesses committed to avoiding layoffs and social assistance for informal sector workers. Additionally, the government introduced recovery plans for the tourism sector and Special Economic Zones (KEK) to boost regional development through industry, tourism, and trade.⁶⁰

4.6. SDGs roadmap or Action Plan

This roadmap acts as a guiding document, outlining the steps and measures required to achieve the SDGs. It helps in identifying key areas of intervention, allocating resources efficiently, and setting realistic timelines for achieving targets. An effective roadmap is both aspirational and practical, providing a clear path towards sustainable development while being adaptable to changing circumstances.

“The Action Plan” for normalizing SDG targets has been implemented at both national and sub-national levels. In Indonesia, this has been included in Government Regulation No. 59/2017 on Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.⁶¹ In relation to the pandemic, the government's policy focus, serving as a reference map, has been on curbing the spread of COVID-19, including in the workplace. The Ministry of Manpower issued Circular No. M/3/HK.04/III/2020 regarding the protection of workers/labourers and business continuity in the context of preventing and managing COVID-19. This circular requires company leaders to strictly implement occupational health and safety (K3) in the workplace and to report suspected COVID-19 cases to local labour and health authorities to ensure workers' rights.

Additionally, the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2020-2024 is closely related to the SDGs, especially in terms of enhancing economic value addition, strengthening economic growth and competitiveness, and increasing productivity and competitiveness. These targets are to be achieved by empowering SMEs through improved cooperation among SMEs, enhancing product quality and SME capacity, and providing funding. Furthermore, the tourism sector, with 10 Priority Tourism Areas (DPP) and the development of tourism destinations, also contributes to achieving these set targets. Another supportive aspect is the reform in vocational schools, involving the industrial and private sectors in vocational education, and curriculum adjustment to meet industry needs. Lastly, increasing investment through regulation harmonization across sectors and regions and creating a conducive business environment are part of the strategy.

4.7. Assess interlinkages, synergies, trade-offs

This process involves assessing how the pursuit of one SDG target might impact others and identifying areas where synergies can be harnessed, or trade-offs managed. By recognizing these interlinkages, policymakers can design strategies that maximize positive outcomes across multiple SDGs, leading to more holistic and sustainable development.

The implementation and achievements of SDG 8 in 2019 revealed an intersection between the employment and education sectors, where an increase in education, especially longer schooling, was found to reduce informal employment in Indonesia. This interconnection was also mentioned in the 2021 report. However, the misalignment between educational

⁶⁰ VNR, Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from the COVID-19, *op cit.*

⁶¹ Bappenas, Press Release, *op cit.*



curricula and industry demands has contributed to rising youth unemployment in Indonesia, including among higher education graduates. The same issue affects persons with disabilities, where limited access to education results in minimal involvement in the workforce.⁶²

The 2021 report mentions a correlation between investment and value-added products. In this context, low investment growth in the manufacturing sector poses more serious challenges to labour productivity and shifts Indonesian products towards higher value addition. Additionally, there has been an increase in the role and cooperation with industry and the private sector in vocational education and training, as well as the alignment of vocational education curricula with industry needs.⁶³

4.8. Policy evaluation and design

This involves understanding the underlying rationale for policies, assessing their impact, and identifying areas for improvement. Such evaluations are essential for ensuring that policies are not only well-designed but also adaptable to changing needs and circumstances. Evaluation and design have also been indicated to be realized, as seen from the formation of 18 policy packages including policy incentives, liberalization, facilitation, and harmonization of policies for ease of investment. There has been a reduction in fuel subsidies allocated for infrastructure development to achieve inter-regional connectivity. Moreover, the income gap between micro and small enterprises and medium and large enterprises across regions has led to demands for more equitable wage policy formulation. In education, which correlates with labour absorption, revitalization of education and vocational training through skilling, upskilling, and reskilling has been undertaken via Training Centres (BLK).

The VNR 2021 report emphasizes wage policy disparities between men and women. Wage growth has been stagnant for women. Additionally, policy design for persons with disabilities, who have been marginalized in the workforce, is being addressed. Future plans include the implementation of disability-inclusive occupational safety and health (K3) measures. Publications related to government assistance to SMEs during COVID-19 reveal that only 43% of surveyed SMEs were aware of available government support.⁶⁴

4.9. Monitoring and review arrangements

This process provides a comprehensive view of a country's advancement towards the SDGs, allowing policymakers and stakeholders to identify areas where additional support is needed. In 2019, reports of economic growth positively impacted poverty reduction, unemployment rates, and an increase in the Gini ratio. The redirection of fuel subsidies to development funds also affected the improvement of the logistics performance index.

In terms of employment, mismatches in over-qualification, under-qualification, and non-alignment with study fields were observed. Limited access to education for persons with disabilities and the non-alignment of empowerment programs with interests and talents also resulted in low absorption of persons with disabilities in the workforce.

Additionally, there was a disparity in wage equality between men and Indonesia's post-COVID-19 economic recovery reflects a nation's resilience and strategic adaptability. Despite initial setbacks, Indonesia has demonstrated a robust return to positive economic growth, aligning its policies and initiatives with the Sustainable Development Goals. Through effective governance, multi-stakeholder consultations, and focused policy implementation, Indonesia has navigated the complex terrain of post-pandemic recovery.

⁶² VNR, Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality, *op cit.*

⁶³ VNR, Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from the COVID-19, *op cit.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

This study highlights the critical role of inclusive and sustainable strategies in fostering economic resilience and growth. Indonesia's journey offers valuable insights for other nations facing similar challenges, underscoring the importance of strategic planning and execution in times of crisis.⁶⁵

Similar to 2019, the 2021 report on monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the SDGs can be seen from the presentation of SDG implementation through economic growth and employment reports based on age, region, and gender, workers and unemployment, correlation analysis between education levels and employment, wage disparities, as well as growth and empowerment of SMEs (UMKM).

5. Evaluation and plan for next agenda?

Unfortunately, there is yet no clear mechanism on how the domestic level should normalize global policies. Some studies have found that normalizing the global agenda of SDGs into the domestic level does not have a specific pattern, given the diverse domestic situations of each country. Allen et al. used a toolkit they developed to analyse the broad implementation of SDGs (17 goals) in a country. However, this toolkit can also be used to evaluate the steps a country takes towards each sustainable development goal. In the case of Indonesia, all eight steps proposed by Allen et al. have been fully realized by the government since 2018. This is evident from the research conducted by Allen et al. using the same indicators as those presented in this article for 2019-2021.

Unfortunately, even though these indicators have been fully realized, the targets and benchmarks for SDG 8 in Indonesia have significantly decreased for 2020-2021 and remain stagnant until the end of 2022. This can be seen in the VNR report as well as in other related institutional reports. For instance, the annual growth rate of real GDP per capita in 2019 was 3.8% for Indonesia, but it dropped to 3.1% in 2020 and continued to show negative growth throughout 2021. Similarly, for the annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person, there was a decline from 3% in 2019 to -1.84% in 2020, continuing to decrease in 2021.

Despite the decline in target numbers, Indonesia still implemented the steps proposed by Allen et al. This discrepancy can occur because a government typically formulates policies to influence three domains: domestic outcomes, foreign outcomes, and addressing various global challenges. These policy domains are interconnected but not necessarily in a clear way. Few governments formulate policies across these domains in a rational and clear manner. Most countries place domestic policy in a separate jurisdiction to pursue domestic interests alone, although public global goods (GPG) policy and international development policy are nearly inseparable.

As in Indonesia's case, there is no clear boundary between implementing global agendas and purely meeting national targets. Unfortunately, this approach can be detrimental to the country adopting it. Misalignment between domestic policies and global agendas reduces the potential for agenda optimization and promotes weakening between one domain and another. Implementing domestic policies without considering their impact on global public goods and development policy is a conceptual oversight that can weaken international development and global public goods. This mistake is caused by a failure to adequately consider whether policy measures in multiple domains complement each other, are alternatives, or are independent. Treating these three domains as separate and independent entities, while in reality, they are interdependent, results in an ineffective policy mix and ultimately fails to make a meaningful impact. To achieve sustainable common interests, Indonesia and every country need to return to a common global vision, reviewing and redesigning governance implementation with a focus

⁶⁵ VNR, Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality, *op cit*.

on aligning domestic policies, global public goods, and international development.

The journey towards achieving SDG 8 —promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all— extends beyond merely adhering to predefined indicators and targets. While formal compliance offers a structured path for progress assessment, it often encapsulates a broader spectrum of socio-economic dynamics and complexities. In Indonesia, a country that has navigated through the tumultuous waters of the COVID-19 pandemic, assessing the tangible outcomes of policies associated with SDG 8 is pivotal. This analysis aims to transcend the realm of formal compliance to critically examine the actual changes—be they positive, negative, or neutral—that have materialized as a result of these policy implementations. Through this lens, we seek to uncover the nuanced realities that lie beneath surface-level statistics, offering a comprehensive understanding of how Indonesia's commitment to SDG 8 has translated into real-world impacts on its socio-economic landscape.

5.1 The Economic Resurgence Post-COVID-19

Indonesia's economic trajectory during and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic exemplifies resilience and strategic adaptability. Following a significant downturn in 2020 with a contraction of -2.1% , Indonesia rebounded with an impressive growth rate of 3.69% in 2021 and an anticipated 4.8% in 2022.⁶⁶ This resurgence is not merely a testament to the country's economic resilience but also underscores the effectiveness of its policy measures aligned with SDG 8. The consecutive quarters of economic growth exceeding 5.0% since late 2021, alongside a marked decline in unemployment rates, highlight the positive outcomes of these interventions.⁶⁷

MSMEs are among the sectors that play major role in Indonesia's economic activities, including employment (more than 90%), community empowerment, as well as rural economic development. During the pandemic more than 88% of MSMEs experienced a decline in profits during the pandemic,⁶⁸ which the government handled by disbursing funds amounting to 95.87 trillion for MSMEs as one of the priority target sectors. Apart from that, various programs such as interest subsidies, collaboration with partner banks to expand working capital credit and restructure MSMEs, assistance for street vendors and stalls, as well as final income tax incentives for MSMEs to ease the burden on MSMEs during the pandemic.⁶⁹ Not only from the government, assistance to MSMEs was also provided by universities through community service programs, such as for Lurik woven fabric SMEs in Klaten,⁷⁰ and well as Home Industry Food Certificate (P-IRT) licensing in Blitar.⁷¹

⁶⁶ Aminullah, Erman: "Forecasting of Technology Innovation and Economic Growth in Indonesia", *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, Vol. 202 (2024), at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2024.123333>.

⁶⁷ Office of Assistant to Deputy Cabinet Secretary for State Documents & Translation: "Address of the President of the Republic of Indonesia on the Presentation of The Government Statement on The Bill on the State Budget for the 2024 Fiscal Year and Its Financial Note Before the Plenary Session of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia!". Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia at <https://setkab.go.id/en/address-of-the-president-of-the-republic-of-indonesia-on-the-presentation-of-the-government-statement-on-the-bill-on-the-state-budget-for-the-2024-fiscal-year-and-its-financial-note-before-the-plena/>, (2023, August 16).

⁶⁸ Prayitno, Edy: "Kebangkitan UMKM pasca pandemi Covid-19", *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, Vol 2, n° 4, (2022), p. 4787

⁶⁹ Ekon: *Pemerintah Terus Perkuat UMKM Melalui Berbagai Bentuk Bantuan* at <https://pen.kemenkeu.go.id/in/post/pemerintah-terus-perkuat-umkm-melalui-berbagai-bentuk-bantuan>

⁷⁰ Prayitno, *op cit.*, p.4793

⁷¹ Pintakami, Lintar; Sekartadji, Dewi; Etik, Freni; Klarisa, Galloh; Pangestu, Panggeh; Lokananta, Ricko; and Almayanti, Wanda: "Upaya Pemulihan Ekonomi UMKM Pasca Covid-19 melalui Perijinan P-IRT di Kelurahan Dandong", *Sricommerce: Journal of Sriwijaya Community Services*, Vol. 4, n° 1 (April 2023), p. 34 at <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/b261/ec5d5c844007c191d64a020950a6f4e8b13f.pdf>

During the pandemic, changes in public consumption patterns from offline to online were also slowly adopted by MSME players to be able to continue to survive the new normal conditions. After the pandemic, MSME players have adapted to digital market developments including e-commerce, where the increase in digital economic value is predicted to increase up to 8x in the next 10 years and reach IDR 4,531 trillion in 2030.⁷² This is in line with the government's mission to make Indonesia the broadest digital economy in Southeast Asia.

5.2 Sector-Specific Outcomes

Export and import industry, investment, and tourism are of the sectors that have visible outcomes in the post-pandemic era. Export disruption that occurred since the start of the pandemic increased again in the second quarter of 2021 to reach 29.83%. The increase in export figures lasted until early 2022 before experiencing fluctuations. This shows the achievement of the Indonesian government's target of pursuing economic recovery through exports, where increasing exports means increasing domestic output, which will then boost the domestic economy.⁷³ However, there are still several obstacles in this sector, such as the majority of Indonesian exports which are still dominated by raw materials (natural intensive products) instead of manufactured goods, sectoral egos between government institutions and export activities, and a lack of understanding of non-traditional markets.⁷⁴

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, priority destinations in the tourism sector had been determined by the government. The Covid-19 outbreak caused international and domestic tourist visits to decline drastically, especially at the start of the pandemic, which resulted in a decline in tourism income of up to 20.7 billion.⁷⁵ During the pandemic, there was a change in tourism patterns from holidays to tourist attractions to holidays at home/hotels (staycation). Restrictions on the number of visitors and implementation of health protocols have also influenced the tourism sector. However, mass vaccination involving public-private partnership⁷⁶ and Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy regulation No. 13 of 2020 concerning Standards and Certification for Cleanliness, Health, Safety and Environmental Sustainability in the Tourism Sector accelerate the recovery from Covid-19⁷⁷. The pandemic has also changed tourism trends, from mass tourism to quality and sustainable tourism. International tourist visits still decreased in 2021 but increased again in 2022 even though there had been fluctuations.⁷⁸

In the investment sector, Indonesia experienced a cumulative increase in realisation of 10.1% in 2020, with figures almost equal between foreign and domestic investment. Moreover, the distribution of investment between Java and outside Java is also even, and 1.1 million people

⁷² Melati, Wely: "UMKM Mulai Menggeliat Pasca Pandemic Covid 19", Ministry of Agriculture, 29 September 2022, at <https://www.djkn.kemenkeu.go.id/kpkn-lhokseumawe/baca-artikel/15474/UMKM-Mulai-Menggeliat-Pasca-Pandemic-Covid-19.html>

⁷³ Widyatara, Gathot: "Perkembangan Ekonomi Indonesia Pasca Pandemi Covid-19", *Journal Intelektual*, Vol. 2, n° 2 (2023), pp. 136-140 at <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/51fc/5ad7a42a9260fbac62a035d2b25a9855e1bf.pdf>

⁷⁴ Karuniawati, Widiagung; Riski, Icaand Latifah, Dwi and Khasanah, Nurul and Achidsti, Ashilly: "Policy Strategies to Increase Exports to Maintain Stable Economic Growth in Indonesia", *Journal of Public Policy and Administration Research*, Vol. 8, n° 2 (2023), p.10-12, at <https://journal.student.uny.ac.id/index.php/joppar/article/viewFile/20704/18377>

⁷⁵ Syafriani, Ida and Qamariah, Sofiah: "Strategi Pemulihan Pariwisata Pasca Pandemi Covid-19 di Kabupaten Sumenep", *Aplikasi Administrasi*, Vol. 26, n° 1 (May 2023), p.2, at <https://doi.org/10.30649/aamama.v26i1.154>

⁷⁶ "Percepat Pemulihan Pariwisata, Pemerintah Gelar Vaksinasi Drive Thru", Ministry of Health, 5 March 2021, at <https://farmalkes.kemkes.go.id/2021/03/percepat-pemulihan-pariwisata-pemerintah-gelar-vaksinasi-drive-thru/>

⁷⁷ Vional Amelia, Danang Prasetyo: "Sertifikasi CHSE (Cleanliness, Health, Safety, & Environment) terhadap Objek Wisata sebagai Wujud Pemenuhan Hak Wisatawan", *Jurnal Manajemen Perhotelan dan Pariwisata*, Vol. 5 n° 2 (2022), pp. 92-99.

⁷⁸ Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif: "Wisatawan Mancanegara dalam Angka 2022", at <https://api2.kemendikbud.go.id/storage/app/uploads/public/659/b91/058/659b910580181925056570.pdf>

were employed⁷⁹. This is considered a success as the government has already formulated a new policy to remove investment restrictions. The cumulative achievement of investment realisation in 2021 has also increased, affecting the employment of 1.2 million people⁸⁰.

5.3 Analysing Social Equity and Quality of Life Enhancements

Beyond the macroeconomic indicators, the real impact analysis necessitates a closer examination of social equity and quality of life improvements stemming from SDG 8 policy implementations. The decline in unemployment rates, particularly during a period of global uncertainty, hints at an inclusive approach to economic recovery, ensuring that the benefits of growth permeate different layers of society. However, this aspect of policy impact requires a deeper dive into disaggregated data to evaluate the equitable distribution of economic gains across genders, age groups, and regions within Indonesia.

Before the pandemic, unemployment in Indonesia was caused, among other things, by mismatch between market needs and the education curriculum, (employment that did not meet expectations of educated unemployed), as well as market failure. In 2020 Covid-19 became a new factor influencing unemployment rates. The sluggish economy which has resulted in layoffs, social distancing policies, lock downs, and the high number of Covid-19 have resulted in an increase in the unemployment rate. In February 2020 the unemployment rate increased by 60 thousand.⁸¹ The figure continued to increase even though employment absorption also took place. During the pandemic, changes in the way of work affect workers' work expectations and orientation, including location, face-to-face needs, comfort of the work environment, passion, and religious values.⁸²

The pandemic has also changed several aspects of people's lives, such as the habit of exercising during the pandemic and being able to continue it after Covid-19 is over. A survey conducted by the Jakarta Property Institute also shows that people are becoming more familiar with digital applications and choose to shop (buy goods) and buy food online even though the pandemic is over. It can be seen that after Covid-19 pandemic, people adopt new habits, not only in the scope of work but also lifestyle. People also further prioritize their well-being.⁸³

5.4 Identifying Challenges and Gaps

While the data portrays a broadly positive picture of Indonesia's economic recovery and alignment with SDG 8 targets, a nuanced analysis must also consider the challenges and gaps in policy implementation. The interplay between global economic pressures and domestic policy responses may reveal areas where expectations have not been fully met or where unintended consequences have emerged. Identifying these gaps is crucial for refining future policy directions and ensuring that Indonesia's path toward sustainable development is both resilient and inclusive. However, this aspect of policy impact requires a deeper dive into

⁷⁹ Dinas Tenaga Kerja, Penanaman Modal Dan Pelayanan Terpadu Satu Pintu Kota Malang (DISNAKER PMPTSP), Realisasi Investasi Januari-Desember 2020, 25 January 2021, at <https://disnakerpmptsp.malangkota.go.id/?p=7449>.

⁸⁰ Ministry of Investment: "Realisasi Investasi 2021 Lampau Target, Kementerian Investasi/BKPM Optimis Kejar Target 1.200 Triliun Tahun ini", 27 January 2022, at <https://www.bkpm.go.id/id/info/siaran-pers/realisasi-investasi-2021-lampau-target-kementerian-investasi-bkpm-optimis-kejar-target-1-200-triliun-tahun-ini>

⁸¹ Rizal, Fitra and Mukaromah, Haniatul: "Kebijakan Pemerintah Indonesia Dalam Mengatasi Masalah Pengangguran Akibat Pandemi Covid 19", Proceeding of 1st Annual Interdisciplinary Conference on Muslim Societies, 2021, p. 2, at <https://prosiding.insuriponorogo.ac.id/index.php/aicoms/article/view/3/3>.

⁸² Sa'adah, Nurus; Fitria, Vita and Widiastuti, Siti: "Career Reorientation during the Covid 19 Pandemic for Fresh Graduates from Higher Education in Indonesia", *Journal of Social Studies*, Vol. 19. n° 1 (2023), p.88-89, at <https://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/jss/article/view/56199>.

⁸³ Jakarta Property Institute: "Berdasarkan hasil survei JPI, Januari 2021", at <https://jpi.or.id/city-after-the-pandemic/>

disaggregated data to evaluate the equitable distribution of economic gains across genders, age groups, and regions within Indonesia.

Thus, Indonesia's journey through the economic turbulence induced by the COVID-19 pandemic to a trajectory of growth and resilience is a testament to the country's robust policy framework and commitment to sustainable development. The analysis of tangible outcomes associated with SDG 8 implementation reveals a multifaceted impact on the nation's economic landscape, employment quality, and social equity. While challenges remain, the lessons learned provide valuable insights for future policy formulation. To build on this momentum, Indonesia must continue to adapt its strategies, ensuring that economic growth is not only sustained but also inclusive, and that decent work is accessible to all its citizens.

5.5 Indonesia's Sustained Commitment to Sustainable Development

Indonesia has demonstrated a sustained commitment to sustainable development across several critical sectors, achieving significant progress through well-coordinated governmental initiatives. In the health sector, the country has seen a marked improvement in maternal health, with maternal mortality rates decreasing from 305 to 177 per 100,000 live births from 2015 to 2020. This achievement reflects the effectiveness of Indonesia's healthcare policies and the expansion of the national health insurance system, which now covers 82% of the population, ensuring greater access to essential medical services.⁸⁴

In education, the "Merdeka Belajar" or "Freedom to Learn" initiative has transformed the educational landscape, increasing the primary school net enrollment rate to 94.5% in 2021. This program not only addresses the flexibility and responsiveness of the educational system to students' needs but also integrates digital learning platforms, enhancing the overall quality of education and preparing Indonesian youth for future challenges. Gender equality has also been a significant focus, with the increase in women's representation in parliament from 17% in 2014 to 21% in 2019 illustrating successful efforts towards enhancing female participation in governance. This progress is underpinned by legislative reforms aimed at promoting workplace equality and eradicating discrimination, fostering a more inclusive society.⁸⁵

Efforts in water management have led to an increase in access to clean drinking water from 72% in 2015 to 77% in 2021. Programs like PAMSIMAS have been crucial in improving water infrastructure in remote areas, which is vital for community health and productivity.⁸⁶ However, addressing socio-economic inequalities remains challenging, as evidenced by the slight increase in the Gini coefficient from 0.384 in 2018 to 0.385 in 2021. The Village Fund Program has been instrumental in redistributing resources to improve infrastructure and development in rural areas, aiming to provide equitable growth across different regions.⁸⁷

Environmental sustainability has been another area of significant progress, particularly in combating deforestation and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. The reduction in deforestation by 75% from 2016 to 2020 and the adoption of sustainable palm oil practices highlight Indonesia's commitment to environmental preservation and economic sustainability.⁸⁸ Through these multifaceted efforts, Indonesia illustrates its robust approach to

⁸⁴ Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional: *Laporan Pelaksanaan Pencapaian TPB/SDGS Tahun 2021*, 2021 and VNR: "Indonesia's, Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2021 Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic for the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda, 2021", at https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2021/280892021_VNR_Report_Indonesia.pdf

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional: *Laporan Pelaksanaan Pencapaian TPB/SDGS Tahun 2021*, 2021

⁸⁷ VNR: "Indonesia's, Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2021 *op. cit.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*



sustainable development, aligning national initiatives with global standards to improve the quality of life for its citizens while ensuring environmental stewardship and economic resilience.

6. Conclusion

Indonesia's sustained commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 8 amidst the tumultuous conditions brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates a remarkable resilience and adaptability. Despite severe disruptions, the nation has commendably kept its trajectory towards promoting decent work and economic growth on track. This resilience is mirrored in Indonesia's swift economic recovery noted in 2021, which not only reflected a reversal from economic contraction but also highlighted improvements in unemployment rates and the successful integration of sustainable practices across various sectors. Such achievements underscore the effectiveness of the country's strategic governance and multifaceted approach, involving comprehensive policy coordination, stakeholder consultations, and aligning national strategies with the SDGs to tackle both immediate crises and long-term goals.

While Indonesia has made significant strides, the journey highlighted several challenges and areas needing further attention, particularly the need to diminish socio-economic inequalities and better include vulnerable populations in the economic growth process. The ongoing gaps in policy effectiveness, particularly in ensuring equitable growth across all societal segments, call for a refined focus on policies that not only drive economic growth but also ensure its benefits are widely shared.

Looking ahead, it is crucial for Indonesia to sustain its economic momentum and continue fostering decent work by integrating innovative and environmentally sustainable practices into recovery strategies. Initiatives such as promoting green jobs and sustainable tourism could act as dual catalysts for economic resilience and environmental stewardship, thereby contributing to a more sustainable economic future. The integration of global SDG targets with localized actions remains vital; continuous alignment of national policies with global objectives ensures that progress is not only beneficial locally but also contributes meaningfully to global sustainability efforts.

The conclusion of this analysis calls for a continued and strengthened commitment from all stakeholders—government entities, private sector participants, and civil society—to uphold and push forward the agenda of sustainable development. Collaborative efforts and innovative policy-making will be essential to meet the ambitious targets set for 2030, emphasizing the need for a concerted effort to ensure that Indonesia not only recovers robustly but also builds a sustainable framework for future generations. This collective endeavour will pave the way for achieving inclusive growth and sustainable development, ensuring that Indonesia remains a resilient and proactive participant in the global quest for sustainable development.



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