

The Indonesian Update

Monthly Review on Economic, Legal, Security, Political, and Social Affairs

Main Report

**The Analysis of Fiscal Policy and Central-Local Transfers:
Equity, Efficiency, and Economic Freedom**

Laws

Revisiting Environmental Law Enforcement for Wildlife in Forest and Land Fires ■

Reading Human Rights Over the Past Year ■

Politics

Returning to the Mass Organization Law: ■

Accountability, Differentiation Regulations and Civil Space

Inter-Party Rivalry and the Future of the Government Coalition ahead of the 2029 Election ■

Social

Starting from the Community: ■
the Key to Strengthening Disaster Risk Management Governance in Indonesia

Disasters are Not Gender Neutral: ■
Understanding Women's Health Vulnerabilities

CONTENTS

1 FOREWORD

3 MAIN REPORT

3 The Analysis of Fiscal Policy and Central-Local Transfers: Equity, Efficiency, and Economic Freedom

10 LAWS

- 10 Revisiting Environmental Law Enforcement for Wildlife in Forest and Land Fires
- 15 Reading Human Rights Over the Past Year

20 POLITICS

- 20 Returning to the Mass Organization Law: Accountability, Differentiation Regulations and Civil Space
- 25 Inter-Party Rivalry and the Future of the Government Coalition ahead of the 2029 Election

35 SOCIAL

- 35 Starting from the Community: the Key to Strengthening Disaster Risk Management Governance in Indonesia
- 40 Disasters are Not Gender Neutral: Understanding Women's Health Vulnerabilities

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FOREWORD

The August 2026 edition of the Indonesian Update presents a main report titled “Analysis of Fiscal Policy and Central-Regional Transfers: Equity, Efficiency, and Economic Freedom.” This paper shall discuss fiscal policy and central-regional transfer mechanisms in relation to equitable development, efficient resource management, and the space for economic freedom. The report shall also examine the challenges in designing central-regional fiscal relations that can strengthen regional independence while maintaining the effectiveness and accountability of public financial management.

In the political arena, the Indonesian Update features two articles discussing the dynamics of civil society organizations and party politics. The article, “Reexamining the Mass Organizations Law: Accountability, Regulatory Differentiation, and Civil Space,” shall examine the regulatory framework for civil society organizations, particularly the need to strengthen accountability while ensuring adequate space for civil society. Meanwhile, the article, “Inter-Party Competition and the Future of the Government Coalition Towards the 2029 Elections,” shall examine the dynamics of competition between political parties and the possibility of changes in the configuration of the government coalition in the political phase leading up to the 2029 elections.

In the legal field, the Indonesian Update includes two articles addressing environmental law enforcement and human rights. The article, “Exploring Environmental Law Enforcement for Animals in Forest and Land Fires,” shall discuss environmental law enforcement in the context of protecting animals affected by forest and land fires, as well as the challenges in ensuring legal protection for animals and ecosystems. Meanwhile, the article, “Reading Human Rights in the Past Year,” reviews developments in human rights issues over the past year, examining the various dynamics and challenges in fulfilling and protecting human rights in Indonesia.

In the social sector, this edition presents two analyses on disaster risk governance and gender-based vulnerability. The article “Community-Based, the Key to Strengthening Disaster Risk Management Governance in Indonesia” shall discuss the importance of a community-based approach in strengthening disaster risk management governance, including through increasing community participation and capacity in facing various disaster threats. Meanwhile, the article “Disasters Are Not Gender Neutral: Understanding Women’s Health Vulnerabilities” discusses how disasters can have different impacts on women, particularly in terms of health, and the importance of a gender perspective in policy formulation and disaster risk management.

Through the monthly publication of the Indonesian Update which raises various strategic and current issues, it is hoped that this report can contribute to policy makers in government institutions, business actors, academics, researchers, think tanks, and civil society, both at home and abroad, to obtain contextual analysis of the political, legal, social, and economic dynamics in Indonesia.

Happy reading.

Main Report

The Analysis of Fiscal Policy and Central-Local Transfers: Equity, Efficiency, and Economic Freedom

-Putu Rusta Adijaya-



Fiscal decentralization in Indonesia has been in effect for over two decades. It began with the enactment of Law No. 22/1999 on Regional Government and Law No. 25/1999 on Fiscal Balance between the Central and Regional Governments. Both frameworks have since been amended and updated; the current Regional Government Law is Law No. 23/2014, which was partially superseded by Law No. 1/2022 regarding Financial Relations between the Central Government and Regional Governments (HKPD). Law No. 1/2022 represents the latest legislation concerning central and regional government finance. These regulations and their revisions demonstrate a consistent objective: to distribute fiscal authority between the central and regional governments in order to provide better, more accessible public services while simultaneously reducing regional disparities in fiscal capacity.

However, the implementations of fiscal transfers from the Central Government to Regional Governments reveal a paradox: policies intended to strengthen regional autonomy and self-reliance have instead rendered Regional Governments heavily dependent on central government funds. This structural dependency became starkly apparent when the allocation for Transfers to Regions (TKD) in the 2026 State Budget (APBN) was significantly cut, sparking a wave of protests from regional leaders directed at the Ministry of Finance. According to jawapos.com (August 3, 2026), at least 15 regional heads—ranging from the Governor of North Maluku to

Main Report

the Regent of Trenggalek—protested the TKD reduction. The TKD ceiling within the 2026 TKDD framework was set at IDR661.7 trillion, a decrease from IDR807.9 trillion in 2025 (djpk.kemenkeu.go.id, accessed September 15, 2026).

The situation described above demonstrates that the issue of cutting Regional Transfer Funds (TKD) is not merely a matter of technical budgeting; rather, it raises a significant, fundamental question regarding the nature of central-regional financial relations in Indonesia. Is the current system aligned with the goals of equitable distribution, inter-regional fairness, and the strengthening of regional economic autonomy? Consequently, this study aims to analyze and address this question while offering policy recommendations to the administration of President Prabowo Subianto.

Current State of Central-Regional Transfers

Legal Framework: Law Number 1/2022 concerning Financial Relations between the Central Government and Regional Governments (HKPD Law)

The HKPD Law, enacted on January 5, 2022, repealed and replaced Law Number 28/2009 concerning Regional Taxes and Regional Levies and Law Number 33/2004 concerning Financial Balance between the Central Government and Regional Governments. The HKPD Law is built upon four main pillars: 1) developing a tax system that supports the efficient allocation of national resources; 2) developing financial relations between the central and regional governments to minimize vertical and horizontal disparities through Central-to-Regional Transfer (TKD) policies and regional debt financing; 3) encouraging improvements in the quality of regional spending; and 4) harmonizing fiscal policies between the central and regional governments to ensure optimal public service delivery and maintain fiscal sustainability.

Although the HKPD Law is fundamentally intended to “create an efficient allocation of national resources through transparent, accountable, and equitable financial relations between the Central and Regional Governments, in order to achieve equitable public services and improved community welfare across the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia” and to strengthen regional fiscal capacity, there are several paradoxes that warrant attention, such as the provisions of Article 97.

Saputa, Soetijono, and Chandra (2025) explain that tax and levy rates established by regional regulations can be revoked by the central government if they do not align with national strategic programs. They argue that this

Main Report

renders the concept of “broadest possible regional autonomy” half-hearted, as it is not balanced by policies that actively foster the implementation of such autonomy (Saputa, Soetijono, & Chandra, 2025).

Furthermore, as reported by mkri.id (June 17, 2026), the Regional Autonomy Implementation Monitoring Committee (KPPOD) and the Indonesian Forum for Budget Transparency (FITRA) filed a petition for judicial review of the HKPD Law with the Constitutional Court (MK). They sought to challenge the constitutionality of several provisions—specifically Article 107 paragraphs (2) and (4), Article 109 paragraph (1), and Article 146 paragraph (1) of the HKPD Law—against Article 1 paragraph (3), Article 18 paragraph (5), Article 18A paragraph (2), Article 28C paragraph (2), and Article 28D paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (UUD NRI).

TKD Budget Trends (2023–2026)

Data on the composition of Transfers to Regions (TKD) relative to state expenditure over the past few years—sourced from djpk.kemenkeu.go.id (accessed September 15, 2026)—indicates a downward trend, as shown in Table 1 below:

**Table 1. Data on the Composition of Transfers to Regions (TKD)
Relative to State Expenditure, 2023–2026**

The Year of APBN	State Expenditure (IDR trillion)	Transfers to Regions (IDR trillion)	%
2023 (Law 28/2022)	3,061.2	813.1	26.56%
2024 (Law 19/2023)	3,325.1	798	24%
2025 (Law 62/2024)	3,621.3	807.9	22.31%
2026 (Law 17/2025)	3,842.7	661.7*	17.22%

Source: Ministry of Finance. Processed by the author. *: Based on data from the SIKD Disbursement Tracking (CakLur) feature as of September 16, 2026 (djpk.kemenkeu.go.id).

Main Report

An analysis of the Transfers to Regions (TKD) figures reveals a percentage decline in TKD relative to total state expenditure between 2023 and 2026. In 2023, TKD accounted for 26.56% of state expenditure; this figure dropped by nearly 3 percentage points in 2024, fell further to 22.31% in 2025, and ultimately dropped below 20% in 2026.

For 2025, the TKD budget allocation stood at IDR807.9 trillion, with a realization rate of 97.4%. The 2025 TKD comprised the following: Revenue-Sharing Fund (DBH) with a budget of IDR178.4 trillion (94.68% realized); General Allocation Fund (DAU) with a budget of IDR438.6 trillion (98.78% realized); Physical Special Allocation Fund (*DAK Fisik*) with a budget of IDR18.7 trillion (94.43% realized); Regional Incentive Fund (DID) with a budget of IDR6 trillion (71.24% realized); Special Autonomy Fund with a budget of IDR17 trillion (100% realized); Special Region of Yogyakarta Privileges Fund with a budget of IDR1 trillion (100% realized); Non-Physical Special Allocation Fund (*DAK Nonfisik*) with a budget of IDR146.7 trillion (98.61% realized); and Grant Transfers with a budget of IDR1.61 trillion (14.96% realized).

Regional Fiscal Dependency

According to the Ministry of Finance's *Media Defis* (Edition XXXIX, 2024), 334 regions remain heavily reliant on Regional Transfer Funds (TKD) for their regional budgets (APBD)—levels exceeding the national average—with 298 of these regions deriving more than 80% of their APBD revenue from TKD. Additionally, 228 regions have a TKD-to-APBD revenue ratio of between 40% and 80%, 19 regions fall within the 20%–40% range, and only one local government has a ratio below 20% (Ministry of Finance, 2024).

These figures indicate that local government reliance on central government transfers remains a deeply ingrained characteristic of regional financial structures. This situation poses a challenge to the agenda of strengthening fiscal autonomy—a key objective of the Law on Financial Relations between the Central Government and Regional Governments (UU HKPD) aimed at bolstering regional fiscal capacity.

The Efficiency-Equity Trade-off

Oates (1972, 1999) argued that the provision of public goods should be handled by a government that understands its citizens—in other words, through decentralization—to maximize overall social welfare. By tailoring the provision of goods and services to the specific needs and conditions of

Main Report

a region's population, decentralized delivery enhances economic well-being more effectively than a universal service model (such as mandating that the goods and services provided in Bali be identical to those in Jakarta).

However, the situation in Indonesian regions—where the majority remain heavily reliant on Regional Transfer Funds (TKD)—indicates that the true essence of fiscal decentralization has not yet been fully realized in line with the expectations of the HKPD Law. This is despite the fact that the Elucidation of the HKPD Law states that regulations concerning regional tax management, TKD, regional debt financing, and regional budget (APBD) control are intended to empower local governments to work synergistically with the central government toward national development goals: specifically, improving public welfare and fostering sustainable economic growth. While local governments possess the administrative authority to spend funds, they lack the fiscal autonomy that Oates identifies as a prerequisite for efficiency.

The Implications for Regional Economic Freedom

From the perspective of economic freedom, the fact that tax rates and levies established by regional regulations can be revoked by the central government—if they do not align with the national strategic programs mandated by the Law on Financial Relations between the Central Government and Regional Governments (UU HKPD)—potentially limits the scope for regional fiscal experimentation. Furthermore, the heavy reliance of most Indonesian regions on central government transfers weakens fiscal checks and balances, as it restricts their ability to implement economic policies independent of central government political dynamics.

For instance, a study by the Regional Autonomy Watch (KPPOD) reveals that approximately 60–70% of regions in Indonesia still rely on central government transfers as their primary revenue source; in some cases, central transfers account for as much as 80–90% of a region's budget structure (sindonews.com, July 7, 2026). This disparity is evident when comparing, for example, North Maluku—where Locally-Generated Revenue (PAD) constituted only 27% of total regional revenue in the 2025 budget, leaving the remaining 73% dependent on transfers—with the DKI Jakarta Province, which funded 59% of its revenue through PAD and relied on central transfers for only 29% (kompas.id, January 19, 2026).

Indonesia's ranking of 60th out of 184 countries in The Heritage Foundation's "2026 Index of Economic Freedom"—with a status of "moderately free"—indicates that the scope for structural economic freedom (including

Main Report

indicators regarding government size and regulations relevant to regional fiscal authority) remains at a moderate level. This freedom is potentially constrained and hindered by recurring patterns of fiscal centralization.

For instance, Djohermansyah Djohan—a professor at the Institute of Home Affairs Governance (IPDN), Acting Governor of Riau (2013–2014), and Director General of Regional Autonomy at the Ministry of Home Affairs (2010–2014)—explained in an article on Kompas.com (March 22, 2026) that the composition of the State Budget (APBN) revealed a stark imbalance: the 546 autonomous regions collectively receive only about 17 percent of the total budget, while the Central Government controlled the majority share of 83 percent. This proportion stands in sharp contrast to the distribution patterns commonly found in other countries, which generally approximate a balanced 50-50 ratio between the Central and Regional Governments. This situation creates a paradox: on one hand, regions retain extensive authority, encompassing 32 areas of government affairs; on the other, the funding sources required to exercise that authority have been curtailed without a corresponding reduction in the administrative burdens the regions must shoulder.

Policy Recommendations

Referring to the preceding discussion, the following are recommendations for the administration of President Prabowo Subianto.

First, all central government entities—particularly the Ministry of Finance through the Directorate General of Fiscal Balance (DJPK), in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs—need to implement a transition scheme whenever there is a significant decline in Regional Transfer Funds (TKD), ensuring regions have time to make fiscal adjustments. Abrupt adjustments to transfers could trigger fiscal shocks, especially for regions that remain heavily dependent on TKD. Therefore, any changes to the TKD formula or ceilings that result in substantial reductions should be implemented gradually, accompanied by transition mechanisms or temporary adjustment measures for regions facing significant revenue losses.

Second, all central government entities—specifically the Ministry of Finance via the DJPK, collaborating with the Ministry of Home Affairs—need to shift the orientation of TKD toward performance-based transfers rather than simply disbursing funds directly. Fiscal dependency is difficult to reduce if increased transfers are not matched by improved local government performance. Consequently, certain transfer components should be linked

Main Report

To bolster regional fiscal capacity, the Central Government could implement several measures, such as adopting a transition scheme during significant declines in Regional Transfer Funds (TKD) to allow regions time for fiscal adjustments; shifting the orientation of TKD toward performance-based transfers; establishing incentive mechanisms that link increases in Locally-Generated Revenue (PAD) to a gradual reduction in reliance on TKD; and enhancing transparency through a public information system that integrates data on TKD allocation, realization, and performance.

to measurable performance indicators, such as increasing Locally-Generated Revenue (PAD) without raising the economic burden, improving the quality of capital expenditure, enhancing the effectiveness of education and health services, facilitating ease of doing business, realizing investments, controlling administrative spending, and ensuring transparency and accountability in the regional budget (APBD).

Third, all government entities need to establish a mechanism whereby an increase in a region's PAD leads to a gradual reduction in dependency on transfers. Regions that successfully increase their PAD sustainably should not face an immediate cut in transfers. Instead, the central government needs to devise an incentive mechanism that allows the additional PAD to create fiscal space for regions to improve public services and boost productive investment.

Fourth, all government entities need to strengthen the transparency of central-regional fiscal relations through a unified public information system that integrates data on TKD allocation, realization, and performance. The public should be able to easily view the amount of transfers a region receives, the intended use of those funds, their actual realization, and whether the transfers have resulted in improvements to public services or regional economic indicators. Such transparency is crucial because large-scale transfers—lacking information on outcomes—make it difficult for the public to assess the effectiveness of fiscal decentralization. Furthermore, the system can serve as a basis for performance-based fiscal incentives and help the central government identify regions requiring intervention or assistance to foster local community well-being.

Laws

Revisiting Environmental Law Enforcement for Wildlife in Forest and Land Fires

-Afifah Fitriyani Oceanto-



Forest and land fires (karhutla) have once again become a recurring environmental problem in Indonesia. In August 2026, forest fires in Kalimantan were reported to have burned at least 72,798 hectares of land (Detik, 4/8/2026). The scale of this area shows that karhutla is not merely a matter of losing forest cover, but also a matter of the survival of the ecosystems within it.

When a forest burns, humans are not the only party affected. Forests are habitats for various species of wildlife that depend on the ecosystem for their basic life needs. Karhutla can cause wildlife to be injured, killed, lose their habitat, or move to other areas to save themselves. Not infrequently, wildlife that has lost its habitat then enters human settlements, increasing the potential for human–wildlife conflict (IPB University, 1/8/2026).

This matter presents a legal problem that is not simple, in terms of understanding the condition of wildlife in karhutla, which is often understood mainly through the relationship between perpetrators, forest damage, and environmental losses. However, when wildlife becomes one of the victims of that damage, a question arises: to what extent does environmental law enforcement in handling karhutla take into account the rescue and recovery of affected wildlife?

When Karhutla Turns Wildlife into Victims

Karhutla is an ecological problem because its impact does not end at the burned area. Forest fires can disrupt the ecological functions of forests and sever the connection between wildlife and their habitat as a source of life (NC State University, 1/8/2023). Wildlife animal able to flee may move to safer areas, including human settlements, while wildlife unable to save itself may be injured or killed.

Field data from this year concretely illustrates this pattern. From 1 August to 10 September 2026, the West Kalimantan Natural Resources Conservation Center (BKSDA) evacuated 24 individual wild animals affected by karhutla from 18 locations in Ketapang, Kayong Utara, and Bengkayang Regencies. These animals consisted of 15 orangutans, six pangolins, one proboscis monkey, one slow loris, and one masked palm civet. This figure only records animals successfully rescued, and does not include those that died or were never found (Katadata, 11/9/2026). This raises the question of whether the karhutla law enforcement framework also views this impact as part of the damage that must be addressed.

The Legal Framework for Karhutla Control and Recovery

Indonesia's legal framework has actually provided a basis for the state to control environmental damage caused by forest and land fires.

First, Article 28H paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution guarantees every person's right to a good and healthy living environment, giving environmental protection a constitutional dimension. Article 33 paragraphs (3) and (4) place natural resources under the control of the state and affirm the principles of sustainable, environmentally sound development.

Second, Law No. 32/2009 on Environmental Protection and Management (UU PPLH), as amended by Law No. 6/2023, regulates the obligation to restore environmental functions. Article 54 states that anyone who pollutes and/or damages the environment is obligated to restore environmental functions through remediation, rehabilitation, restoration, and other methods in line with developments in science and technology. Article 87 paragraph (3) opens room for courts to impose "certain measures" beyond compensation for losses.

Third, Regulation of the Minister of Environment and Forestry No. P.32/MENLHK/SETJEN/KUM.1/3/2016 on the Control of Forest and Land Fires (Permen LHK P.32/2016) is one of the instruments specifically regulating the control of forest and land fires. This regulation defines various

Laws

aspects related to karhutla control, ranging from prevention and mitigation to post-fire recovery. With this scope, Permen LHK P.32/2016 should serve as one of the main foundations for ensuring that karhutla control is not solely oriented toward extinguishing fires, but also encompasses handling impacts and environmental recovery afterward.

Fourth, the protection of wildlife and their ecosystems has a legal basis in Law No. 5/1990 on the Conservation of Living Natural Resources and Their Ecosystems (UU KSDAHE), as partially amended by Law No. 32/2024. This legal framework shows that wildlife protection cannot be separated from the protection of the ecosystems in which they live. Therefore, in the context of karhutla, environmental protection and wildlife protection should not be viewed as two separate legal regimes, but as interconnected parts in maintaining ecosystem sustainability.

Beyond conservation, animal welfare also has a legal basis through Law No. 18/2009 on Animal Husbandry and Health, as partially amended by Law No. 41/2014. This law places animal welfare as part of animal health and defines it as various matters relating to the physical and mental condition of animals that need to be applied and enforced to protect animals from improper and inappropriate human treatment.

This provision is further detailed in Government Regulation No. 95/2012 on Veterinary Public Health and Animal Welfare. Article 83 paragraph (2) contains the principle of animal welfare known through five freedoms: (a) freedom from hunger and thirst; (b) freedom from pain, injury, and disease; (c) freedom from discomfort, mistreatment, and abuse; (d) freedom from fear and distress; and (e) freedom to express natural behavior.

Thus, these various legal frameworks form the foundation and essence for restoring or at least placing, wildlife as a central part of handling and recovery, as a cohesive component during and after karhutla.

Three Regimes That Never Meet

The list above appears complete. The problem arises when these three regimes are confronted with a single event: wildlife becoming victims during karhutla.

UU PPLH operates on the concept of environmental function. Wildlife enters the picture as a component of the ecosystem, not as an entity to be restored in its own right. The object of the obligation under Article 54 is the land and its function; success indicators are typically the area rehabilitated and the trees replanted.

Laws

UU KSDAHE operates on the logic of species status and area status. Its protection attaches to protected species and to conservation areas. Wildlife without protected status, burned in production forest areas or other land-use zones, effectively has no entry point into this regime.

The Law on Animal Husbandry and Health, together with Government Regulation 95/2012, arises from the logic of animal health and livestock farming. The five freedoms in Article 83 paragraph (2) constitute a strong normative formulation, but the context of their creation is animals under human control. Extending them to wild animals that are victims of fire requires additional argumentation — and this is precisely where academic groundwork remains largely unaddressed and needs further examination so that wildlife can become a focus of attention.

The consequence of these three unaligned logics can be summed up in one sentence: the obligation to restore the environment can be formally fulfilled through land rehabilitation without a single animal being saved, and no norm would be violated. A forest that turns green again does not automatically mean the ecosystem is functioning. Wildlife may still lose their food sources, migration routes, and breeding grounds, even as the recovery obligation is administratively declared complete.

For example, this disparity is clearly visible in the karhutla in East Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan, in August 2026. A reptile observer found at least 26 animal carcasses over two weeks of karhutla, consisting of pythons, a king cobra, three monitor lizard species (dipong), a water monitor, and a water snake, all dead as a result of the fire (Resensi Kaltim, 27/8/2026). This case starkly reveals a substantial weakness in UU KSDAHE, particularly Article 1 paragraph (3) of the law, which defines the ecosystem of living natural resources as “a system of reciprocal relationships between elements in nature, both living and non-living, which are interdependent and mutually influencing.” This article explicitly places all living elements, without exception, as interrelated parts of a single system.

However, this inclusive definition should be followed by protective instruments that are equally comprehensive, collaborative, and responsive. Moreover, given that these species do not hold protected status, the deaths of these various animals do not give rise to any legal obligation for the parties responsible for the fire, even though the ecological damage they suffered is identical to that suffered by orangutans or other protected animals.

Therefore, bringing these various regulations together is essential to examining the state’s responsibility toward wildlife, which often becomes

Laws

The right to a good and healthy living environment cannot simply be interpreted as a prohibition against the state causing damage, nor does it apply only to humans. Therefore, recognition is needed so that this right also forms the basis of the state's positive obligation to protect and restore wildlife that become victims.

a victim of regulations still centered on humans, so that the convergence of these legal frameworks can become the spirit behind building comprehensive ecosystem protection.

Policy Recommendations

- a. The Ministry of Forestry, together with the Ministry of Environment, must revise Permen LHK P.32/2016 by making wildlife rescue protocols a mandatory component of karhutla mitigation,
- b. The Directorate General of Natural Resource and Ecosystem Conservation and the Natural Resources Conservation Center must establish a rapid-response wildlife unit on standby during the dry season in high-risk provinces, with a dedicated budget, and must formally bind cooperation with rehabilitation institutions through formal agreements covering the costs of animal care and release,
- c. Local Governments, together with veterinary authorities, must prepare a human–wildlife conflict mitigation mechanism during the karhutla season, including a channel for public reporting, compensation for crop losses, and the deployment of authorized veterinarians, and
- d. The Ministry of Forestry must build a cross-sector collaboration mechanism for handling wildlife affected by karhutla, involving the Ministry of Environment, the National Disaster Management Agency, local governments, the Natural Resources Conservation Center, veterinary authorities, universities, wildlife conservation and rehabilitation institutions, and civil society organizations.

Laws

Reading Human Rights Over the Past Year

-Afifah Fitriyani Oceanto-



Protests continue to be recurring events that claim lives in Indonesia. In August 2025, an online motorcycle taxi driver named Affan Kurniawan was reported killed after being run over by a Brimob (Mobile Brigade) tactical vehicle in the Pejompongan area of Central Jakarta (Tempo, 30/8/2025).

A year later, in the same month, August 2026, in the same area, a mirror trader named Bambang Setiawan was reported killed after being beaten by an unidentified group following the dispersal of a demonstration (Amnesty International Indonesia, 1/9/2026). The mere one-year gap between these two events shows that the human rights problem in handling protests is not merely incidental, but a recurring pattern.

When a protest takes place, civilians are not the only party who may become participants in the action — they are also a party who can become victims even without being directly involved. Protests can cause residents to be injured, lose their lives, or be caught up in violent situations beyond their control. Not infrequently, residents who merely happen to be near the location of unrest end up bearing the heaviest consequences.

This condition raises a legal problem that is not simple. Law enforcement regarding deaths during protests has so far been understood mostly through the relationship between perpetrator, victim, and criminal sanction. However, when such deaths keep recurring year after year, a question arises:

to what extent does human rights law enforcement in handling protests take prevention into account, so that similar events do not keep repeating?

Whilst Protests Turn Citizens into Victims

Protests do not end when demands are voiced. The unrest that accompanies them can endanger the safety of anyone in the vicinity of the location, including those who are not expressing an opinion at all. Participants confronting security forces may experience violence, while residents who simply happen to be passing by or living nearby can become trapped in an uncontrollable situation.

Affan Kurniawan died while working, delivering a food order near the protest site on 28 August 2025, after being run over by a Brimob tactical vehicle (IDN Times, 2025). Bambang Setiawan died while about to close his shop on the night of 27 August 2026, after unrest that began in front of the DPR (House of Representatives) building spread to the residential area where he lived (Tempo, 2026). Neither of them was a protest participant, yet both became victims of a situation arising from the demonstration.

In this context, civilians can be understood as parties who experience direct or indirect impact from protest-related unrest, despite not being part of the protesting group. The question is whether the existing law enforcement framework has regarded the protection of such residents as something to be handled seriously, or whether it only receives attention after victims have already fallen.

This question becomes a point of reflection, because the success of protest handling should not be measured solely by the ability to disperse crowds or impose sanctions on perpetrators after the fact. After a protest ends, there remain equally important issues: how victims and their families obtain justice, how perpetrators are thoroughly investigated, and how the risk of similar events recurring in the future is prevented.

The Human Rights Legal Framework in While Protests

Indonesia's legal framework has actually provided an adequate basis for the state to protect the right to life and prevent violence in handling protests.

First, Articles 28A and 28I paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (UUD 1945) guarantee the right to life as a right that cannot be diminished under any circumstances. This provision gives constitutional weight to the protection of every citizen's life. In addition,

Laws

Article 28E paragraph (3) of the UUD 1945 guarantees the right to organize, assemble, and express opinions, which should operate alongside the right to life, as a core link in the exercise of interconnected rights.

Second, Law No. 39/1999 on Human Rights (UU HAM) provides a basis regarding the state's obligation to protect every person from arbitrary acts, whether committed by the state apparatus or by other parties. Article 1 paragraph (1) states that human rights are a gift from God and mandates the State to protect every person's dignity. This is reaffirmed in Article 8, which places responsibility on the Government to carry out the protection, promotion, enforcement, and fulfillment of human rights.

Third, Chief of Police Regulation No. 7/2012 concerning Procedures for Providing Services, Security, and Handling of Cases Related to the Expression of Public Opinion, which is meant to serve as a guide for handling protests. Article 3 letter b makes clear that human rights protection is a primary principle in securing demonstrators. Furthermore, Article 5 paragraph (1) states that citizens expressing opinions in public have the right to assemble and to voice opinions, whether orally or in writing, responsibly and with regard to social values and norms.

Fourth, Law No. 12/2005 on the Ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Article 6 paragraph (1), in line with the Human Rights Law, states that every life must be protected by law and no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of life. Meanwhile, Article 21 explains that the right of peaceful assembly must be recognized and should not be restricted except for the sake of public safety and the protection of the rights and/or freedoms of others.

Viewed from various national to international regulations, the spirit of human rights enforcement stands as the main guide in various human activities, especially during protests.

State Responsibility in Preventing Recurrence

From a human rights perspective, this issue can be linked to the state's obligation to ensure the protection of the right to life. This right, under Articles 28A and 28I paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution, should not only be understood as a prohibition on the state arbitrarily taking the lives of its citizens, but also as a basis for the state to take active steps to protect citizens from third-party threats.

Laws

The deaths of Affan and Bambang, to read together, show that threats to the right to life in the context of protests can come from two directions: from direct actions by security forces, and from the state's failure to act against violence committed by other parties. Thus, the state's obligation is not sufficient only during the protest itself. The state also has a role in ensuring that prevention, oversight, enforcement, and recovery run effectively, both before, during, and after the protest ends.

The pattern that has recurred within this one year has a different threat character, Affan's death stemmed from direct action by security forces, while Bambang's death stemmed from the state's failure to act against violence by a third party as unrest spread into a residential area. In addition, both cases reveal the same handling gap: swift resolution of individual sanctions, but slow progress on structural human rights accountability. In Affan's case, the National Police Commission for Code of Ethics and Professionalism (Komisi Kode Etik dan Profesi Polri) dishonorably discharged Kopol Kosmas Kaju Gae and demoted Bripka Rohmat for seven years, while five other Brimob members were only required to apologize (Kompas.com, 4/9/2025). On the other hand, an independent fact-finding commission concluded that the incident constituted a criminal act of murder, not an accident (Tirto.id, 4/2/2026). This gap indicates that the obligation of an independent, prompt, and effective investigation as required under Article 6 paragraph (1) of the ICCPR in conjunction with Law No. 12 of 2005 has not yet been fulfilled.

In Bambang's case, the handling of individual perpetrators actually moved faster, Polda Metro Jaya (Jakarta Metropolitan Police) named three suspects with the initials FP, DS, and DDS on 12 September 2026 after arresting them in Babakan Madang, Bogor Regency (Detik.com, 14/9/2026). However, the dimension of state omission has yet to be addressed by several parties, including Amnesty International Indonesia, which highlighted the involvement of mass groups in dispersing the protest as something that revives the collective trauma of the 1998 Pam Swakarsa tragedy, especially given that at least 18,504 combined TNI-Polri (military-police) personnel had been deployed to secure the demonstration (Media Indonesia, 2/9/2026). This leaves unanswered the question of whether the state's obligation under Article 9 of Law No. 39/1999 and Article 28I paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution to actively prevent third-party threats has been fulfilled by law enforcement thus far.

In the context of both cases, the question then becomes whether this obligation has been translated into a clear mechanism. When a protest has the potential to spread into residential areas, for instance, a mechanism is needed to protect residents while also preventing the entry of groups

Laws

Law enforcement regarding deaths in protests cannot stop merely at sanctioning perpetrators. Therefore, there should be a mechanism that links such accountability with structural preventive measures, so that similar events do not keep recurring.

that could trigger unrest. Likewise, when violence by security forces has the potential to occur, the principle of proportionality should be genuinely applied, not merely written into regulation.

Policy Recommendations

- a. Komnas HAM (the National Commission on Human Rights) needs to activate an independent investigation mechanism in accordance with its legal mandate, duties, and functions, so that it can respond promptly whenever a protest claims lives,
- b. Komnas HAM, together with civil society organizations, needs to build an annual database of protest-violence victims to map the recurring pattern seen in the August 2025 and 2026 incidents.
- c. Local Governments, together with the Police, must provide evacuation routes and security for residents and traders near protest locations before an action takes place. The absence of such a mechanism in two consecutive incidents at the same location reflects a repeated planning failure, not a one-time oversight, and
- d. The Ministry of Social Affairs, together with the Witness and Victim Protection Agency (LPSK), needs to provide legal assistance, psychological support, and compensation to victims' families without waiting for the legal process against perpetrators to conclude.

Politics

Returning to the Mass Organization Law: Accountability, Differentiation Regulations and Civil Space

-Felicia Primaresti-



These past few years, social organizations (mass organizations) in Indonesia are facing difficulties to operate in the religious, educational, and social fields. Some mass organizations have developed large mass bases, institutional capacity, and significant economic resources. This is important as mass organizations' ability to influence policy-making is also influenced by its organizational capacity, internal structure, member participation, and the capabilities to interact with policy-makers (Albareda, 2018).

Major organisations, like Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, both have broad social bases and have played roles in various fields including education, health, and religious affairs. However, both have different characters. Muhammadiyah has a relatively modern and organized organizational structure, while NU has the structure that is more decentralized through networks of kiais, Islamic boarding schools, and organizations at the local level (Brown, 2019).

The differences in capacities are more relevant if mass organizations entered economic activities. Through PP No. 25/2024, the Government offers Special Business Mining Permit (WIUPK) to religious organisations. NU and Muhammadiyah have decided to accept the offer.

The more important question is that what regulations are still adequate to address the diversity in capacity, function and influence of mass organizations?

Politics

This question is important because mass organizations are not entities with a homogeneous category. Law No. 17/2013 concerning Mass Organizations, as revised through Law No. 16/2017, regulates various aspects of organizations, starting from the establishment, management, finance, body business, supervision, to sanctions (Republic of Indonesia, 2013; Republic of Indonesia, 2017).

If Powers are Different, Can Accountability be Uniformed?

The important question is whether the designs of the regulations are capable to follow the changes in the characters of mass organizations in Indonesia.

Literature on mass organizations show that organizations have different levels of capacity. Albareda (2018) shows that organizational capacity influences the ability of mass organizations in connecting public interests with policy-makers.

This gives rise to the question about the implementations of management standards. The problem is the bigger the powers that mass organizations have, the bigger the accountability mechanisms should be.

The transparency of finance and the accountability of its members are crucial. However, this also needs audit, the transparency of funding sources, the management of conflict interests, and the mechanisms accountability to the public.

Therefore, an evaluation of the Mass Organization Law is necessary to see whether the law is still proportional and appropriate to regulate the capacity, activity and risks of mass organizations.

The Gaps in Regulations and the Excess of Authority of Regulations

The differences in capacity and inter-organizational influence raise two issues; namely, regulatory gaps and excess authority.

Regulatory gaps appear if existing laws and regulations are not able to regulate organizations that have increasing economic capacity, political access, and public influence. If mass organizations enter large-scale economic activities, the question on accountability becomes more important. Regulations need to be able to address compliance administrative, the conflict of interests, and the distribution of economic benefits are distributed.

Politics

The University of Indonesia Political Studies Center (PUKAPOL UI) found that mass organizations were facing funding difficulties. Local organizations and communities at the grassroots level are also struggling due to the problems. (PUKAPOL UI, 2025).

Similar problems have also been impacting similar foreign mass organizations operating in Indonesia. In 2025, the Government confessed to facing problems in managing foreign mass organizations. The problems include long and complex licensing processes. The Government mentioned that there were around 256 foreign organizations operating in Indonesia, but only 41 officially registered. To solve this, the Government is developing digitalization and reforming the regulations and the licensing of foreign mass organizations (Ministry of State Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025).

Organizations with big resources have more capacity to fulfil their obligations. Small organizations only have limited capacity to fulfil their obligations. Regulations should take into account the functions of social control, advocacy, and supervision.

A paradox of rules arises. On one side, big mass organizations need greater accountability mechanisms. On the other side, stricter accountability mechanisms create more burdens for the mass organizations.

Thus, strengthening accountability should not limit mass organizations in conducting the functions of advocacy, oversight, and public participation. CIVICUS's assessment of Indonesia also shows the existence of challenges to civil freedom including the activities of mass organizations (CIVICUS, 2026).

Powers, Political Access, and Relations with the State

Another important dimension is the connection between mass organizations and the state. Mass organizations do not only have social capacity and economy, in some cases they also have significant political access.

NU and Muhammadiyah show that big mass organizations can play roles in policy processes. Brown (2019) shows that both of them are organizations with large social based and have influence to public policy-making. Both also have different organizational structures and logics. Brown (2019) shows that NU and Muhammadiyah are two largest Muslim organizations in Indonesia with broad social networks that have influence to public policy in various issues, including regulations, religion, education, and health. However,

Politics

Muhammadiyah has a relatively modern organizational structure, while NU relies on the networks of Islamic boarding schools and kiai (Brown, 2019).

Studies regarding NU and Muhammadiyah in Kudus find that both of them have strong networks and members until the village level. Both of them influence policy through dialogue and persuasive approach to the Government. However, some research finds that their influence on policy processes is still limited (Ulya, 2015).

In 2024, the Government gave room for businesses belonged to religious organizations to get Mining Business Special Permit (WIUPK). PBNU then got the Mining Business Permission (IUP). Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah in July 2024 decided to accept IUP offer from the Government (ANTARA, 3/6/2024). This has created the dimensions of relationships, conflict of interests, transparency, social impact, and environmental impact.

In August 2026, the Chair of the Board of Advisors of the Indonesian Golden Community Forum (FORMAS), Hashim Djojohadikusumo, inaugurated 20 new mass organizations that had joined FORMAS. FORMAS has 103 member organizations and is intended for strengthening the role of civil groups in supporting and overseeing government programs (ANTARA, 3/3/2026).

Therefore, political closeness and favoritism should not be the basis for providing higher regulatory standards. Accountability standards should be determined based on objective characteristics like the source of the organization's powers, activities, risks, and public impacts.

Recommendations

In the perspective of libertarianism, this approach is also relevant as state intervention should not be restricted.

- a. The Home Affairs Ministry must work together with the Ministry of Law to conduct the classification of risks of mass organizations according to their organizational scale, management, governance management, the types of mass organizations, and economic activities. access to source public power, as well as impact its activities. Every mass organization should fulfil their basic obligations related to transparency and legal compliance, including independent audit, financial reporting, and the disclosure of the conflict of interest.

Politics

Mass organizations in Indonesia should not play a role as a receptacle social and religious activities. Some organizations have developed their with mass base s, sources of economic powers, and significant political access. This is importance as framework regulations that guarantee civil freedom.

- b. Government agencies need to *review* to the administrative obligations of mass organizations, especially those related to registration , reporting , funding and licensing of organizations. Those agencies should identify overlapping rules and simplify procedures that are not required. The goal is to lower the burden of compliance. This approach is in line with with the principles of *limited government*.
- c. The Government and the DPR need to ensure that authority supervision towards mass organizations has clear boundaries , indicators, and procedures . This also in line with a provision that rights can be restricted by laws and court decisions.
- d. Administrative decisions like giving sanctions, restrictions activities, or revocation of organizational status must be accompanied by reasons that can be tested by *judicial review* . Thus, the country could increase accountability of mass organizations without making regulations as the instruments of control over mass organizations.

Politics

Inter-Party Rivalry and the Future of the Government Coalition ahead of the 2029 Election

-Arfianto Purbolaksono-



A statement by Democratic Party (Partai Demokrat) Chair Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono (AHY) about how no one holds power forever has sparked debate among political parties. AHY made the statement during the 25th anniversary celebration of the Democratic Party on 5 September 2026. In his speech, AHY asserted that power is a mandate from the people and has a time limit (Detik, 8 September 2026).

Normatively, the statement can be understood as a democratic message about the importance of the rotation of power. However, in the context of Indonesian politics, which is entering the early phase of preparations for the 2029 Election, the statement cannot be separated from party positioning interests. Reactions from Gerindra, Golkar, PAN, NasDem, and PDIP show that every statement made by an elite figure is now being read as a signal about the direction of coalitions and possible candidacies in the upcoming election (CNN Indonesia, 7 September 2026; Detik, 9 September 2026).

This controversy shows that the competition ahead of the 2029 Election is not only taking place between the governing parties and those outside government. Competition is also occurring within the government coalition itself, particularly in the contest for influence, access to power, public legitimacy, and position as the leading candidate in the next presidential contest.

Power and Inter-Party Competition

In a multi-party system, a government coalition is essentially not a fully homogeneous political organization. Coalitions are formed based on overlapping interests, yet each party retains its own identity, voter base, leadership, and electoral interests.

According to William H. Riker (1962) in *The Theory of Political Coalitions*, political coalitions are formed through a rational process in which parties join together to gain power, while each party continues to maintain its own autonomy and strategic interests. Lanny W. Martin and Georg Vanberg (2011), in *Democracy and Coalition Governance*, add that although parties in a coalition share executive power, they continue to compete to preserve their respective identities and voter bases, particularly in fragmented multi-party systems.

Parties within the Prabowo–Gibran government face two interests that run in parallel. First, they must demonstrate loyalty to the government in order to retain access to political resources and policymaking. Second, they need to build their own identity and image so as not to lose bargaining power ahead of the 2029 Election.

This situation produces what is known in political studies as intra-coalition competition. Parties do not openly confront one another as adversaries, but rather compete to secure a stronger position within the coalition. They may support the government on one hand, while at the same time beginning to prepare narratives, cadres, and networks for the next electoral contest.

AHY's speech sits within this space of competition. The statement that power has a time limit could be read as a democratic message, but it can also be understood as an attempt by the Democratic Party to remind others that the party has a history of governing, electoral experience, and a political right to be reckoned with in the future configuration of power.

In other words, the Democratic Party is trying to maintain two positions at once: remaining part of the Prabowo–Gibran government while not fully merging into Gerindra's narrative as the dominant ruling party. This is the central dilemma faced by mid-sized parties within a large coalition. If a party is too loyal and passive, it risks losing its identity. Yet if it shows electoral ambition too soon, it may be seen as disloyal or even as a potential threat to government stability.

Coalition Theory and Political Competition

In political science literature, a government coalition is understood as a temporary alliance between political parties to obtain and maintain executive power. According to William H. Riker in *The Theory of Political Coalitions* (1962), coalitions are formed based on the principle of the minimum winning coalition — the smallest coalition still sufficient to control a majority.

However, in the practice of contemporary multi-party democracy, coalitions are often larger than mathematically necessary. Lanny W. Martin and Georg Vanberg (2011), in *Democracy and Coalition Governance*, explain that oversized coalitions are often formed to increase government stability, particularly in fragmented political systems.

This theory is relevant for understanding President Prabowo's government coalition in parliament. The coalition includes Gerindra, Golkar, PAN, the Democratic Party, NasDem, PKB, and PKS, which together control around 81 percent of parliamentary seats. This coalition far exceeds the minimum threshold needed to control parliament, and can therefore be categorized as a *grand coalition*.

However, large coalitions carry inherent weaknesses. According to Kaare Strøm (1990) in *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, an oversized coalition tends to face coordination problems, internal conflict, and difficulty in decision-making. Each party has its own electoral interests, which can clash with the coalition's collective interests.

In the Indonesian context, the large coalition under the Prabowo government faces similar challenges. Member parties are not only competing against opposition parties, but are also competing with one another for strategic positions in government, access to resources, and public legitimacy ahead of the 2029 Election.

This competition could be understood through the concept of *coalition bargaining* developed by Michael Laver and Kenneth A. Shepsle (1996). According to them, a coalition is not only about the distribution of cabinet seats, but also about the distribution of policy, political narrative, and future electoral positioning.

AHY's speech could be read as part of this coalition bargaining process. By asserting that power has a time limit, AHY indirectly reminded others that the Democratic Party has the right to be taken into account in the future configuration of power, even though it currently occupies the position of a smaller coalition partner compared with Gerindra.

Gerindra's Stance and Efforts to Maintain Solidity

Gerindra's response — urging AHY and the Democratic Party to focus on working for the people and not to discuss the 2029 Election too early — reflects an effort to maintain coalition discipline. Gerindra believes that all parties in government need to concentrate on completing the agenda of the Prabowo–Gibran government (CNN Indonesia, 7 September 2026; Merdeka.com, 8 September 2026).

This statement could be understood as a political message directed at all coalition members, not only at the Democratic Party. Gerindra wants to ensure that the government does not turn into a campaign arena too early. If parties begin openly discussing presidential nominations, ticket-sharing, or coalition changes, the government's focus could be disrupted.

However, Gerindra's response also shows that the party is aware of the potential emergence of leadership competition within the coalition. The call to “focus on working” serves two functions. First, it preserves the image that the coalition remains solid and prioritizes the interests of the people over electoral interests. Second, it restrains other parties from too quickly building a political base that could challenge Gerindra's dominance.

From the perspective of inter-party competition, Gerindra has an interest in maintaining a power structure centered on President Prabowo. Coalition member parties may compete, but that competition is expected not to develop into open conflict that could weaken Gerindra's dominant position.

Therefore, Gerindra's criticism of AHY's speech does not necessarily signal a coalition rift. The criticism could instead be understood as a mechanism for controlling internal competition. Gerindra is attempting to set a boundary: parties may have political ambitions, but must not let those ambitions disrupt the government currently in office.

The Democratic Party's Stance and AHY's Positioning Strategy

For the Democratic Party, AHY's speech carries important meaning for building the party's political identity. After being outside government for several years, the Democratic Party has now returned as part of government. That position provides access to power, but also creates new challenges.

The Democratic Party needs to show that its participation in government is not merely about obtaining positions. The party must build an image as a

Politics

political force with its own ideas, experience, and leadership agenda. AHY's statement about the limits of power can serve as an instrument for building that image.

Moreover, according to a number of electability surveys for the 2029 presidential and vice-presidential race, AHY's name has repeatedly appeared near the top. In particular, the Adidaya Institute survey placed AHY second in the vice-presidential race with 13.8 percent electability, only narrowly behind Vice President Gibran Rakabuming Raka, who stood at 13.7 percent for the vice-presidential position (Radar Pekanbaru, 11 June 2026). The Median survey similarly recorded AHY's electability at 8 percent for the vice-presidential position, behind Dedi Mulyadi but ahead of a number of other senior figures (Kumparan, 24 February 2026). This kind of electoral capital is important for the Democratic Party in building bargaining power toward 2029, but it needs to be managed carefully so that it is not read as an open attempt to rival Gibran, in order to preserve the balance of relations with Gerindra and the government coalition.

This strategy could be described as dual positioning. On one hand, AHY needs to demonstrate support for the Prabowo government. Democratic Party Deputy Chairman Dede Yusuf affirmed that AHY supports the Prabowo government and denied interpretations of internal dissatisfaction (Detik, 9 September 2026). On the other hand, the Democratic Party must signal that it does not rule out playing a larger role in the 2029 contest.

This kind of position is common among parties that are part of a coalition but do not hold primary control over the government. Such parties try to gain benefits from their presence in government while maintaining political distance so as to avoid bearing the burden if government performance declines. However, this strategy carries risks.

If the Democratic Party uses the narrative of the rotation of power too often, the public and other parties may interpret it as a veiled campaign for AHY. Conversely, if the Democratic Party too quickly denies having any agenda toward 2029, it risks losing momentum to build a new political position.

Thus, the Democratic Party's challenge is not simply whether to support the government or not. The challenge is managing the balance between loyalty to government, party autonomy, and preparation for the electoral contest ahead.

Looking at the Positions of Golkar, PAN, and NasDem

Golkar's reaction shows how a coalition party reads AHY's speech through the lens of electoral competition. Golkar Deputy Chairman Ahmad Doli Kurnia said the speech could be read as a signal of AHY's readiness to run in the 2029 presidential election, including the possible emergence of a political axis associated with Cikeas (Viva.co.id, 8 September 2026; Suara.com, 7 September 2026).

Golkar's interpretation shows that every party is beginning to calculate the possible candidates and political axes of the future. By framing AHY's speech as a signal of candidacy, Golkar is indirectly helping to shape the issue circulating in public discourse. The party is not merely responding to the speech, but also testing how the public and other parties react to the possibility of AHY's candidacy.

PAN has taken a more moderate position. The party could accept the idea that power is temporary, while still emphasizing the importance of staying focused on the government's agenda. This stance reflects a party strategy that seeks to maintain good relations with the center of power without closing off political opportunities ahead of 2029.

Meanwhile, NasDem has emphasized the importance of maintaining coalition cohesion. NasDem has cautioned that political statements made by elite figures should not disrupt the internal solidity of the government (Kompas.com, 9 September 2026). This position shows that NasDem understands that open conflict among coalition parties could reduce the bargaining power of all parties involved, particularly in the absence of agreement on a shared agenda.

These three responses reveal a division of strategy. Golkar tends to test and explore the possibility of candidate competition. PAN seeks to preserve flexibility. NasDem emphasizes stability and cohesion. This divergence shows that the government coalition does not necessarily have a solid agreement on its political direction toward 2029.

PDIP's Interpretation and the Exploitation of Coalition Cracks

As a party outside government, PDIP has an interest in reading and exploiting any sign of tension within the government coalition. The statement by Deddy Yevri Sitorus, who interpreted AHY's speech as a signal of dissatisfaction and a possible new political map toward 2029, is part of that strategy (Detik, 9 September 2026; Inilah.com, 9 September 2026).

Politics

PDIP does not need to prove that the government coalition has actually fractured. Simply by spreading the interpretation that internal dissatisfaction exists, PDIP can prompt the public and other parties to question the coalition's solidity. In politics, the perception of a rift can carry an impact just as significant as an actual rift.

This strategy relates to the concepts of agenda-setting and framing. According to Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972) in agenda-setting theory, the media and political elites have the ability to determine which issues the public regards as important. By framing AHY's speech as a signal of dissatisfaction, PDIP is attempting to place the issue on the public agenda.

In addition, according to Robert Entman (1993), framing is the process of selecting certain aspects of reality and making them more salient in a communicating text in order to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation. Deddy suggested that AHY's statement could be understood either as a call for the coalition to begin thinking about a new roadmap toward 2029, or as a message urging that AHY and the Democratic Party be taken into account in the upcoming contest (RMOL, 9 September 2026; Viva.co.id, 9 September 2026).

Through this framing, PDIP gains at least three political advantages. First, PDIP can position itself as a critical observer of government dynamics. Second, PDIP can open political communication with parties that feel they have too little room within the government coalition. Third, PDIP can build the narrative that a large coalition does not automatically mean a stable one.

However, PDIP's strategy also has limitations. If the Democratic Party promptly denies any dissatisfaction, PDIP's interpretation could lose its force. According to Robert Entman (1993) in his theory of framing, the effectiveness of a political frame depends heavily on the ability of political actors to maintain narrative consistency and avoid contradiction from credible sources. If the target of the framing — in this case, the Democratic Party — actively refutes the proposed interpretation, the framing may face frame contestation, in which the public is presented with two competing interpretations.

In such a situation, according to Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972) in agenda-setting theory, the strength of a frame is also determined by the frequency and consistency of the message delivered across various communication channels. If PDIP cannot sustain the narrative of dissatisfaction consistently, or if the Democratic Party succeeds in building

Politics

a stronger counter-narrative through the media, PDIP's framing will lose its persuasive power in the eyes of the public.

The Democratic Party has stated that AHY continues to support the Prabowo government (Detik, 9 September 2026). Therefore, PDIP needs to build a stronger argument grounded in policy issues, government performance, and concrete differences of interest, rather than relying solely on interpretations of an elite figure's speech.

The Forms of Competition toward 2029

Inter-party competition toward the 2029 Election is likely to unfold across several arenas. *First*, competition to dominate the political narrative. Parties will strive to present themselves as the force best able to address public concerns. The Democratic Party is using a narrative of regeneration and the limits of power. Gerindra emphasizes continuity of governance and work for the people. PDIP seeks to raise the issue of dissatisfaction and the need for a new political map.

Second, competition to control government resources. Parties with cadres in the cabinet and state institutions have greater opportunities to build visibility, networks, and claims of success. As such, a position in government can become electoral capital, but can equally turn into a liability if government policy fails to gain public support.

Third, competition to secure the position of the most strategic coalition partner. Mid-sized parties such as the Democratic Party, PAN, and NasDem hold bargaining value because they can serve as connectors between different political forces. They are not always the largest forces, but they can determine coalition configurations when no single party is able to stand alone.

Fourth, competition to build presidential and vice-presidential candidates. At this early stage, parties have not necessarily made formal declarations of candidacy. However, speeches, surveys, political visits, organizational consolidation, and leadership narratives can be used to test public response.

Three Political Scenarios

Referring to the analysis above, the implications point to three possible political scenarios as these dynamics unfold. *First*, the government coalition remains solid. In this scenario, coalition parties succeed in keeping their political differences from turning into open conflict. The Democratic Party

Politics

continues to support the government, Gerindra maintains its position as the center of the coalition, while other parties gain room to gradually prepare their electoral agendas.

This scenario could hold if the Prabowo government is able to maintain performance, distribute resources proportionately, and provide effective internal communication mechanisms. In such a situation, AHY's speech would be positioned as an internal party expression rather than a threat to the coalition.

Second, intra-coalition competition intensifies. In this scenario, coalition parties begin to openly compete with one another. The Democratic Party promotes AHY as an alternative figure, Golkar tests candidates and its own political axis, while Gerindra strives to maintain dominance over the direction of government and coalition.

This competition would not directly lead to the coalition's dissolution. However, differences in stance on strategic issues, contests for position, and narrative battles could make the government less effective. Parties may remain in the cabinet, but their support for government policy would become more transactional.

Third, a new coalition map emerges. In this scenario, some government coalition parties begin building more intensive relationships with parties outside government. The Democratic Party could become one of the most attractive parties to approach, given its governing experience, national network, and a chairman figure who is relatively well recognized by the public.

PDIP could take advantage of such conditions to build an alternative axis. However, the formation of a new coalition would depend heavily on candidate electability, the results of the 2029 Legislative Election, candidacy threshold rules, and parties' ability to agree on power-sharing.

At this stage, it is too early to conclude that AHY's speech automatically marks the Democratic Party's departure from the government coalition. Nevertheless, the speech clearly opens room for interpretation and shows that the Democratic Party wants to be seen as an actor with political autonomy.

Politics

A political coalition could be built through an agreement over power, but it could only be sustained through performance, communication, and the ability to manage internal competition.

Recommendations

Referring to these dynamics, there are several important steps that political parties and the government need to consider. **First**, coalition parties need to build more regular internal communication mechanisms. Differences of opinion should be discussed within coalition forums rather than through public sniping. Poor communication can turn a minor issue into a political crisis.

Second, the Government needs to distinguish between loyalty to government and political uniformity. Coalition parties can still hold their own views and electoral agendas, so long as these do not disrupt the implementation of government programs or violate principles of public accountability.

Third, the Democratic Party needs to manage its political messaging more consistently. If AHY wants to build an image as an alternative leader, the Democratic Party must articulate concrete policy agendas as part of the government, rather than merely offering normative criticism about the limits of power.

Fourth, Gerindra needs to avoid responses that are too defensive. Calling on parties to focus on their work is indeed important, but a healthy coalition must also provide room for aspirations and democratic political competition.

Fifth, parties outside government, including PDIP, need to strengthen policy-based criticism. Interpretations of AHY's speech can serve as an entry point, but effective opposition must be supported by evaluation of government performance, policy alternatives, and a clear agenda for change.

Social

Starting from the Community: the Key to Strengthening Disaster Risk Management Governance in Indonesia

-Made Natasya Restu Dewi Pratiwi-



Throughout August and early September 2026, Indonesia was hit by various disasters that caused economic and health impacts on communities. As of September 1, 2026, the intensity of forest and land fires had increased, with 1,370 hotspots detected across several regions of Indonesia, including West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, South Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, Jambi, South Sumatra, and Riau (Ministry of Forestry, 2026). As a result of forest and land fires, cases of Upper Respiratory Tract Infections (URTI) in West Kalimantan also reached 165,747 (Ministry of Health, 2026).

In eastern Indonesia, earthquake victims in East Nusa Tenggara are still receiving limited assistance to meet their basic needs. Most recently, a 15-year-old girl at a refugee camp in Sikka, Flores, was raped (DetikNews, September 5, 2026). These post-disaster losses serve as a reminder that Indonesia needs to make greater efforts to improve the quality of disaster mitigation and preparedness in order to reduce future losses. However, despite the high frequency of disasters in Indonesia, the disaster management sector has experienced significant budget cuts.

According to the 2026 State Budget (Anggaran Pendapatan Belanja Negara/APBN), the budget of the Indonesian National Disaster Management Agency (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana/BNPB) decreased by 75.6%, from the total 2025 budget of IDR 2.01 trillion to IDR 491.0 billion (Ministry of Finance, 2026). This budget cut indicates that the disaster

management sector is not a top priority in the implementations of the latest national priority programs. In fact, to mitigate the high risk of disasters in Indonesia, the Government has encouraged disaster risk management at the village/sub-district level, which also receives funding from the APBN allocation and village fund transfers. This mandate is stated in Regulation of the National Disaster Management Agency of the Republic of Indonesia Number 7/2025 concerning Disaster-Resilient Villages and Sub-districts.

Amid the dynamics of disasters and the debate over budget efficiency, this article shall examine opportunities to improve the quality of disaster risk management governance in Indonesia by placing communities at its core, with the aim of making it more empowering, participatory, and equitable. It is hoped that the recommendations in this paper could address gaps in the implementation of existing policies to minimize future losses and casualties.

The Benefits of Community Involvement in Disaster Risk Management

Currently, according to the data from the BNPB Disaster Risk Management Map (2026), the Central Government remains the dominant actor in implementing disaster risk management programs. This indicates that Indonesia's disaster risk management approach tends to be more hands-on and top-down, which may hamper the sustainability of disaster risk management programs by failing to foster a sense of ownership at the grassroots level (Moktan et al., 2026).

These findings confirm that comprehensive regulations on community-based disaster risk management in Indonesia will not necessarily foster disaster preparedness awareness and skills at the grassroots level if opportunities for inclusive and meaningful participation at every stage of disaster management are not effectively realized. Therefore, the involvement of community actors at the regional level needs to be strengthened so that disaster mitigation could be more participatory, contextual, and sustainable in the long term.

Community involvement throughout the disaster risk management cycle can provide various benefits, including: 1) documenting local stories and wisdom that can be integrated into disaster education and simulations; 2) mapping the needs of residents living in at-risk areas and identifying channels for post-disaster aid distribution; and 3) mapping disaster risks and community vulnerabilities, as well as documenting the impacts of disasters from mental and psychological perspectives, which have been underreported (Gupta and Barman, 2021).

Social

However, simply involving grassroots communities is not enough; Indonesia also needs to ensure that these participation pathways are gender-equitable and responsive to the needs of vulnerable groups. For example, the village/sub-district-level disaster risk management program known as Disaster-Resilient Villages (Desa Tangguh Bencana/Destana) has not recruited Destana facilitators in an inclusive, representative, and gender-sensitive manner. This is evident from the fact that men currently account for 71.8% of the 1,615 Destana facilitators in Indonesia (BNPB, 2026). This gender imbalance in the involvement of women as Destana facilitators risks making the disaster management cycle less responsive to the needs of women and children during disasters. In fact, during disasters, as many as 70% of women are at greater risk of experiencing violence (UNFPA and UN Women, 2023).

In conclusion, although Indonesia has policies and programs that enable community participation in disaster risk management, it still needs to improve its implementations mechanisms to ensure greater representation without widening regional disparities, strengthen inclusivity, and mainstream gender equality and social inclusion across all stages of the disaster risk management cycle. The following are recommendations for optimizing community involvement at each stage of the disaster management cycle.

Table 1. Recommendations for Optimizing Community Involvement in Each Disaster Management Cycle in Indonesia

Disaster Management Cycle	Recommendations
Prevention and Mitigation	• Information dissemination on the use of early warning channels • Development of disaster-adaptive building designs • Formation of village/sub-district alert teams to assist in mapping disaster-risk areas
Preparedness	• Mapping of local resources, disaster risks, community vulnerabilities, and the needs of vulnerable groups through a co-creation process with the community • Disaster and first aid simulations at the village/sub-district level based on local experiences and the experiences of vulnerable groups • Promotion of evacuation routes and aid distribution routes • Preparation of disaster preparedness bags at the household level

Social

Emergency Response	• Rapid assessment of disaster impacts, both physical and non-physical • Needs-based evacuation and aid distribution • Education on maintaining personal hygiene and maternal and child health, as well as identifying signs of sexual violence in refugee camps • Formation of response teams and data collection mechanisms for sexual violence cases at refugee posts
Recovery	• Referral of residents to psychological recovery services and distribution of financial assistance • Long-term building reconstruction • Strengthening disaster risk reduction forums at the village/sub-district level

The table above demonstrates the principle of co-creation in the operationalization of Destana targets and disaster risk reduction policies in Indonesia, particularly through the establishment of disaster risk reduction forums that develop disaster management plans at the village/sub-district level. Through community empowerment in disaster risk reduction governance, policies can be designed to prioritize local wisdom, incorporate the experiences of vulnerable groups, and maintain continuous coordination among different actors (Maffi et al., 2026).

This co-creation approach could be realized by establishing disaster risk reduction forums or conducting disaster simulations at the village/sub-district level using case studies and collaborative activities. For example, coastal communities facing a higher risk of tsunamis can be involved in mapping their vulnerability to tsunamis and developing a joint action plan to minimize post-tsunami losses. Through this approach, communities are not only positioned as voices but are also equipped with the skills to identify what can be done when facing a disaster and recovering from its impacts.

In general, the biggest challenge to optimizing disaster risk reduction governance in Indonesia is ensuring that the budget specifically allocated to Destana could be optimized by all villages/sub-districts across Indonesia. This is important to address the asymmetry of power and skills between policymakers/disaster volunteers and the general public by strengthening community capacity.

Therefore, a fundamental goal for Indonesia amid increasing disaster risks is to ensure that “disaster preparedness skills” become a way of life

Social

Indonesia's biggest challenge in addressing the increasing risk of disasters is ensuring that awareness and preparedness become a way of life for communities at the grassroots level. Government commitment and adequate budget allocation are essential prerequisites for optimizing disaster management governance at every stage of the disaster risk management cycle. Communities must be supported and equipped with preparedness skills well before a disaster occurs."

for communities long before a disaster strikes. If these preparedness skills become part of everyday life, Indonesians are expected to avoid significant losses after a disaster because they will already know how to protect and even save themselves and their families long before a disaster occurs.

Recommendation

Here are some recommendations to improve disaster management governance in Indonesia by empowering communities and mainstreaming disaster preparedness:

- a. The National Disaster Mitigation Agency (BNPB), together with Commissions VII and IX, which oversee social and health affairs, should review opportunities to optimize the Destana program by strengthening incentive mechanisms for villages, assessing village and sub-district resilience, and replicating successful practices in the field.
- b. BNPB could collaborate with communication and technology companies to strengthen the early warning system network and integrate it into community members' devices. The early warning system should be accessible offline and provide vibration notifications containing evacuation route recommendations customized to the needs and profiles of each individual.
- c. BNPB could oversee the transparency and inclusivity of the Destana facilitator recruitment process by involving health cadres and the Family Welfare Empowerment Association (Pemberdayaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga/PKK) to promote gender-sensitive disaster mitigation and response.
- d. Implement a participatory disaster risk management program under the coordination of the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) and the Regional Disaster Management Agency (Badan Penanggulangan Bencana Daerah/BPBD) in each region, ensuring the involvement of religious leaders, artists, and community leaders. This can help ensure that educational messages on disaster preparedness are grounded in grassroots experiences, local wisdom, religious belief, and the needs of vulnerable groups. For example, the government can collaborate with local artists to develop traditional games and optimize the use of *kentongan* (wooden drums) as a channel for emergency information at the village/sub-district level.

Social

Disasters are Not Gender Neutral: Understanding Women's Health Vulnerabilities

-Made Natasya Restu Dewi Pratiwi-



Indonesia has experienced a series of disasters that continue to cause significant impacts. The earthquake that struck East Nusa Tenggara has left refugees grieving and without adequate assistance. A 15-year-old girl was even raped (Kompas.com, September 9, 2026). Meanwhile, forest and land fires in Kalimantan have reduced air quality to a very unhealthy level (National Disaster Management Agency, 2026).

Disasters affect individuals unequally due to differences in capacity, needs, and access to resources when responding to disasters. Women, girls, the elderly, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups may face greater risks because pre-existing inequalities can be exacerbated when public services, infrastructure, livelihoods, and social networks are disrupted (Thurston et al., 2021).

In the case of women, this vulnerability is not only related to the risk of gender-based violence. Disasters can also disrupt women's access to sexual and reproductive health services, including prenatal care, childbirth services, contraception, menstrual care, breastfeeding support, food, clean water, sanitation, and mental health services. The increased caregiving responsibilities placed on women can also affect their ability to evacuate and access assistance.

Social

This is important to consider because women's health does not stop being a concern when a disaster strikes. Disruptions to health services and basic needs during emergencies can have traumatic consequences and impacts that persist into the post-disaster recovery period. Studies of women in South and Southeast Asia show that factors such as age, education level, economic status, physical health, and the loss of family members can influence women's health outcomes after a disaster (Fatema et al., 2021).

This series of events can disrupt women's psychological recovery after a disaster, affecting their quality of life. Meanwhile, studies on gender-based violence show that economic pressures, displacement, disruption of social protection, and unsafe environments after disasters can increase the risk of violence against women and girls (Thurston et al., 2021; Murphy et al., 2023).

This means that disasters cannot be considered gender-neutral, as differences in social structures, role allocations, access to resources, and health conditions can expose women to greater risks of violence and health problems. Therefore, disaster management that relies solely on a general approach risks overlooking the needs of groups that are easily overlooked in disaster management. Therefore, this article will examine lessons learned that Indonesia can adapt to ensure women's protection in disaster management.

Understanding the Variety of Women's Health Vulnerabilities During Disasters

Women's vulnerability during disasters cannot be viewed as a single category. A girl has different needs from a pregnant woman, a breastfeeding mother, an elderly woman, or a woman with a disability. Even within a single group, vulnerabilities can be layered and overlapping. Pregnant women with disabilities, for example, may face simultaneous barriers to healthcare, mobility, communication, and access to services.

Therefore, vulnerability mapping requires examining the intersection of gender with age, health conditions, disabilities, socioeconomic conditions, and caregiving roles, a concept derived from the intersectional approach. The ASEAN Regional Framework on Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in Disaster Management 2021–2025 defines gender, age, and disability as essential dimensions for understanding risk and designing disaster responses. The following section presents a disaster vulnerability mapping for each category of women.

Social

Group Characteristics	Vulnerabilities in Disasters
Children and teenage girls	- The risks of violence, exploitation, and abuse increases when protected spaces are unsafe. - Disruption of schooling and social support can increase the risk of child marriage and unintended pregnancy.
Women of reproductive age	- Access to contraception and sexual and reproductive health services may be disrupted. - Menstrual needs may be overlooked in aid distribution. - The risk of gender-based violence may increase.
Pregnant women	- Access to prenatal check-ups, medication, health workers, and delivery services can be difficult. - Disruptions to transportation and referral systems can delay the management of complications. - Exposure to disasters is associated with an increased risk of preterm birth and low birth weight (Lawler et al., 2025).
Breastfeeding mothers	- Breastfeeding support may be interrupted during displacement and in refugee camps. - Limited access to food, clean water, and privacy can hinder breastfeeding practices. - Unsupportive conditions in refugee camps can increase physical and psychological stress among mothers.
Mothers with babies and toddlers	- The need for food, clean water, diapers, medicine, and other baby supplies increases. - The burden of caregiving can limit mothers' mobility and access to support. - Refugee facilities that are not child-friendly can increase the risk of disease and safety concerns.
Elderly women	- Limited mobility can make evacuation and access to aid difficult. - Disruptions to routine medication and health services can worsen existing health conditions. - Social isolation can increase following the loss of homes and support networks.

Social

Women with disabilities	- Physical, communication, and information barriers can impede evacuation and access to services. - Inaccessible refugee facilities and bathing, washing, and toilet facilities can increase dependence on others. - The risks of violence, discrimination, and neglect of needs may increase.
Women with caregiving burdens	- Responsibilities for children, elderly people, or family members with disabilities can slow down evacuation. - The needs of family members may be prioritized over their own health.

These diverse vulnerabilities demonstrate that women's needs during disasters are multifaceted. Therefore, the needs of vulnerable groups need to be identified before a disaster and translated into actionable measures when the risk increases.

Learning from Good Practices in Southeast Asia

The Southeast Asian region already has a regional foundation for integrating protection, gender, and inclusion into disaster management. The ASEAN Regional Framework on Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in Disaster Management 2021–2025 positions protection, gender, and inclusion as integral parts of disaster management, including through leadership and meaningful participation involving women, children, youth, the elderly, people living in poverty, and persons with disabilities. It is hoped that this document could be updated to better reflect current disaster and climate risk dynamics.

One key lesson from the document is the need to use disaggregated data. The guidelines encourage the collection, analysis, and use of data disaggregated by gender, age, and disability to support disaster risk reduction strategies. This approach is relevant for Indonesia. Population data alone is insufficient to determine needs when a disaster occurs. Local governments need to know the number of pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, elderly people, girls, and people with disabilities in at-risk areas during the pre-disaster phase. This data then needs to be linked to logistical planning, health services, evacuation, and protection.

Another lesson learned is the importance of involving women in decision-making. This is crucial because local communities possess knowledge and even local wisdom about regional conditions and the needs of different groups that are often not captured in administrative data. Going forward, Indonesia needs to concretely implement gender and intersectional analysis,

Social

By understanding that disasters are not gender-neutral, Indonesia must move beyond simply responding to their impacts and work toward building a disaster management system; that is, more anticipatory, inclusive, and capable of protecting the health and dignity of all people, especially women and other vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and the elderly.

develop inclusive early warning systems, and involve women's organizations at the village/sub-district level and indigenous community groups in action planning. This could be done, for example, through the disaster risk reduction forums that are part of the Disaster-Resilient Village (Desa Tangguh Bencana/Destana) program.

Indonesia already has a gender-sensitive policy framework. National Disaster Management Agency (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana/BNPB) Regulation Number 2 of 2026 concerning Gender Mainstreaming in Disaster Management integrates a gender perspective into disaster management policies, planning and budgeting, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, supervision, and reporting. However, Indonesia should not stop once the relevant policies are in place; the next step is to ensure that these principles are reflected in practice at the regional level, particularly by ensuring that each regional government adheres to targeted disaster risk reduction indicators that address the needs of vulnerable groups.

Recommendations

Here are some recommendations to ensure that disaster management governance in Indonesia is responsive to the needs of women and vulnerable groups:

- a. The National Disaster Management Agency is required to implement the mandate of BNPB Regulation Number 2/2026 concerning Gender Mainstreaming in Disaster Management by disaggregating target data based on gender, age, and disability status from the pre-disaster phase. This information could be used to determine evacuation locations, logistical needs, health facilities, evacuation routes, and groups requiring priority support.
- b. The National Disaster Management Agency could collaborate with civil society organizations, private companies, and philanthropists to ensure the availability of sanitary pads, appropriate underwear, baby supplies, breastfeeding supplies, medicines, and reproductive health needs for all age groups, ensuring that disaster victims do not have to wait long for these necessities. These supplies must be readily available in high-risk disaster areas.
- c. Women need to be positioned as key actors in preparedness and recovery. Health cadres, women's groups, organizations for people with disabilities, youth groups, and civil society organizations can be involved in needs mapping through post-disaster assessments, disaster simulations, contingency planning, and disaster response evaluations.

Institution Profile



The Indonesian Institute (TII) is a public policy research institute (Center for Public Policy Research) officially established on October 21, 2004, by a group of dynamic young activists and intellectuals. TII is an independent, nonpartisan, and non-profit institution primarily funded by grants and donations from foundations, corporations, and individuals.

TII aims to be Indonesia's premier research center for public policy issues and is committed to contributing to public policy debates and improving the quality of public policy making and outcomes through the implementation of good governance and public participation in the policy process in Indonesia.

North Star TII

To be a trusted and influential primary reference in the public policy process in Indonesia, particularly regarding issues of human rights, law enforcement, public participation, human development, economic freedom, and institutional strengthening.

TII Vision

Encourage the realization of public policies that uphold the general principles of good governance based on the principles of human rights, freedom, law enforcement, and inclusive and meaningful public participation in Indonesia.

TII's mission is to conduct reliable, independent, and nonpartisan research and to distribute research results to policymakers, businesses, and civil society in order to improve the quality of public policy in Indonesia.

TII also has a mission to educate the public on policy issues that affect their livelihoods. In other words, TII is positioned to support the process of democratization and public policy reform, and to take a vital and active role in that process.

The scope of research and public policy studies conducted by TII covers the economic, social, political, and legal fields. The main activities carried out in order to achieve TII's vision and mission include research, surveys, facilitation and advocacy through training and working groups, public discussions, public education, weekly editorial writing (Wacana), Instagram Live Series and Twitter Space (Policy Talks and Initiative!), publishing monthly studies (Update Indonesia in Indonesian and The Indonesian Update, in English), mid-year policy studies (Policy Assessment), annual reports (Indonesia Report), and monthly discussion forums (The Indonesian Forum).

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