

Identifying Factors to Solve Hunger: Reflecting on the Experience in Indonesia

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Abstract

This essay tries to analyze the key factors that influence the food security issue in Indonesia that many people suffer from that issue. Hunger is a big issue that influences the economic stability in all countries. This essay will look at the key factors to solve this hunger problem based on the young generation perspective. Even Indonesia had a lot of natural resource the issue of hunger still exists in some village. The difference between rural and urban areas, food security and malnutrition issue. Ending hunger requires the strict policy to overcome poverty first in Indonesia, this paper will link these two issues and find the basic problem about the agriculture aspect and the farmers. Why is it so hard to end hunger in Indonesia? This is the basic question in this paper.

Keywords: Food security; Hunger; Indonesia; Economic stability; Malnutrition; Poverty

Introduction

Hunger is the big issue facing all the countries right now, even in the developed countries, hunger still is a main problem in some of the region especially rural areas. Hunger is the result of the poverty. Many people in Indonesia die because of this issue and Indonesia still cannot solve the problem of malnutrition. Even with a lot of natural resources and as an agriculture country we are still facing a problem of hunger.

Article 25 (1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate

for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services [1]. So, we can say that this issue critical issue to every country and even international organization recognized this as the most challenging counterpart problem.

Based on Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2016 Indonesia is in the elevated level (serious level), this indicator such as condition of malnutrition throughout the population, weight and height of children under five years, and child mortality before reaching the age of five years. More than 19 million Indonesians are still malnourished. Even 2 to 3 children out of every 100 children, die before the age of 5 years [2].



Figure 1: Global Hunger Index 2016 Getting to Zero Hunger by International Food Policy Research Institute, Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe, October 2016 [2].

The higher the global hunger index in a country shows the worse the situation of hunger in the country. If we see in the chart above, even its decreasing from 1992 and 2008 but it is still a fundamental problem as Indonesia reach 21.9% in 2016. Compare among ASEAN member countries, Indonesia is much better only with Laos but with other countries Indonesia is in a bad position. How it is possible as the agricultural country, but we are still face a problem of hunger. Why is it so hard to end hunger in Indonesia? what are the solutions and the impact on the society?

Analysis of the Problem and Solution

Agriculture is the sector with the highest revenue in Indonesia and became the basis of people's livelihoods, especially in rural areas. Firstly, in some region, rice is difficult and expensive, people must know that not only rice they can eat, but potatoes also contain a lot of protein, people must promote the advantage for potatoes and wheat, so people know better that we have another option for healthy food if sometimes the price of rice become unreachable.

Secondly, education aspect also influences a lot to overcome this issue, people must getting educate well so they can survive and avoid the hunger issue. In the academic perspective itself, agriculture faculty is not so famous like the other faculty, some of the big universities open this faculty but not well being promoted that is why they lack the number of the students. People still think that agriculture is not the best faculty for earning money in the future. People still think that only if we study agriculture we only be a fisherman which is not give any money and be a poor fisherman. People still lack for the agriculture businessman. Young people afraid to be entrepreneur in agricultural aspect. Mentoring people in our school or university about the different career opportunities and what we can achieve if we take agriculture as our platform to make other people life better and make them understand the positive side of the farmers. We must increase the agricultural activities in every region, farmer is not a top list jobs that young people want to do because their mindset here that you will not get a lot of money if you are a farmer and is not a prestigious job but if you are looking at it, young people can open their business in the entrepreneur sector as they got a lot of source and we just need a creative people to do that.

Thirdly, economy and education are the factors why we are still facing this issue, we must make sure that everybody had the access for the healthy food because a lot of children become a victim to the lack of nutrition. For example, in my city, in Ternate people lack an access for the food. So, the people who live far away from the city have a problem to access the healthy food and it is become expensive also. As the route is so far away and the street is not so good too. The infrastructure in the rural area is not so developed and did not help people who live far away to get the same facilities as people who live in urban area. Educate people most importantly in the rural area that they must be confident enough to take what their right, so they do not be easily to get fooled about the price of the market.

Indonesia is agricultural country that we must be surprise that we got a hunger problem even we had a lot of natural resource and we produce a lot of food. That is why government and the citizens must work together to solve this issue. We do believe that the issue of hunger cannot be separated with the issue of economic progress that mostly all countries face it. We can take the example to make the clear understanding why as a big country with a lot of natural resources we still suffer from hunger.

Fourth, small farmer suffers for the owner of the land, we know that the small farmer is the one who make a lot of effort to produce the food, but the money will go to the owner of the land or the big employers. The farmers find it difficult to export their products. Big employers easily export their products (employers can press/lobbying the government) so that people can be a shortage of food or must pay a higher price. This has been proven by the soaring price of oil up to twice fold over a period of less than 3 months due to rising prices International. The government cannot do anything. If the main products such as rice, soybean, wheat controlled by employers, the people will suffer because of the price game.

Fifth, regarding food policy in Indonesia is often linked to the country's economic and political situation. Political stability in the 1980s and 1990s cultivated high economic growth and increased food security. The issue is how we can produce a lot of food, so people will not be hunger in the future. As a young generation for me the best things to do first is to influence my neighborhood that we had this problem, people must be aware about the disadvantage for this issue that maybe we all will face the hunger problem not only for poor people, I think to make them to be not only consumer but also, they can produce their own food. I did in my house but because I live in the center and I do not get any big land, so I did inside the house with a little help of the sun my plant is growing and produce tomatoes, pepper and onion and right now we do not to spend a lot of time to buy this kind of things, but we produce that it will save our money more and our time. The problem is people tend to want everything easy they are consumptive, so they just want to buy anything, but we must look at the future and for people who do not have money to buy the food.

People must be more creative, and the government jobs make it easier like provide the land and to force the price and economic policy in the agriculture. holding price stability, while in terms of revenue intended that farmers' income does not fluctuate too much from season to season and from year to year. Price policy can contain a buffer Award (support) on the prices of agricultural products that are not too detrimental to farmers or directly contain many specific subsidies for farmers. In many countries such as; United States, Japan, and Australia a lot of agricultural products such as wheat, cotton, rice, and sugar which received government protection in the form of price supports and subsidies.

The Indonesian state considers maintenance of food supplies, particularly rice, as one of the most important development policies, which should therefore come entirely under its jurisdiction. Both the public and the private sectors participate in the food market. In East Indonesia for example North Maluku province mostly the problem is coming from the farmers itself, they are lazy to distribute their own food and to make a best quality for their own food. The transportation are expensive and many poor farmers cannot afford to pay the transportation that they cannot control the higher price and the access for market are very far away, many people live in the rural area or near the mountain in Ternate but the central market located in the city they need a good transportation because it is so far away and the infrastructure like the street is not so good in Ternate that is why a lot of obstacles comes even the government really try hard to make a better live for all the farmers and always improve the agriculture sector in Ternate.

Country	1990	2000	2010	2012	Reduction, %/ year Start to end	Score

Philippines	33.2(a)	24.6		19	0.68	Fail
Indonesia	54.3	47.7	18		1.82	Pass
Vietnam	63.8(b)	40.1(c)		2.4	3.07	High Pass
Cambodia	44.5(d)		11.2		2.03	High Pass
Bangladesh	70.2(a)	58.6	43.3		1.42	Fail
India	49.4(b)	41.5(c)	32.6(d)		1.05	Fail
Pakistan	64.7	35.9	12.7		2.6	High Pass
Nepal	68.0(e)	53.1(c)	53.1		2.46	High Pass

Table 1: Extreme Hunger Incidence, Percent of Population, 1990, 2000, 2015 in www.worldbank.org.

If we see the percentage, Indonesia (Table 1) shows a lot better compare with previous year, even they pass but it is only a slight difference with the country that shows they fail to overcome the extreme hunger incidence. Only 1.82% only a slight difference with Bangladesh that fail with 1.42%. So, we are still in the danger position like what shows in the Figure 1 about global hunger index that shows Indonesia position are even worse compare with another country. So, what's the solution for this problem? It is heart-breaking as an agricultural country and as a country that rich with natural resources how come we are still face an issue about hunger, it is hard to believe it. Government must put a lot of effort to solve this problem.

Possible Solution

Malnutrition cannot be separated with poverty, they connect each other. If the malnutrition problem cannot be solved, Indonesia will not have a skillful young generation to lead the country in the future. The other issue also about the population in Indonesia that based on the demography survey 2020-2035 that the Indonesia population will reach 350 million people. By 2035 we will need 48.6 million ton every year and if we multiple the need of rice per capita in Indonesia approximately they will need 139 kg rice every year [3].

The policy to stop a hunger problem in Indonesia will be an easy task. Every people in every sector must give a hand to make this possible. The government must have a short and long-term policy that can solve this issue. If we want to solve the hunger and malnutrition problems we must end the poverty first. Improvement of family nutrition effort aimed at family empowerment to improve household level food security, increased efforts of integrated nutrition services and referral system starting from the level of Integrated Service Post (Posyandu), to Puskesmas (Community Health Centres) and hospital and then improving food and nutrition security through the Food and Nutrition Awareness System.

We all must be together to create the awareness, so people will understand the important for stop hunger. Improving communication, information, and education in the field of food and nutrition of the community. Improved food technology to develop a variety of food products of high quality and affordable by the public. The government must open a lot of job opportunities also, so people do not have any

problem to get an access to the food. People who have a problem with malnutrition mostly from poor people because it is not easy for them to get a healthy food, the environment they live is not clean, so their food will get affected.

In Indonesia, one famous saying that you cannot called you are eating if you do not eat rice. Indonesia people are very dependent with rice they must eat with rice every time or they cannot feel full. They make rice as their main meal every time so when rice price becomes so expensive they stay hungry or they will just eat rice with something else. People must understand that we have a lot of main meal besides rice such as wheat, sago, cassava so they can use this kind of food when the price of rice already high. These foods still have a lot of protein and easy to find and cheap. In western part of Indonesia people these kinds of food are only for poor people and people tend to think that if we eat sago or cassava as our main meal it is only for poor people that cannot afford to buy rice regardless in the other areas in Eat Indonesia sago and cassava are their main meal.

Ministry of Agriculture in Indonesia have many programs for the sustainability of the areas. They are focusing in the village areas that had many resources, but the people are still under developed and limited source of the facilities. For example, in North Maluku Province in Eastern part of Indonesia, they train the farmer and introduce them to a modern technology, so they can use it well and develop their land. Many farmers do not know that right now many recent technologies are created to make their work easier. Training the farmers is important, educate them so everybody can be a farmer even though they only have a small land. It will make people to not only consume their food, but they also can produce and will decrease the hunger percentage. The government also must continue the program to give a lot of seed, so they can plant their own food and the farmers also need not find it difficult to plan a new product.

Once more, we can start from the basic that influence the most people mindset to change their lifestyle. Working within communities to empower people with the economic means such as livestock, training, and other resources to rebuild their families, their neighborhoods, and their hope for sustainable futures. As people share their animals' offspring with others along with their knowledge, resources, and skills an expanding network of hope, dignity, and self-reliance is created that reaches around the globe. Self-reliance and sustainability of food-producing resources rather than dependence on aid [4]. Then with the help of the government to make a policy implementation to stop hunger and to end the poverty, everybody must work together.

Conclusion

The good strategy for making it better for our agriculture sector to make people not face any hunger in the future need the effort from all the sides such as encouraging the development of national commodities and in accordance with the local market opportunities, characteristics and potential of the region with good cultivation technology, we are speaking about technology which is mostly young people are the actors to understand the technology like it happen to some farmers in Ternate but they are living near the mountain as it is so far away from the city centre, the students in the university working together with the local government give them mentoring about how to use the new technology to plant their rice to make it more faster and how they can sell their product with using only mobile phone. Farmers

they do not know the effortless way to handle this kind of things, so they spend a lot of money and time to use the old way.

Develop rural area leading commodity-based management from upstream to downstream in one area, it can be done with the help of the local government or the local NGO that focus on the development of a small farmers, the author involved in the NGO that focus on women empowerment and we focus to stop the discrimination towards women in the work place and to make sure that women did not face any difficulty to get a job. This is also the best option that to stop the chance that one family suffer from danger we must make sure that all their family members do not have a problem to get a job and train them to develop their skill, so they can help their father or maybe their husband in the family.

Ending hunger requires that each society to find the right mix of market forces and government interventions to drive a process of economic growth that reaches the poor and ensures that food supplies are readily and reliably available and accessible to even the poorest households [5]. If a country confident to achieve this goal they can be

said that they ae almost solve the problem of hunger in their country. In the global level, the international market prices play a key role to sustain the stability of a national price also and the growth between demand and supply also.

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