Dear readers,

The topic of COVID-19 is, beyond doubt, the dominant topic these days. Looking at the academic sphere, we see that the life at our universities has changed literally within days. In Germany as well as in Indonesia (and in other countries worldwide) the classrooms are closed, teaching is done – more or less successfully - online, research activities are limited due to limited access to laboratories, international and even national mobility has nearly come to a standstill.

However, at least in my perception, it is astonishing how quickly our universities have adapted to this situation and to the “new normality”, which will surely last not for weeks but for months. For example, only recently did we see a discussion on a possible “non-semester” (semester without academic activities) at German universities. However, now, universities are more and more frequently speaking about a “creative semester” – a semester where new and innovative ideas, e.g. in digitalisation, should be tried out and implemented. Crises can also be seen as chances. New initiatives are underway, often in cooperation between universities and companies, and often including international partners. Apps which will be able to track the spread of the virus without violating data privacy are being developed, 3D-printing is being used to produce makeshift ventilators etc. We see that the IT infrastructure in everyday life as well as at universities and enterprises seems to cope quite well with the situation. At many Indonesian universities, too, we see positive developments: Universitas Padjajaran (Bandung/Jatinangor) and Universitas Hasanuddin (Makassar), have developed apps which are used to spread information on the symptoms of COVID-19 to specialised hospitals, and to identify areas which are particularly endangered by the spread of infections. There are also multiple initiatives focused on hygiene. Maybe you have recently read about a portable disinfection chamber invented by students of Brawijaya University (Malang), and about the production of moveable hand washers which originated from a cooperation of Universitas Indonesia’s Technical Faculty (FTUI) and the Alumni network of FTUI. These initiatives show us very clearly that our universities can produce innovative and new ideas even in difficult times.

International cooperation is going on despite the circumstances, as mentioned above, and it has to go on in order to find the necessary solutions for the problems of our time. Existing projects and study programmes are being further developed, research projects are being designed. The partners uphold their communication via Internet and, as a result, new ideas are being generated, while the partners are already thinking about the time after corona. Some of the experiences we are going through right now will surely have an impact on future exchange models – for example it is very likely that future mobility and exchange activities will be increasingly combined with - hopefully more and more well designed - online phases than today. Naturally, online communication will probably never be able to fully substitute the experience of meeting your partners personally, discussing ideas with them and at the same time gaining intercultural experience and a better understanding of how people think, feel, and act in other countries.

In this edition of our newsletter, we would like to look beyond the moment of crisis we are facing right now. This is also a moment to remember that, during many years of intensive cooperation, we have built a strong network of scientists, students, university administrators, entrepreneurs and persons in governmental and regional administrations and ministries, which now forms a solid and reliable foundation for creativity and future initiatives between our countries.

We would like to take a short look back on nearly 70 years of cooperation between DAAD and our Indonesian partners, and also on 30 years of DAAD’s presence in Indonesia with its Jakarta office. In this context we have asked four of our former directors of DAAD’s Office Jakarta about their experiences in Indonesia. Thank you very much, dear directors, for sharing this review on some of the most interesting moments of the past, which hopefully will provide us with the spirit and maybe even with some ideas for the next decades of Indonesian - German (and Indonesian - European) cooperation!

I wish you a pleasant read!

Thomas Zettler

Director of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta
1949 is a year of central historical significance for Indonesia as well as for Germany. Indonesia, having declared independence in 1945, reached international recognition as a sovereign state, and Germany was “reborn”, but divided into the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR), a situation that lasted until the reunification in 1989.

From the start, Indonesia and the two Germanies established contacts, cooperation, especially between RI and FRG, developed vibrantly. As early as 1950, the “Deutsch-Indonesische Gesellschaft e.V.” ("German-Indonesian Association") was founded in Köln (Cologne) with the goal of fostering mutual understanding and cooperation between the two countries. In 1952 diplomatic ties were established between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Indonesia, followed by the opening of embassies in Jakarta and Bonn in 1952/1953. The German Democratic Republic was represented in Jakarta from 1960 onwards with a Consulate General, which was transformed into an Embassy in 1972 when the GDR and RI established official diplomatic ties.

Thus, in 1961, when the German Department at Universitas Indonesia was opened, academic ties with institutions from both German states were established with UI, and by 1963 two German lecturers were teaching at the faculty – one from the GDR side, and one DAAD lecturer from the FRG side. Despite the German-German political tensions, both were working harmoniously and in good cooperation.
In the field of Indonesian-German academic cooperation, the DAAD was there from the start. Our first scholarship holders from Indonesia were enrolled as early as 1952. The DAAD itself, founded in 1925 and, after the war, re-founded only in 1950, had just rebuilt its international activities by then. Since that time, the cooperation between the DAAD and Indonesia has flourished in numerous areas. 3100 alumni from Indonesia are listed in our DAAD databases – students and young scientists who have studied or conducted research in Germany for a longer period of time, many of them for a full study programme or for PhD studies. The flow has gone both ways, thousands of German scientists, doctoral candidates and students have come to Indonesia assisted by DAAD scholarships and grants. If we consider that DAAD funding forms only one aspect of the network building between German and Indonesian academia – e.g. until today, more than 30000 Indonesians have studied or conducted research in Germany financed on their own or through another source, Indonesian and German, donor organisations – we understand how significantly the Indonesian-German network has grown. Not every alumni is still engaged in ongoing German-Indonesian projects, but there is still a huge capacity for cooperation which reaches far beyond academia, as many alumni are working not only in universities and research institutes as LIPI, but also in other fields such as business enterprises and governmental administration.

The late president of Indonesia Prof. Dr. Ing. Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie is beyond any doubt the most prominent representative of Indonesian-German academic (and economic) cooperation. After finishing his studies in Aerospace Engineering at the RWTH (Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule/Technical University) Aachen he took up PhD studies at the same university in the framework of a DAAD scholarship. After a high-flying career in the German aeronautical industry he joined the Indonesian government as Minister of Research and Technology. He personally contributed to some important milestones of Indonesian-German cooperation in the sphere of science and academia, including:

- The Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (1979)
- The Agreement on Cultural Cooperation (1988)

The Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation defines some priority areas for joint R&D (Research and Development) activities: Scientific marine research, energy research, aeronautical research, research in geosciences, research in social and humanitarian sciences. Up to this day, marine/biodiversity research and energy research remain two fields of especially close cooperation. Important joint activities have been carried out, for example, in the field of geothermal energy. An early-warning system for tsunamis has been developed and installed, and biotechnological research with the goal of developing medicine containing natural agents is being conducted. Funding programmes from the German as well as from the Indonesian side ensure that the joint research (and development) activities can be continued in the future.

In the Agreement on Cultural Cooperation both sides agreed to strengthen the exchange of students and scientists in both directions, as well as facilitate cooperation in the spheres of art, theatre, restoration and cultural exchange. Subsequent to the agreement, the DAAD’s Jakarta Office was opened in 1990. Starting in small premises within the German Embassy Jakarta, the office soon moved to its present-day location in Jl. Sudirman. The main partner of the DAAD Office is the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemenbud), especially the Ministry’s Higher Education division. A Memorandum of Understanding (signed in 1999) specifies the details of the cooperation.

A look into the future: Just as during the last nearly 70 years, we want to be reliable partners for Indonesian academia, including goal-oriented partnerships in projects with institutions of non-academia such as enterprises and administration. We will continue to inform you, dear readers, on study and research opportunities in Germany, and on opportunities to connect to German partners. The same goes for our German scientists and students whom we try to inform about Indonesia’s study and research landscape in order to facilitate new projects, ideas and cooperation. Most of our funding programmes are open to all scientific disciplines.
Some topics will become especially important for our cooperation. Digitalisation is one of them. It is quite clear and understandable that most of us still have a limited understanding about what this could mean for the future. We are still standing at the beginning of big changes and developments in this area. It is all the more important to jointly explore the prospects of digitalisation and to create and share ideas on this topic, with the goal of developing new projects for the benefit of our societies, including the learning environment of our universities.

Another area where cooperation could be further developed during the years to come is the area of "applied sciences". The development of curricula and of teaching and learning methods which prepare the students to become "fit for the job", industry-related or community-related research which can be implemented in the production of products or in innovative services to the community, better cooperation with Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) including Start-Ups – these are topics in which Indonesia as well as Germany have a high interest in. In Germany, the model of the “Universities of Applied Sciences” and their close links to SMEs and community has proved to be highly successful.

Of course, cutting-edge research on the big questions and problems of our time, which have been put into words in the UN’s "Strategic Development Goals" (SDG), will be another important topic of possible joint activities – encompassing topics such as climate change, conservation of ecology and biodiversity, reduction of use of fuels which are harmful to the environment/increasing use of renewable and clean energy, social cohesion in the times of migration and globalisation and tolerance between cultures and religions. Indonesia and Germany have both started large-scale programmes to foster research activities in these areas, and this opens new chances to combine our forces.

As for the DAAD, and especially for our office in Jakarta, we will try our best to accompany and, as much as we can, assist and foster future joint endeavours and projects with German and Indonesian universities and partners, as we have done for the last 30 years. Please do not hesitate to contact us in case you have questions, ideas or simply need some information!

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Dr. Hartmut Glimm, Director of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta 1990—1994, together with the first team of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta.
Source: DAAD AS Jakarta
The year 2020 has shocked us with an unwanted COVID-19 pandemic, but this year also marks an important milestone for DAAD Regional Office, Jakarta which celebrates its 30th anniversary. Although its physical presence started in Jakarta 30 years ago, our database records reveal that the first group of researchers received DAAD scholarships 68 years ago in 1952. They also indicate that cooperation between DAAD and Indonesia has been on-going for almost 70 years. Now, we have more than 3100 DAAD Alumni listed all over Indonesia who work as practitioners in their chosen field.

30 years is not a short time nor a long one. However, we can be certain that the challenges faced by the former Directors of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta has been evolving over time due to Indonesia’s political condition and policy.

In this edition, we are honoured to interview four former Directors of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta. In the interview, we invited them to look back at some of the challenges and memorable moments during their journey in Jakarta and share them with us. So, here are our interviews with

- Dr Dorothea Rüland, who was the Director of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta from 1994 – 1999, and is currently the DAAD-Generalsekretärin
- Frau Ilona Krüger, who was the Director of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta from 2002 – 2008
- Dr Helmut Buchholt who was the Director of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta from 2009-2012
- Dr Irene Jansen, who was the Director of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta from 2012-2017

What was your main motivation to go to Jakarta and work there as the director of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta?

**Dr. Dorothea Rüland (DR):** I love to live and work abroad. Before I came to Indonesia I worked as a DAAD lecturer in Great Britain and Thailand. There, I developed a weakness for South-East-Asia. During my stay in Thailand I had the chance to travel to Indonesia and was intrigued by the beauty and diversity of the country. When a vacancy opened in our office in Indonesia, I took the opportunity.

**Frau Ilona Krüger (IK):** When I travelled across Java and Bali in 2001, I was amazed by the beauty of the landscapes and the friendliness of the people in Indonesia. I decided it could be an interesting place to live and work for some time. So, I applied when the post as director became vacant in 2002.

Since 1995, I had worked for the DAAD in Bonn as Head of Section North Africa, Near and Middle East. Before I joined the DAAD I had already lived and worked abroad in different countries e.g. in Africa.

The political developments in Indonesia were very interesting too at that time. For example, the dynamics of constitutional and other reforms with the first direct elections of the president by the people. The Indonesian higher education system, which was relatively young at the time, underwent a lot of changes and universities got more autonomy. Many Indonesian academics chose Germany as the study destination.

**Dr. Helmut Buchholt (HB):** At the time the DAAD was looking for a new director for the AS Jakarta, I had been head of section evaluation, statistics for about seven years. After such a long time a change in my field of work felt quite obvious to me. Because of my biography I had a close relation to Indonesia. Before I joined the DAAD, I had been involved for almost two decades in scientific work on Southeast Asia, in particular Indonesia. As an employee of the University of Bielefeld I had carried out field research in small-town markets in North Sulawesi, a study of the regional development of the same area as well as research on socio-spatial aspects of ethnic conflicts in Southeast Asia. The focus of my studies were in rural areas. Furthermore, I gave lectures and taught at the UNSRAT Manado and at ITB Bandung. Needless to say that I visited Jakarta several times. Therefore, the position as director of the AS Jakarta was an opportunity to come back to Indonesia, to work in an urban context and see the country and people from a different perspective.

**Dr. Irene Jansen (IJ):** I knew that the SHARE project was somewhat up in the air and that the prospect of getting involved in such an innovative multilateral project would be very attractive for DAAD as an institution and an entirely new experience for me, professionally. My hopes that we could pull a European team together and jointly win the grant was my main motivation to become the director of the DAAD office in Jakarta at the time.
What were the main challenges – concerning everyday life, culture, etc. – during the first months of your stay? Did you face “cultural shock” – and, if so, what helped you to overcome it?

DR: Of course, life in Jakarta differs quite a lot from life in Bonn. When I took up office, I moved to Jakarta with three small children. Everything had to be organised from kindergarten to day-to-day life. But I had many helpful colleagues at the DAAD office who facilitated our life and made our stay very easy right from the beginning. What we enjoyed very much was the friendly atmosphere and the role of children in Indonesian society. Life in such a huge capital is quite exhausting on the one hand, but on the other hand, Jakarta offers many exciting aspects to life: The beautiful countryside, a unique culture, warmer weather than Germany and much more.

IK: The first challenge came very early after I started my duty: it was the terrible Bali bombings. So, the office had to deal with emergency plans, establish hotlines and look after German students and lecturers that were in different parts of Indonesia. Many wanted to leave immediately and needed assistance. As I had just arrived shortly before, I decided to stay. I had not even moved into my house and my luggage was still going through customs.

During the next 2 years several terrorist bombings happened and all people working in Jakarta had to get used to more security measures. The DAAD Jakarta Office participated in many emergency evacuations and practice drills. Our staff had to leave the office on the 11th floor without use of elevators. We usually felt that exercise in our legs the day after.

Luckily, the number of terrorist attacks went down – but the security precautions had already become part of our everyday life – they continued. The DAAD staff members were great in those situations, calm and reasonable. We looked after each other, and I personally never felt unsafe.

HB: Against this background the cultural settling-in period in Jakarta was without problems. Even my wife and my son experienced no culture shock at all. The most difficult thing in Jakarta to adjust to, as my family and I agreed, was the traffic (macet). However, this is something one has to accept and to tolerate, as it is part of everyday life in Jakarta.

IJ: The main challenges were the almost daily struggles with ministerial authorities. Almost all DAAD staff had to grapple with one thing or another: ever changing regulations concerning visas, inconsistent policies concerning our work in the field of research cooperation, or new post graduate scholarship schemes. But given our fantastic DAAD team, supported by hundreds of loyal alumni, all hurdles were eventually overcome.
An Interview with Former Directors of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta

Do you remember one or two events or achievements you would consider as “highlights” of your stay at the DAAD Regional Office Jakarta?

DR: There were many chances to initiate and support new cooperation between German and Indonesian universities. We were often innovators; we provided the first education fairs to offer young people the opportunity to study abroad. I had the chance to get to know some eminent personalities, first and foremost the late President Prof. Habibie who built important bridges between our two countries. The last time I visited him was in his house in Munich and I was quite impressed by how much everyone loved him. We went to a typical Bavarian biergarten and had asparagus together. The German owner was so happy to have him back after a difficult heart surgery procedure. That was really touching.

IK: While Indonesian universities started to professionalise their undergraduate studies, the German universities were developing many excellent new Master’s and PhD programs, often in English language. The DAAD exchange offers became even more attractive.

The DAAD Jakarta Office busily worked to support and internationalise young academics from both countries, when the terrible Tsunami hit the Province of Aceh in 2004. Also, many students and lecturers in Aceh or from Aceh lost their lives, their families, their houses and sources of income. The survivors were traumatised. In order to reconstruct the province of Aceh well educated people would be needed.

One highlight of my stay was definitely that the DAAD Jakarta managed to get funding from the German public and private sector very quickly in order to support students from Aceh at other universities who would otherwise have had to give up their studies completely. 12 renowned universities in Java and Sumatra joined the scholarship initiative of the DAAD and offered to waive the fees. DAAD Jakarta had received enormous help from rectors, academics and alumni during the hectic process of listing and selection of candidates at the different universities. This way we were able to support around 1500 students with these special scholarships in difficult times. In a later phase the DAAD continued to help promote new lecturers for Aceh through exchange scholarships.

HB: An extraordinary event was the Alumniportal Deutschland (APD)-fair in Jakarta, where we welcomed more than 1000 Indonesian Alumni to intensive discussions on a great variety of topics. All these alumni had studied in Germany years or even decades ago. The huge success of the APD-fair was based on the vital interest of the Alumni (many more Alumni applied to participate) as well as on the outstanding team spirit of the AS Jakarta employees, their engagement and preparation which lasted several weeks. The APD-fair became an unforgettable event for all participants. Here the special contribution of the DAAD’s Vice-president, Prof. Max Huber, needs to be mentioned. With his empathy and scintillating speech he hit the nerve of the Alumni and gave the meeting a number of fascinating inputs. – Beside the Alumni-fair I remember other events like the discussions in the framework of interreligious dialogues under the chairmanship of Heidrun Tempel from the Ministry of Foreign affairs, where DAAD-Alumni, who studied Islamic studies in Germany gave a number of interesting and stimulating inputs. Furthermore a German-Indonesian medical conference in Jakarta underlined the long and intensive cooperation between Indonesian students and doctors with German universities. The discussions were focused on strokes, a very serious problem not only in Indonesia but also in Germany. Needless to say, there were a huge number of further events that were initiated during the time I spent in the AS Jakarta, a time I enjoyed very much.

IJ: We certainly celebrated 25 years of DAAD “in style”. Bapak Habibie honoured us by giving the Opening Speech and the Minister of Research sent a congratulatory address. Our alumni were full of energy and ideas, networking fruitfully and eventually starting a new cooperation with SEAMEO. The team spirit of the wider DAAD family was the most rewarding thing for me personally and professionally.
An Interview with Former Directors of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta

Do you have any message for our Indonesian and German Alumni who are involved in exchanges between the two countries?

DR: Alumni play a crucial role as we can see from President Habibie. They can open doors for the younger generation, function as role models and can prepare their students for a stay abroad. They have experienced the challenges and chances a stay abroad offers. You learn a lot about a new country and the topic you are working on. Interestingly, you sometimes learn even more about yourself: you must cope with an unfamiliar way of life, with different norms and values. Hopefully, this opens your eyes to other cultures and creates tolerance and an open-mindedness for others.

IK: Amongst the highlights in a DAAD Regional Office is congratulating new scholarship holders and meeting with alumni. Those who are preparing their departure to study abroad have a feeling of excitement, hopes and fears. Former fellows have acquired a high degree of expertise in their field of research and intercultural experience during their stay abroad. They come back to serve their country and at the same time they contribute to the understanding between cultures e.g. in Asia and Europe.

The DAAD has many different funding programs for alumni and their networks and I would like to encourage all to make use of it. Please join or stay in touch with the regional office in your home country. Your advice and assistance is of great value to our work. I wish to thank especially those who have kept up their ties, forged links, and fostered cooperation and friendship for so many years. Terima Kasih!

HB: To the Indonesian as well as the German Alumni I would like to recommend: Please continue the good and friendly relationship between our countries and keep close contact wherever it is possible.

J: My message to our alumni: Terima kashi! Thank you for your loyalty, tolerance, and open-mindedness! Keep supporting the DAAD in successfully navigating the turbulent waters of international cooperation through this coming decade!

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