

Comparative Study of Sustainable Development Planning in Southeast Asia Countries



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ABSTRACT

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The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have become applicable since January 2016 and is expected to be fully implemented in 2030. This article examines how Indonesia, Malaysia, and Negara Brunei Darussalam (NBD) as three Muslim countries in Southeast Asia with different economic, social, and political conditions commit to respond to the SDGs. The study used content analysis method to analyze the long and medium-term development plan documents in three stages. The researchers interviewed the planners to get an overview of the process of achieving the SDGs. The results of this study showed that the three countries have their own specific institutional agencies that undertook similar steps in achieving the goals, i.e. aligning the existing plan documents with SDGs, examining the indicator and data availability for monitoring and evaluation, establishing communication, and building the capacity with all stakeholders. The three countries have already internalized the SDGs in their planning development. However, when it comes to SDGs targets and indicators, Malaysia and NBD have a lower score than Indonesia because as a country with a lower level of development, Indonesia has more desired outcomes with quantitatively explicit and specific indicators.

1. INTRODUCTION

Every country has its own way to implement the 2030 agenda for 'Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)'. The approach of one country to achieve the SDGs actually depends on number of populations, environment, political and social-cultural conditions [1].

Indonesia, Negara Brunei Darussalam (NBD), and Malaysia are countries with Muslims majority in Southeast Asia that have four issues to be addressed. Firstly, a question of whether or not Islamic values are inherent in their development planning. Secondly, the difference in number and quality of population. Indonesia is a big-sized country with 257.6 million population but only has a mean years of schooling (MYS) of 7.9 years. Malaysia is inhabited by 30.3 million population and has a better quality of MYS of 10.1 years. NBD, a very small country with a population of 'only' 0.4 million has MYS of 9 years [2]. Thirdly, the monarchy form of government versus republic. Indonesia is a republic state covering 34 provinces and 514 districts/municipalities, while Malaysia and NBD are monarchy countries. Malaysia follows a democratic system form of government and NBD holds on its Malay Islamic Monarchy ("MIB") philosophy. Fourthly, middle-income countries versus high-income countries. Indonesia is low middle income country, meanwhile Malaysia has ranked up from middle to upper income country; and NBD is a high income country [3]. Condition and interaction among the four components above will specify the methods, measures,

process, and substance in achieving the 17 goals, 169 targets and 241 indicators of SDGs [4].

To help reach 169 targets, United Nation's Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) has provided a three chapters guide of *Getting Started with the Sustainable Development Goals - a Guide for Stakeholders*. Achieving such complex goals of SDGs' requires thorough plans with the government taking the lead and also support from business, academia, and civil society in the form of active engagement [5]. This article aims to examine how the three Muslim countries with their significant economic, social, and political differences adopt the SDGs into their respective development plans.

2. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Sustainable development has definitions and principles that integrates economic, social, and environment dimensions. However, many countries have experienced practical difficulties in integrating the three dimensions and putting the concept into operation [6]. Some scholars such as Roberts et al. [7], Moles et al. [8], Taylor and Hamnett in William [9], Nolon and Salkin [10] advocate the role of planning to achieve sustainable development.

The grounded in theories of linear rationality, is a classical planning paradigm that sees planning as 'an organized, conscious and continual attempt to select the best available