

UGM Encourages Government to Step Up Education in Papua


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Strategies for the development of Papua and West Papua cannot solely rely on Special Autonomy's funding. On the other hand, infrastructure and human resource development through education need to be encouraged, too, due to the low level quality of education, limited educators as well as the wide spread of population and transportation access difficulties in the province.

These issues emerged in a discussion themed *Tracing the Underdeveloped Education in Papua and West Papua Provinces* on Monday (18/9) in the seminar room of Faculty of Social and Political Sciences UGM. It was organised by Centre for Capacity Building and Cooperation (PPKK) of the Faculty, presenting speakers, including Director General for Regional Autonomy, Dr. Sumarsono, Chairman of Papua Taskforce of UGM, Bambang Purwoko, and former Regent of South Sorong, Otto Ihalauw.

Sumarsono said education development in Papua cannot be done regularly as in other provinces in Indonesia. The current government policy is to accelerate the completion of 9 year- compulsory study, procurement of teaching and non-teaching staff, and adaptable school model development. These all involve multi-sectors such as Home Affairs Ministry, Education and Culture Ministry and Research and Higher Education Ministry,



“I think all would require the strong commitment of all, government, educators, parents, and society,” he said.

Bambang Purwoko said since 2013, UGM has done research and guidance on government management of Papua as well as education sector development by sending 140 teachers for assignment to Puncak and Intan Jaya areas. “In the near future, we will send 50 more teachers to Mappi area. We want to contribute to education enhancement but we also expect the regional leaders to pay more attention to education issues,” he said.

Otto Ihalauw said the people of Papua still put the state as the only actor that can save them from the problem of isolation and underdevelopment. He viewed that geographical challenge still posed a serious problem to build construction and public services in the province.

Rector of UGM, Prof. Ir. Panut Mulyono, M.Eng., D.Eng., said the education development in Papua was the key factor in human resource development. Despite the rich natural resource of Papua, if it is not supported by qualified human resource, it will be hard for Papua to flourish. “Hence, UGM encourages the development that is not centred on Java only but also the eastern part of the nation that has lacked attention in the past. We want the development there to be also improved,” he said.

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