


Alleviating Poverty, Australian Students Join Community Service

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YOGYAKARTA - Ten students from six Australian universities have joined the student community service programme (KKN PPM) of UGM. The participating universities are Murdoch University, Adelaide University, Melbourne University, Queensland University, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University, and Deakin University. The students are assigned to carry out poverty alleviation programme in three regencies in Yogyakarta.

Alexander Dungey, 21, one of the students in Development studies at Deakin University, said he joined the community service after having been recommended by Deakin University. Currently, for one semester Dungey is doing student exchange between Indonesia and Australia, joining the Indonesian Language and Culture Learning Service (INCULS), Faculty of Cultural Sciences UGM. For almost two months, Dungey is assigned in one of villages in Sleman regency. "We do community empowerment in the village which we help train," said the student who has visited Indonesia four times.



Also joining the ten Australian students, some 275 Indonesian do community service programme outside of Yogyakarta, such as Seribu islands, Makassar, and Muntilan. In the Seribu islands, no less than 20 student are participating. “They do community service in terms of waste reduction, which is in line with the agreement between UGM and provincial government of Jakarta Special Region,” said Vice-Rector for Research and Community Service, Prof. Dr. Suratman, M.Sc, releasing the students for the programme in Balairung on Monday (4/11).

Suratman added the students have the mission to increase community’s independence in terms of food security, energy and entrepreneurship. It aims at minimising the number of impoverished people by opening new work opportunities through innovations in various areas. Hence, in the same location a three-year programme may give new work opportunities and reduction of unemployment. “In three year’s time, the location of the community service programme would become an independent village,” he said.

At least 12 themes are raised in this period’s programme, including clean water management, poverty alleviation, medical service for mother and child, and community empowerment.

The theme of the next programme is handling of dengue endemic, community empowerment in waste reduction, handling of displaced people due to Mt. Merapi eruptions, nationalism, and food security.

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