

## Flood-Proof District Workshop and Discussion

Thomas Neise was invited to support voluntarily the activity entitled “Connecting Jakarta - Writing Workshop and Discussion about Flood-proof District” at Rumah Muara, South Jakarta, on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2016. This event was organized by Rumah Cerita (House of Stories), a non-profit organization that was established 2012 in order to collect creative stories and ideas of Indonesian’s young generation.

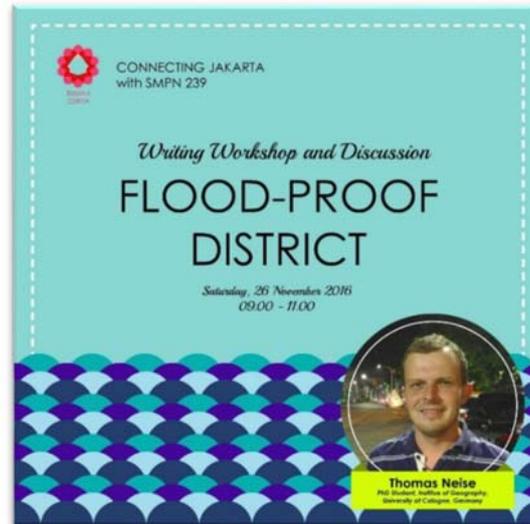


Fig. 1: Announcement of workshop

22 students from a Junior High School participated in the workshop. Together with Thomas, the pupils were discussing social issues affecting their area. Particularly how the neighborhood can reduce the flood risk was elaborated. The pupils were so enthusiastic since they had unpleasant experiences (e.g. damage of house interior) due to pluvial floods in South Jakarta.



Fig. 2: Thomas explained flood problem in Jakarta.

At the workshop session, Thomas shared his knowledge and provided an overview of the working group research project about flood exposure in Jakarta and Semarang. He explained that Jakarta is a coastal city which is highly vulnerable to flood disaster. South Jakarta is mainly affected by pluvial floods as the rain water from the hilly landscape of Bogor in the South flows uncontrolled in the narrow river arms. Moreover, waste clogged and narrowed rivers due to dense urban development accelerate flood events. Besides, he also provided a glimpse of flood risk in Cologne. Interestingly, he explained the pupils that Cologne is affected by floods, too. However, after serious floods in the 1990s Cologne established a very good flood protection and river management system.

At the discussion session, Thomas challenged the pupils to discuss in groups how to solve flood problems in Jakarta. The solutions should put focus on the smallest parts of the society: family, neighborhood, and local government. The team with the best ideas was awarded with a present.

Overall, each group presented very interesting innovative ideas. Interestingly, each team mentioned that floods basically happen because people always throw their rubbish in the river. It was also criticized that the urban development caused many trees to vanish and the river capacity was reduced. One innovative solution was to install robotic dustbins. The robotic dustbin who can say “Thank you for your rubbish” with cute voices could educate the people to throw the rubbish in the dustbin. This idea is adapted by Japan. Furthermore, it was suggested that the government should expand the green area in Jakarta and change the asphalted road into paving stone, so that the rainwater can absorb more easily into the ground.

At the end, all pupils concluded that the best solution to decrease the flood risk should be starting from themselves. “If they always love and keep the nature, nature will love them back!”



Fig. 3: Discussing flood preventing solutions by pupils with support from volunteers

The event was very fruitful and provided a different perspective on flood exposure by pupils. The pupils care about their environment and perceive flood as a serious threat for their living. Moreover, we are very impressed by the social engagement of Rumah Cerita to give the pupils insights of future career ways. The working group donated Geography and English textbooks to endorse the education quality in Indonesia.

We thank the organizers Ina, Ira, and Fikri of Rumah Ceritan, volunteers, and particularly the pupils from the Junior High School SMPN 239 Jakarta for their tremendous engagement.



Fig. 4: Group picture of all participants

Fikri & Thomas, Jakarta, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016