

Providing quality healthcare *for everyone*

How Indonesia bridges the gaps through technology

Indonesia has the fourth largest population in the world, with approximately 250 million people in the country that spans across 17,000 islands. The geographical barriers, development gaps in urban and rural areas, as well as underdeveloped infrastructure make access to basic healthcare an ongoing challenge for the country. This panel discussion focused on the possible solutions to improve healthcare access through private and public sector collaboration, while leveraging the use of technology.

Mr Suryo Suwignjo, Country Manager, Philips Indonesia, summarized the current challenges in healthcare access as “ACCA”, which means access, capacity, capability and affordability. “In terms of the number of hospitals and hospital beds, every ratio that we can think of, we are left behind.” The doctor-to-patient ratio in Indonesia is 43:100,000, far lower than the benchmark of developed nations, which is 250:100,000¹.

“In a city which suffers the most from a lack of healthcare professionals, technology will be able to help.”
Mr Suryo Suwignjo

Bringing healthcare services to remote communities is a long-term issue. “Millions of people, especially those living in the Eastern part of Indonesia, still live in poverty,” said Dr Lie Dharmawan, Founder, Floating Hospital, Rumah Sakit Apung, doctorSHARE, Indonesia. “There are no roads. If people want to go from one village to another they have to go on foot,” he added.

To expand the reach of care, an innovative approach is essential. “In a city which suffers the most from the lack of healthcare professionals, technology will be able to help,” Mr Suwignjo said. He used Mobile Obstetrics Monitoring solutions as an example of leveraging technology to plug the gaps in Indonesia’s healthcare system. The maternal death rate in Indonesia remains among the highest in Southeast Asia, with 190 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births². “And the reason is that expectant mothers in rural areas do not get enough medical services,” he said.

“We provide midwives with smartphones and applications for their visits to pregnant women. At the visits, the midwives will take important measures for the mothers and upload the data into a system where physicians can review and flag if there are high-risk pregnancies,” Mr Suwignjo explained. Professor Hasbullah Thabrany, Health Policy and Health Economics, Universitas Indonesia, also believes that technology, has made our society better connected. “With current technology we can send money to small islands in a couple of seconds. If you don’t need to worry about transferring money, we can ensure quality health services can be delivered there,” he said.

Commenting on how the private sector and the government are able to work together to bring about easier access to healthcare, Mr Suwignjo said industry players can help by introducing technology to provide care for remote areas and building infrastructure for the nation. The panel also explored how both public and private sectors should come together to educate individuals and the community.

The first key aspect to achieving this is to promote healthy living at home, which also helps prevent the onset of diseases. Mr Kemal Imam Santoso, Chief Financial Officer, BPJS Kesehatan shared that to educate and motivate individuals, we need to first identify “the leaders within the community to promote a healthy lifestyle”.



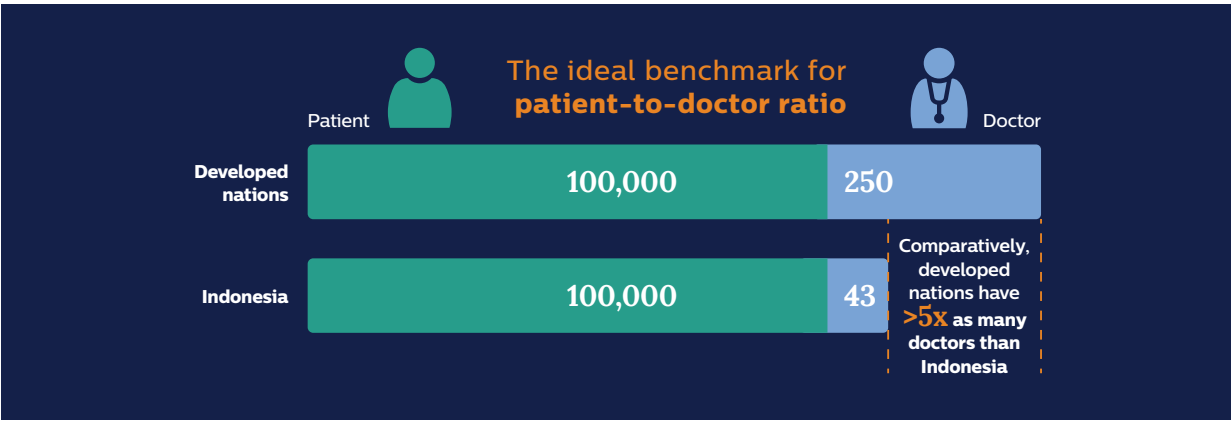
Prof Hasbullah Thabrany, Health Policy and Health Economics, Universitas Indonesia

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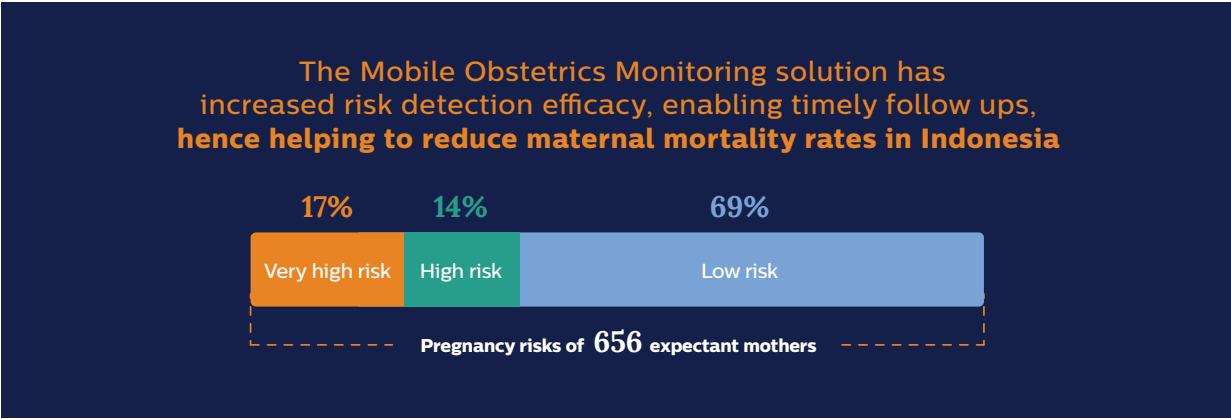
Mr Suryo Suwignjo, Country Manager, Philips Indonesia

Mr Kemal Imam Santoso, Chief Financial Officer, BPJS Kesehatan

Teymoor Nabili, Moderator, Channel NewsAsia Perspectives



Source: Republic of Indonesia Ministry of Health: Indonesia Health Profile 2014



Source: Philips white paper: Mobile Obstetrics Monitoring (MOM) as a model for community-based antenatal care delivery in a low-resource setting

At the same time, Mr Suwignjo also emphasized the importance of educating healthcare professionals on an ongoing basis. “So from time to time, we drive them [medical professionals] to try out new technology and refresh their knowledge, so that they can be up to the level that we expect.”

“I think there must not be a dichotomy with the government on one hand and the private sector on the other hand. We all are Indonesian, and are all responsible for building our country.”
Dr Lie Dharmawan

There is also a need to build on Indonesia’s capacity to keep up with the nation’s healthcare demands. To do so, Mr Suwignjo believes it is critical to build a pipeline of medical professionals. “The government needs to accelerate the training of medical professionals in a timely manner,” he said.

Building a healthcare system in Indonesia that meet all these criteria – accessibility, capacity, capability and affordability – will require ongoing collaborative efforts from the government, private sector and the community at large. While strides have been made in the right direction – enabled through technology and public-private partnerships – more remains to be done.

Philips is proud to partner with Channel NewsAsia to present the channel’s flagship panel discussion TV program Perspectives, where a panel of experts from the industry, government and academic sectors discuss their views on the issues and trends shaping the current healthcare landscape.

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¹ Republic of Indonesia Ministry of Health: Indonesia Health Profile 2014
² Indonesia Country Fact Sheet, Achieving MDG5, WHO.