

# My time with IofC Indonesia

*Monthly reports authored by João Felipe Elias*



## MARCH/APRIL 2015

### Arrival in Indonesia and first impressions



I arrived at the Jakarta airport on the evening of March 26<sup>th</sup>, after 5 days travelling from Brazil to Indonesia. On the way to Indonesia, I visited South Africa, Australia and Singapore. My first 3 days in Jakarta I spent at the Syahida Inn, inside the Islamic State University outside the southern border of the city.

My first impressions were positive, of a safe country and nice and curious people. Jakarta is overwhelmed by traffic – probably the worst in the world, it's hard not to be annoyed by it. Dodging such traffic is an art.

For my first breakfast in Indonesia I had fried rice with eggs, pretty unusual for me, yet delicious. Food turned out to be very spice here, with a lot of stir fried and noodle options. I

still have trouble today to find exactly the food I want, even in supermarkets. I have also not experienced an Asian country whose majority religion is Islam, so it was curious to see mosques, prayer chants, and headscarves everywhere I went. Also you almost never see a dog in Indonesia, as due to religious practices, Indonesian Muslims are not allowed to own dogs.

During my first days, I also began learning Bahasa Indonesia, the official language of Indonesia (although not the only one spoken here). It is a pretty simple language, without pompous sounds and grammar – it's very objective, straight forward and simple to learn. Many words are actually borrowed from Portuguese, so it becomes easier to remember.



Throughout the months of March and April, the IofC Indonesia team organized several outing activities to show me a little more about Indonesia, such as to Kota Tua (old city), Situ Gintung (lake), "No-car day" in the center of Jakarta, and eating out at restaurants and street food carts. So far the team was excellent in providing me with an introduction to the Indonesian culture.

As for the following months, I expect to develop my friendship with members of IofC Indonesia, learn some Indonesian language, and do a good job here project-wise so I can leave some solid foundations for commercial programs of IofC Indonesia.





### Green Montessori School visit

Our first outreach as a team was at the Green Montessori School in Jakarta with two classes of children aged from 5 to 9. This was part of the School Leadership Program designed to bring IofC values into schools by presentations to children of all ages. During the session, I showed them a PowerPoint presentation about Brazil with lots of pictures and in the end a quiz, to see if they paid attention. The outing was interesting, as it was my first contact with a class of

children in years. I had forgotten how it was to work with them, and how funny and loud they can be. I believe it is important for IofC to have such outings because it is the best way to refine our arguments of 'why we do what we do' and why adherence to our cause is relevant.

### English Club school trip to Puncak

Between the 13-15 April, Yadi, Aisyah and I went to Puncak with the English club of MEN4 (Empat) school. We met the school director and students at the school in the early morning, together with an Australian teacher called Michelle Siciliano, who joined us for the tour to Puncak. So once we arrived there by bus, we had a morning session with the students in which the teachers introduced the schedule and guests introduced themselves. I spoke with the students about the importance of studying English as



a way to open doors in the future career. Within the following days we had a few activities



with the students like watching a movie ("Akeelah and the bee"), Q&As, games, workshop about honesty with IofC, visit to Taman Safari (amusement park with an open area where the animals roam free). In our way back, we visited the Cimory restaurant and bought some sweets. This outing was my first time outside of Jakarta, in a cold and beautiful mountain environment. It was certainly a worthwhile experience provided to me by IofC Indonesia.

### One-week stay at the Jagat 'Arsy World Boarding School

**What did we do?** We began by visiting a public school and giving a motivation speech to the students about the joy of travelling and speaking a new language. The school was rather poor, but the students seemed very cheerful nevertheless. We followed by arriving at Jagat 'Arsy school and doing a presentation to students about Brazil and about my career. That night we



had dinner with Mr. Abah Aos, spiritual guide of the director and Mr. Budi, owner of the school. That night we sang with the students and had a good time. The next following days, I had presentations with the students in their classrooms about the mission and objectives of IofC. I believe that a stronger cooperation between Jagat 'Arsy school and IofC Indonesia is very plausible in the near future. In one of the days, we visited Taman Mini, the miniature theme park displaying several architectural styles, cultures, plants and birds of Indonesia.



**How was it like?** The school is extremely nice and impressive gardens and buildings, and having higher level of quality in the lectures, with smaller classes and better teachers. The students seemed very well educated, but sometimes very chatty too. However, I believe most good students captured the ideas I tried to convey on the importance of building trust, living a sustainable life, and promoting ethical leadership.

**How was the weekend?** We went to the mountain mosque near Tasikmalaya with the school crew. We had the visit of the Minister of Social Affairs to the mountain mosque in an inauguration event of a drug rehabilitation center.

It was a very special trip since the mountain area was so beautiful, cold and people were so kind and interesting. We also attended a local wedding and I even got a rock ring as a present from the people from the mosque.



## MAY 2015

During the month of May, I was already more adjusted to living in Indonesia and had found myself settled very well in my accommodation. The main shortcoming I have faced was regarding the language. Many Indonesians try hard to help you when you talk in English, but fall short in communication skills. As for my *Bahasa Indonesia*, I have developed a vocabulary of 100 words or so, which help me to get around fine most of the times. After learning some basic Indonesian, the city became much easier to navigate. In addition, you get used to the rush-hour flow of people, the different means of transportation (from bus, to van, to Moto taxi).



### How is my accommodation?

I am currently living in a residence that Indonesians call “Kosan”, which is a family-friendly accommodation with small private bedrooms and common areas. The apartment complex is very nice and close to the IofC Office, making it easy for me to walk there. One interesting aspect of my accommodation is that the toilet is the “Asian toilet”, not the western one. Maybe some people are bothered by it, but I got used to it already.

### How are things advancing?

Now that I am more familiar with the social and economic situation of Indonesia, I began reshaping the project to sit the needs of IofC Indonesia and their country’s context. The new project intends to synchronize better with the needs of IofC and of their community.

As for my current impression of Indonesia, I find it to be a complex society, with friendly people. Religion plays a huge role in the social relations in this society, yet they coexist in a democratic and peaceful governance that is unique. I am looking forward in the following months to understand this country even further.

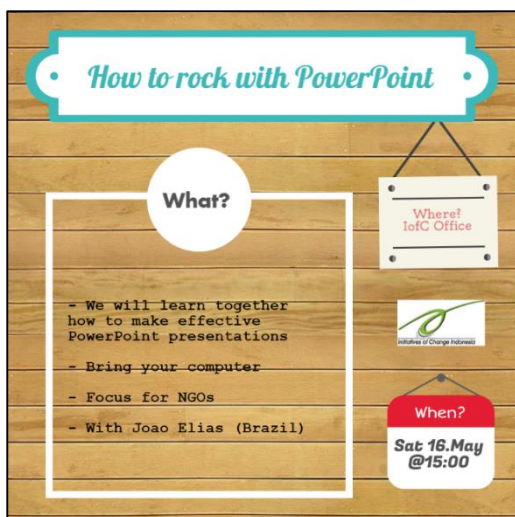


### Britzone Event

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, IofC Indonesia had a presentation session with Britzone, an English speaking community associated with the University of Indonesia. Their objective is to practice the language in interactive sessions. There I was a guest speaker, taking the opportunity to present to them the IofC missions (trust building, sustainable living, and ethical leadership) and values (4 standards).

By the end of the presentation, we had a very important guest paying Britzone a visit – it was





the Minister of Education and Culture of Indonesia, Dr. Anies Baswedan. He spoke briefly about his experience in Yogyakarta as an English teacher, and praised us for the initiative of practicing and improving our skills in the universal language.

### Session “How to rock with PowerPoint”

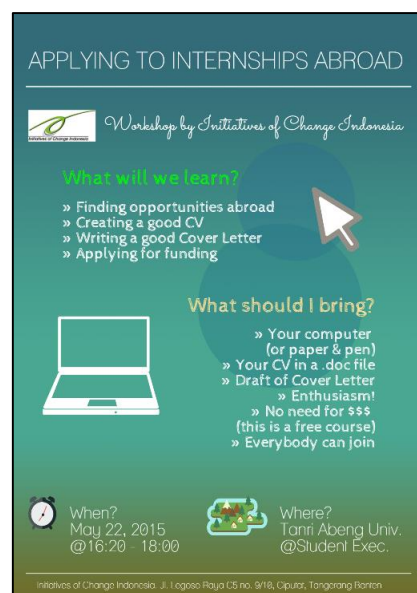
On May 16, the IofC core team and I prepared a training session during the Saturday gathering. Many people came to the training, and I got to meet a few new IofC friends.

Once everyone had their computer set, we made a small introduction how to use PowerPoint and where

to find its most common tools. Then the next step was a pair activity in which the groups were assigned a task. For example, one group received the task to present IofC to groups of students age 14 to 18, thus their presentation had to take into consideration their public. In the end, every group had to present their slides, and all of us learned a lot from sharing and from each other. I like to see how sharing makes our group stronger and grow together.

### Session at TAU about career building

During the times I have visited Tanri Abeng University (TAU), many students expressed their concern on how to find and apply for internships abroad. Many of them were interested to going to a different country, inspired by me coming to Indonesia. Considering their needs, on May 22 we held a workshop on how to improve your CV for applying to internships abroad. If some of these students get internships abroad, they will have unforgettable memories and lessons abroad, and bring them back to Indonesia to improve knowledge, tolerance, skills and efficiency, thus developing the country towards a more human and empowered nation. It seemed also that some students were interested in working with IofC offices abroad, in which case we will support them in their applications. I hope that after this session, these students are on way to become global citizens.



### Individual Field Trip to Bali

I felt it was time for me to explore Indonesia more. I went to Bali on May 27, I departed to the famous island's cities of Ubud, Tabanan and Kuta. Among the unforgettable culture and ancient temples, my favorite activity took place in the Pondok Pensantren School in Tabanan, where I had the chance to visit

this school dedicated to orphan children. While the work of teachers is magnificent and wholehearted, I believe this school deserves more financial assistance from community and other Islamic friends across Indonesia. As a member of IofC, I will do my best to connect this school to possible donors, who will help build the new campus of the school, where children will have a chance to play, learn and grow up to their best potential.

The differences in culture between Java and Bali are very evident, beginning from the Hindu majority in Bali, which led to a historical differentiation in architecture. While Bali receives tourists by the thousands, I still feel the local population does not benefit entirely from tourism, mostly because the extra revenue has not improved the quality of government in the island, which in turn would improve people's lives. In general, I feel that IofC could easily find activities to perform in Bali.

## JUNE 2015

### Pari Island Trip

IofC Indonesia organized an outing weekend the paradise-like island of Pari Island, in the group of islands off the coast of Jakarta on June 6 and 7. We had several bonding activities happening there, such as planting new mangrove tree buds, snorkeling, starfish exploration, swimming and playing at the beach.



The activity that I found most fruitful was the planting of the buds for the growth of more mangrove. With human activity in the island, the growth of the mangrove is an important part of preservation of local environment. This is an important reminder that IofC's mission worldwide is also *Promoting a sustainable living*, that in which human and nature live in harmony. We should be reminded that nature can recover itself, it just needs time. However, if we take more from nature than it can recover, we might be killing the very source of our life and subsistence.



### Visit to Yogyakarta, Central Java

Between 19 and 23 of June, I have visited the city of Yogyakarta (Jogja, for short), in Central Java. There I had the chance to meet old friends from my time in Sweden and visit timeless sites, such as the Prambanan and Borobudur temples. I also had the opportunity to see the Ramayana ballet, telling the story of Rama and Sinta with a local Indonesian dancing style.

Yogyakarta is known for being a student town, with lots of social and technical innovations. Once graduated, many students move from there to various urban centers around Indonesia. Therefore, any positive impact taking place during the schooling years is important for the life-long activities the alumni will perform. Considering this opportunity to engage with students, I took initiative in two activities, the first was the engagement with AIESEC local association and, the second, the possibility of exchange program between Brazil and Indonesia.

A short introduction to Brazilian and Indonesian relations, in June 2015, Bali courts executed a Brazilian citizen for drug traffic, spoiling further the relationship between both countries. My idea is to build permanent bridges between both countries by connecting the international officer of Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) to the international officers in Brazil. Coming to Yogyakarta allowed me to act as the bridge between parties. As a Brazilian, I attempt to always apologize and put into context the crime and punishment event which took



place in Indonesia. My honest attempt to connect UGM with a Brazilian university worked and currently both universities are planning an agreement to exchange bachelor and master's students by 2016, thus deepening both countries' mutual understanding and cultural exchange.

My second activity took place at a local café chosen by the AIESEC representatives. There I got the chance to listen and learn about AIESEC's mission and activities in Jogja. Noticing the potential to mutual learning and experience exchange, we proposed a continuous partnership between IofC Indonesia and AIESEC in the themes of Ethical leadership and sustainability, as both organizations have projects and manpower in both topics, which can benefit from exchange. One immediate benefit of the meeting is that IofC's Youth leadership camp and APYC event will be promoted within the AIESEC network. For the future, maybe IofC will be invited to take part in AIESEC leadership events or social projects, and vice-versa.

## JULY 2015

### How's the adaptation and work so far?

By the month of July, I had already learned how to walk around my neighborhood, knew how to navigate chaotic Jakarta's public transport, knew about 300 words in *Bahasa Indonesia*, could communicate in the street for directions and price bargaining, and be more independent of IofC friends.

We had already engaged with several educational organizations (Jagat Arsy, TAU, etc.) and youth organizations (AIESEC, social work, etc.), providing me with a better scope of the activities we were performing. I was already "well networked". In addition, consistent



engagement with IofC team updated me on the concerns with fundraising and the challenges to come in regard to fundraising and organization of the Youth camp (December 2015) and APYC event (August 2016), which I intended to continue working on.

I also gained much deeper insight into the needs of Indonesian society by reading news, talking to people and listening to different opinion. Some of the needs are active, people are voicing the societal needs, for example corruption and quality of education. Other needs are passive and not as evident for the common citizen, for example environmental responsibility and waste management. In general, I suspect that there are two main needs, ethical leadership and sustainability. While other needs are also evident, I personally believe these two are not getting enough attention.

As for the corporate activities, mostly due to absence an active network with business leaders, team skills in business and corporate social responsibility, we have decided to advance the CSR research and project in a different direction. We would focus now on the already existing network, and attempt to collect stories of motivated individuals who applied ethical leadership to their life and business models. By doing this, we want to first build a personal network of individuals who have provided change, and second, to build a program around such inspiring stories (e.g., Heart of effective leadership).

### **Ramadan in Indonesia**

Ramadan is the holy month for the world's Muslim communities. It is a month of purification and renewal. Muslims abstain from most pleasures and engage into a fasting that ceases with nightfall. As my colleagues informed me: there is Indonesia and there is Indonesia during Ramadan – as to emphasize the difference between the two. Jakarta in general is a busy, crowded, buzzing city day and night. Jakarta during Ramadan was quiet, peaceful, empty and devoted to faith.



Ramadan is also the month in which school is out and some workers take their vacation. By the end of Ramadan, most Indonesians will return to their village of origin and celebrate Idul Fitri holiday with family and friends. This means that most activities halt, except some larger businesses. As for IofC activities, most activities stopped with intention to return after Idul Fitri, in early August.

During the holy month, I had to be mindful of my Muslim friends who were fasting, and respect their eating schedules and not eat and drink in front of people fasting. In sum, experiencing Ramadan in a Muslim country is an experience of collective devotion, peace and giving that I will always remember very deeply through my life.



### Trip to Garut with IofC friends

In the last week of Ramadan, I was invited by IofC friend to visit their village town of Garut, in West Java. For about one week, most of the activities revolved around the culture and celebration of Idul Fitri, the end of the Muslim holy month. We visited natural sites and had social activities with family and neighbors. Here in the village I experienced strong language barrier, yet was the place I benefited the most in terms of

language learning. There we had the chance to participate in activities with the English Leadership Center, founded by IofC friends to provide English classes to underprivileged children in their village – which were so numerous. More than a professional experience, going to Garut and dwelling among the village people during their holiest time of the year was a marking spiritual and personal experience.

### Asia Pacific Youth Conference (APYC) 2015 – Vietnam and Cambodia

Considering that APYC is an important piece of history for IofC offices all around Asia and Pacific regions, and considering that Indonesia will be the future host of APYC in 2016, the team and I came into agreement it would be beneficial for me to join APYC 2015 in Cambodia. One of the possible outcomes of my participation is that I would be able to experience the logistic necessities of APYC, and therefore suggest immediate actions for the future APYC team. Fundraising, for example, was a recurrent topic during the conference.

Looking up flight tickets, I have come across the fact that flights to Cambodia three times as expensive as flights to southern Vietnam. It was more efficient to fly to Vietnam, and then take a four-hour bus to Cambodia, which I did. After spending one day and one night in Ho Chi Minh city and seeing the Mekong Delta and War memorial museum, I took the bus to Phnom Penh and met up with team crew in the capital of the Kingdom of Cambodia.





## AUGUST 2015

### Asia Pacific Youth Conference - APYC 2015

The Asia Pacific Youth conference began on August 1<sup>st</sup>, at the Green Park Hotel in Phnom Penh, capital of Cambodia. After the opening ceremony, we experienced a very large rainfall with following flooding of the streets.

The next day the conference participants travelled to the main venue of the conference in Sihanoukville, southern sea of Cambodia.

During our introduction meeting, tragedy struck us all. The child of one of the organizers drowned in the swimming pool, and was quickly taken to the hospital. We attempted to continue the conference, to learn later that he



had not survived. It was the most difficult moment most of us have ever experienced, yet in spirit to the family who gave such commitment to APYC, we carried on the conference, praying and sharing our feelings.

The following days we learned and worked on inner development, IofC four absolute standards, family workshop, healing the past, stories of success, and made a commitment to action. We also made good friends in the conference and learned from our seniors' personal

stories. I was personally impressed about the capacity and logistics the Cambodian team was able to put up together. It was truly amazing for such a small team had so much will.

Finally, I see my experience in Southeast Asia divided after having attended APYC. I was especially touched by the family workshop and inner development. It was important for my pursue in developing IofC Indonesia's fundraising capacity to attend APYC, as we learned there several techniques to ask for sponsorship that allowed the Cambodian team to succeed in their logistics of the conference. Moreover, it provided us ideas of how to model IofC Indonesia's activities towards a social enterprise model. The conference inspired the team and I to develop a great Youth conference and next year's APYC.



### Cultural immersion at Royal Morocco School

In my last week in Jakarta, we had the opportunity to carry out one last school outreach activity at Royal Morocco School in southern Jakarta. There we met students from lower and upper primary school (ages from 8 to 12) and had cultural exchange, songs, quiz trivia, drawing and questions.

This outing activity represents a great opportunity for capitalization of the IofC Indonesia activities, as many schools see great value for their students to participate in cultural immersions or leadership

programs. Our objective as an organization is to professionalize this school activities, possibly having a full-time staff to outreach to the schools and produce facilitation material and activities. I strongly believe similar programs such as the one performed at Royal Morocco School and so many other schools is the way for IofC Indonesia to raise funds to its many social activities.



## THE PROGRAM'S FINAL EVALUATION

### Seeds to a corporate project

Initially I came to Indonesia with preconceived ideas of what Indonesia needed. The truth is that there was a lot of learning and experiencing to happen before I could state with confidence the needs of the country. It was a three-month long exercise of actively listening to all sorts of people to finally discover what was needed. I also did not foresee that a corporate project would be good for fundraising, but an educational project would be even better.

Thus began a shift in the original proposal to learn from and improve our current school leadership programs, and use them as a platform to other projects, such as the yearly youth camp and the APYC, which will happen in Bandung, Indonesia, in 2016.

The corporate project has not been forgotten, but before we can unleash a good project for business, we need more stories of change makers within the business world. During my time in Indonesia, I focused my effort in fundraising, networking and advocating for the organization, both nationally and abroad. At IofC-Indonesia we have agreed that regardless of the time it takes, a project for business will follow certain steps.

Step one, find more examples and stories from change makers within the business and enterprise world. Step two, assemble these people under a common workshop and time for sharing good deeds; meanwhile, we would like to promote the IofC conferences in India and Switzerland, such as Heart of the Effective Leadership and Trust and Integrity in the Global economy. The third step would be to grow this network of change makers into a specific workshop under a given program. Yet that will take time and commitment of the Indonesian team, but the seed and inspiration for such a program has been planted.



## Fundraising and partnerships

This was the most prominent and effective point proposed in the initial project. Every social organization suffers with difficulty of funding. Through networking, seminars, and advice from professionals and friends, we have short-listed the most real options for raising funds to IofC Indonesia. The first we composed a directory of grants, crowd funding options and websites to find funding. It is a MS excel list of grants that can be sought by the organization and have gone through rigorous screening. We have also planned and to capitalize the school leadership program and school visiting programs, as a source of income for our social projects (while also providing quality and value to the youth's education). Partnerships, partnership, partnership: this an important part of the fundraising strategy. With proposals of MoU agreements, we will be able to have certainty in the number of LSPs every semester, making revenue a bit more certain.

## Youth-based outreach

Reach out to youth about the possibility to work and do good at the same time was a mission of my time here in Indonesia. I have visited numerous schools, and met dozens of motivated students. Many times we spoke about different cultures world-wide, and what is it that drives us daily. The support IofC provides to youth helps to share IofC values and to welcome students to Youth camp, APYC and international IofC internship programs.

## Administrative work with IofC-Indonesia

Supporting IofC Indonesia's administrative work was one of the most interesting tasks during my time in this country. Their current projects were fascinating, such as the *SLP* and *inner development growth program*. I wish I had had the time participate in other activities, such as the *Gintung we care* and *Trust-building work*.

## Conclusions and Recommendations: Lessons for future projects

I cannot say enough how my time in Indonesia was important for my personal development. But I want to use my last words to give recommendations for future projects that follow similar patterns to mine.

The cultural exchange that happened between a Brazilian guy and the IofC team was the richest episode of my experience, for both parties. Therefore, the need for IofC (world-wide) to prioritize its exchange of people, staff and younger members is very important. I would very much like to see an IofC volunteer/youth exchange network, in which IofCs internationally could exchange their members. A formal program should be implemented, and the benefits would be large.

Also, more support and investment from richer IofC office into poorer IofC offices is an important activity, and it shouldn't stop or shrink. IofC offices in richer countries sometimes claim their finances are in a difficult situation, but I believe that less privileged offices in poorer countries do a lot even without any income. With income and revenue, they would be able to do a lot more.

Finally, the exchange of knowledge and best practices for fundraising and corporate engagement is an activity that should take place consistently through IofC offices worldwide, in the form of visiting guests, seminars, etc. It is not something new to IofC, but it should be intensified, as to better equip and inspire youth in developing countries.