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More Innovation, Less Poverty-Stricken: A Case of Rural Youth Activism in Trenggalek, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has evoked collective anxiety among rural populations due to social restrictions that have caused disruptions to local education and industries. This article delves into the intricate social innovations undertaken by *Ikatan Sedulur Trenggalek* [Trenggalek Brotherhood] in its endeavors to address the multifaceted challenges of poverty amid the backdrop of pandemic. IST as a prominent constituent of Trenggalek civil society assumes a pivotal role in the realm of rural humanitarian affairs and the provision of robust health support. This empirical investigation primarily seeks to illuminate the profound social programs orchestrated by astute youth members within this fraternal association, which have emerged as indispensable responses to the escalating urgency of poverty-related predicaments stemming from the pandemic. The analysis reveals that IST, as a rural youth-led civil society initiative, has undergone innovations and adaptations during the pandemic. The results highlight some of IST's principal programs, including the creation of a digital database for local individuals in need, ambulance services, voluntary initiatives, fund-raising programs, and institutional collaborations with rural entities and local institutions. This research strives to provide scholarly insights into the indispensable contributions of rural youth activism in ameliorating the plight of poverty during the tumultuous course of pandemic.

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has engendered collective anxiety among rural populations, as social restrictions have resulted in disruptions to local education and industries. In response to safety concerns, governments worldwide have intensified efforts to enact policies that limit public activities to prevent further spread of the virus (COVID-19 Task Force, 2020a, 2020b; Kominfo, 2021). Consequently, the pandemic has precipitated significant disruptions in social, economic, and cultural spheres, engendering losses experienced by nations and communities across multiple facets of life (Abuelhaj &

Gelders, 2021; Suryahadi et al., 2020). Notably, Indonesian government has implemented measures— including lockdowns, travel restrictions, and social distancing guidelines—as part of their strategy to curb the transmission of new variants of the virus (Finaka et al., 2021; Roberts, 2021). These restrictions have reverberated across businesses, industries, and daily livelihoods, causing economic contractions and financial hardships for individuals and communities alike.

Social distancing measures leading to school and workplace closures have intensified young people’s emotional burden. A recent online survey by UNFPA Indonesia’s Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) found that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused high levels of anxiety among Indonesian youths, with approximately 90% experiencing distress (Agustino, 2020; Uchino & Sidabutar, 2020). The survey highlighted contributing factors including concerns about lack of improvement in the situation (70%), feelings of isolation due to limited socializing (58.7%), financial stress (40%), and feelings of insecurity in their environment (38%). Only around 15% sought health and counseling services to address anxieties, while 77% coped using mobile devices and social media (Do et al., 2022). The survey emphasizes the significant impact on the well-being of Indonesian youth, urging targeted support and health services to address their emotional burden during this arduous period.

Similar survey conducted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) aimed to find out the impact of the disaster to youth employment. ILO noticed that a massive percentage of Indonesian youths (51.5%) did not feel confident with their personal and interpersonal skills needed to develop rural regions and re-live local tourisms (ILO, 2021). Young rural people either had to postpone looking for jobs or even had to lose their jobs. Additionally, the impact of the pandemic has affected the local economy worse because many rural communities rely on agriculture, small-scale businesses, and tourism for their livelihoods. It led to disruptions in supply chains, market closures, and travel restrictions, resulting in income loss and unemployment for many individuals and families. This has made things “out-of-hands” for youth-led social organizations to engage young people in their communities and promote personal and interpersonal developments on both rural and urban regions (Both et al., 2021).

Scholarly debates are circumstantiated around four main research areas on this issue; *First*, the development of creative industry, business, and tourism in rural regions; *Second*, the role of youth representation in post-pandemic programs of national development; *Third*, global youth civil society initiatives; *Fourth*, the advocacy of youth-led activism on rural working-class issues. Some academics mentioned how domestic tourism and local gastrodiplomacy re-emerge in rural areas of the world such in Vietnam (Huynh et al., 2022), Romania (Ștefanovici & Mazilu, 2021), Ghana (Soliku et al., 2021), and Indonesia (Dianto, 2022; Ro’fah et al., 2022). Others focused on the vital position of millenials’ performance on human capital development (Àkànle, 2022; He et al., 2022; Kousis & Giugni, 2020; Sardini et al., 2022). Global mobility of youth-led civil society initiatives and local politics are also observed (Abadi & Wulandari, 2022; Gunadi et al., 2023; Rosales, 2023; Viera, 2021). In a more specific discussion, a minimum amount of scholars

discussed the advocacy of youth-led activism on rural humanitarian issues such as essential supply distribution, economic empowerment, health support, and promoting safety measures (Chatani, 2022; Muzammil et al., 2022; Pratiyudha et al., 2022; Sulistyaningsih et al., 2022). Taking further step of those studies on the pivotal role of youth-led initiative in a rural region, this article partakes a particular focus on *Ikatan Sedulur Trenggalek* [Trenggalek Brotherhood, henceforth: IST], a decade-old local youth-led activism placed at the heart of Trenggalek district of East Java, Indonesia.

This article delves into the intricate social innovations undertaken by IST in its commendable efforts to address the multifaceted challenges of poverty amidst the backdrop of the pandemic. As a prominent constituent of civil society, IST assumes a fundamental role in the realm of rural humanitarian affairs and the provision of health support. This empirical investigation primarily seeks to shed light on the profound social innovations ingeniously orchestrated by the astute youth members within this fraternal association, which have emerged as indispensable rejoinders to the escalating exigency of poverty-related predicaments engendered by the global pandemic. The research endeavors to furnish scholarly insights on the indispensable contributions of the youth demographic in ameliorating the plight of poverty during turbulent courses.

Theoretical Framework

Social Innovations in a Rural Region

Social innovation offers a novel approach to effectively address social challenges, aiming for sustainability, efficiency, and added value (Phills Jr. et al., 2008). Saiman (2013) suggests that social innovation emerges from specific situations and opportunities to enhance conditions. It functions as a tool, not merely an end goal. He further explains that the goal of innovation is to create positive change or improve conditions, distinguishing between incremental and radical (Ancok, 2012). Maccallum and co-authors' (2017) delineation of criteria for social innovation stands as a pivotal contribution to the discourse, furnishing a comprehensive and systematic framework against which the essence and efficacy of initiatives geared towards transformative societal advancement can be discerned. Each criterion, as articulated below, encapsulates a distinct facet of the multifaceted realm of social innovation, engendering a nuanced perspective on the salient dimensions therein:

First, addressing social problems. The imperative to transcend conventional social paradigms through ingenious solutions finds its manifestation in this foundational tenet; *Second*, creating new institutional relationships. Fostering collaboration among disparate stakeholders, including governmental entities, non-profit organizations, corporate entities, and local enclaves, engenders a synergetic convergence of perspectives and resources, thereby conferring heightened efficacy and protracted viability to the solutions proffered; *Third*, enhancing capacity: This criterion furnishes a critical aperture onto the empowerment of individuals and collectives, elevating their agency to assume stewardship over their developmental trajectories; *Fourth*, improving well-being. Imbued within this

precept is the ultimate ambition of social innovation—the elevation of individual and communal well-being. Inculcating a holistic orientation, this criterion transcends materiality to encompass psychosocial, emotional, and existential dimensions, thus epitomizing the quintessence of socially equitable transformation; *Last*, sustainability. Inscrutable in its depth, sustainability traverses ecological, temporal, and socio—political spheres, mandating the longevity of not only the interventions but their resultant reverberations.

Collectively, these criteria afford a scholastically rigorous vantage point from which social innovation may be comprehensively assessed. Unfurling a panoramic vista encompassing synergy, pragmatism, autonomy, holistic enrichment, and enduring efficacy, Maccallum et al.'s framework substantiates itself as an effective compass guiding the trajectory of social innovations. The government has initiated policies to support the vulnerable amidst the pandemic. These efforts include the *Program Keluarga Harapan* [PKH, Family Hope Program] involving conditional cash transfers, basic food cards, regional-specific food assistance, non-regional cash aid, and Village Fund cash aid. Additional government initiatives encompass wage subsidies, assistance for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), discounts on electricity bills, and internet access support. These programs function as a safety net, aiding those adversely affected by the economic crisis brought about by the pandemic. However, challenges persist. Inaccurate targeting of Covid-19 social assistance leads to uneven distribution, with some areas reporting inadequate aid despite being affected (Hakam, 2020). Conversely, individuals from higher economic strata sometimes receive assistance meant for the impoverished, attributed to flawed perceptions of poverty, verification issues in welfare data, and regulatory conflicts (Barus, 2021). Misdirected aid distribution can compromise the government's poverty alleviation efforts during the pandemic.

Youth-led Initiative during Crisis

The contemporary landscape of the workplace has undergone profound transformations driven by the infusion of millennial values, ideals, and identities into organizational frameworks. In response, social works are evolving to embrace and nurture these cultures, encompassing strategies like flexible work arrangements, employee engagement initiatives, transparent program trajectories, open channels of communication, and recognition of meaningful contributions. The cultivation of such skills necessitates a heightened level of engagement and collaboration, transcending conventional approaches to bolster workplace dynamics.

Folarin's (2021) postulates that pivotal attributes characterizing Millennial generation, such as collaboration, integration, multitasking, experimentation, and nomadic tendencies. He argues that these attributes materialize as integral components of their distinctive leadership styles. To ensure the professional success of Millennials despite generational disparities, Folarin emphasizes three essential strategies. First, providing a holistic understanding of the initiative—a broader perspective that resonates

with their proclivities. Second, aiding Millennials in finding their individuality within a team dynamic, striking a balance between the collective and the personal. Last, a targeted mentoring to develop career-building acumen, an area that early-career individuals might be less proficient in when compared to their more experienced counterparts. The valuable leadership traits that Millennials bring to the fore, such as adept multitasking, a penchant for diversity, creativity, flexibility, and a spirit to invest extra effort to attain success, hold immense potential for social works. By harnessing these qualities and concurrently imbuing future young leaders with a deep understanding of the initiatives' programs, goals, and vision, the foundation is laid for the cultivation of a generation of adept and visionary leaders.

Examining youth engagement in rural area becomes profoundly consequential in the context of crisis management. A study conducted by He et al. in 2022 delves into the dimensions of youth engagement, expounding on factors influencing millennials interaction and participation within government-related programs. The research sheds light on the efficacy of innovative engagement strategies, highlighting enhancements such as creative program presentations and trust-building mechanisms for youth participation (He et al., 2022). It also underscores theoretical paradigms like entertaining and collaborative governance within the realm of crisis communication, offering practical insights to foster effective and engaging crisis communication strategies targeted at the youth demographic.

Research Methods

This research uses qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach. Bogdan and Taylor on Moleong (1990) argued that qualitative method is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of words both written and oral from people and observed behavior. Qualitative research departs from the approach which is used to analyze the meaning of the data obtained in the field, or in other terms this research aims to understand the coverage information obtained in research that is not just revealing information that only appears on the surface (Bungin, 2008). The reason for using qualitative research methods in this study is that the social innovations of rural youth-led initiative in responding to poverty problems during the COVID-19 pandemic can be explained through data obtained in the field.

This research was conducted in Trenggalek Regency, East Java, as the base of the social care action of the Trenggalek *Sedulur* Association volunteers. Primary data sources in this study were obtained through direct interviews with individuals who know social innovations and programs of IST in dealing with social problems in Trenggalek, such as the board members of IST and its volunteers. Observation or direct observation in the field was also carried out to add to the research data. Meanwhile, secondary data in this research was obtained through documentation, literature studies, and archives obtained during the research. Direct interviews used the in-depth interview method with the help of a question guide. The technique of determining informants was carried out by

purposive sampling where IST members were selected with the prerequisite of having participated in social care actions for the last five years.

Results and Discussion

Rural Youth Activism During Pandemic

There are several social programs organized by *Ikatan Sedulur Trenggalek* responding to social problems and poverty-stricken issues that are prominent during the COVID-19 pandemic. The youth-led organization initiate database of needful persons, ambulance services, voluntary acts, fund-raising program, and collobaration with other rural entities and local institutions. These social innovations experience modifications and developments considering during an emergency condition such of the pandemic.

Visible social services of IST in relation to poverty management during the pandemic are *sedekah informasi Trenggalek*, *IST Peduli*, and ambulance service, *Rumah Singgah Trenggalek*, and *Relawan Pasukan Pink*. These social service programs overcome social problems occurring in civil society of Trenggalek Regency. The role of these social services has intensified in proportion during the pandemic. Almsgiving for poverty information has been increased considering that the number of people affected by the disaster and experiencing economic shocks has also increased. *IST Peduli* has expanded its target beneficiaries. Previously, IST Care was given to the poor according to their needs such as basic supply assistance and health equipment, while it later provided capital and managerial assistances for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Trenggalek during pandemic. Meanwhile, the IST ambulance services switched functions as a means of picking up bodies outside Trenggalek to be brought home to the funeral during the pandemic.

The analysis shows that the transformation efforts made by IST depart from social problems. This condition creates adjustment efforts so that people who experience economic shocks due to the pandemic can feel helped. Initially, IST programs are specified for internal members of the community while its program target is being expanded to non-members who are classified as the impoverished rural people during the pandemic.

Youth-Inclusion in Local Government Programs

The endeavors of IST necessitate collaborations with various entities and institutions to carry out social welfare initiatives aiding impoverished communities. Entities engaging in collaborative efforts and establishing relationships within the context of social service innovations during the Covid-19 pandemic encompass village governments across various districts within Trenggalek Regency, as well as Local Government of Trenggalek Regency. Village governments in multiple local clusters contribute by facilitating permits and distributing aid to the underprivileged beneficiaries of *IST Peduli*. Meanwhile, the Local Government of Trenggalek Regency facilitates access for IST to provide poverty

reports, thereby enabling impoverished communities to receive social assistance. This also ensures the accurate targeting of social aid recipients.

Efforts toward capacity enhancement aim to develop strategies that improve efficiency and effectiveness. IST consistently strives to enhance the capacities of its members in delivering social services through acts of compassion, specifically directed towards the Trenggalek Regency community. Effective communication and coordination skills among members play a pivotal role in realizing the social welfare initiatives of IST. Communication and coordination are achieved through social media and direct interactions. Additionally, the presence of an organizational structure that delegates responsibilities to each member contributes to capacity development. IST boasts both a central and local organizational structure, aiming for efficient coordination and communication. The central structure includes a chairman, secretary, treasurer, youth section, fundraising section, and social media administration section. Meanwhile, local organizational structures vary according to the specific needs of each region. Amid the pandemic, coordination and communication activities are largely conducted through WhatsApp groups, aligning with government-imposed social activity restrictions.

IST provides social services that act as a social safety net, enabling impoverished communities to sustain their livelihoods. As a part of civil society, *Ikatan Sedulur Trenggalek* also contributes to the betterment of society through social welfare initiatives for the impoverished, both pre- and post-Covid-19 pandemic. The members of *Ikatan Sedulur Trenggalek*, predominantly comprised of native youth from Trenggalek Regency dispersed across various districts, the outskirts of the city, and even overseas, have established a strong solidarity to create a positive social impact on one another. Numerous individuals within Trenggalek Regency have expressed gratitude for the aid extended by *Ikatan Sedulur Trenggalek* through the IST Community. Generally, the assistance provided is in the form of charitable aid.

The youth-led initiative provides capital support to MSMEs through the *IST Peduli* initiative during pandemic. Capital assistance is disbursed to pandemic-affected MSMEs in the form of cash contributions from IST members. This assistance is intended to foster community sustainability, ensuring their resilience during the Covid-19 crisis. This effort is aimed at rekindling the spirits of MSME practitioners, empowering them to continue their businesses amidst the Covid-19 crisis. At the very least, the endeavors they have embarked upon do not come to an abrupt halt.

The Profile of IST

IST is a tangible form of the development of interactions built through social media towards direct solidarity relationships in the community. Basically, IST is part of *Info Seputar Trenggalek* [Information Center of Trenggelek] which acts as a driver of social activities to the community directly and is not limited to interactions on social media alone. Currently, IST has passive members who only join IST's social media and active members, namely *Ikatan Sedulur Trenggalek*, who act as volunteers in IST's direct social care

actions. Most members of IST are young people who have a concern for poverty in their area. It has spread across all sub-districts in Trenggalek Regency, several cities in Indonesia, and abroad. Members of IST who are outside the city are incorporated in several regional offices including Kediri, Gresik, Surabaya, Malang, Sidoarjo, Jabodetabek, Bali, Samarinda, Sangatta, Ambon, Banjarmasin, and Batam. Meanwhile, the Trenggalek *Sedulur* Association abroad is also divided into several regional offices including the Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam regional offices. All members of the Trenggalek *Sedulur* Association specifically come from Trenggalek Regency, East Java. IST is one of the social communities that is the result of interaction through the social media of *Info Seputar Trenggalek* (IST). Meanwhile, *Info Seputar Trenggalek* is a social media-based community in Trenggalek Regency, East Java. IST community was formed on the basis of the need for the youth and community of Trenggalek Regency on social media to share information and stay in touch with each other. Since its first appearance in 2012, the *Info Seputar Trenggalek* (IST) Media Service Community has formed a solidarity network for fellow youth and communities of Trenggalek Regency on Facebook social media. Then, the IST social association was formed which aims to accommodate the interaction of IST members on social media to be more structured and organized.

In its dynamics, IST has carried out many social activities in the community of Trenggalek Regency. It also pays more attention to efforts to deal with poverty problems in Trenggalek in addition to being a means of sharing information and maintaining social cohesion for each of its members. The efforts of IST members in responding to the problem of poverty in Trenggalek Regency are realized through various social care actions. Generally, the social care actions carried out by the IST are more directed towards social services for the poor.

IST has had various forms of social services to respond to social problems in Trenggalek Regency. The social services carried out by the IST are a form of member solidarity to have an impact on poor groups of people who are in a more vulnerable condition. Basically, IST has its own initiative under the name “IST Media Service Community” and the result of cooperation with the Regional Government of Trenggalek Regency. Activities or programs that are initiatives of *Ikatan Sedulur Trenggalek* in addressing poverty issues include poverty information alms, *IST Peduli*, IST ambulance and activities to promote regional tourism. Meanwhile, the social services provided by the IST as a result of cooperation with the local government include *Relawan Pasukan Pink* [Pink Troop Volunteers] and the management of *Rumah Singah Trenggalek* [Trenggalek Shelter House]. The following is an explanation of some of the forms of social services provided by the *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association in more depth.

Millenials Handling Social Programs

This research explores the social innovations carried out by IST in responding to poverty issues during the pandemic. COVID-19 that has hit the community lately is an extraordinary condition that requires various adjustments. *Ikatan Sedulur Trenggalek* as part

of a civil society organization that has efforts to deal with poverty issues needs to be reviewed further on the role given during crisis. It is because social innovations from civil society organizations are something that is expected to answer poverty issues during the increasingly emergency Covid-19 Pandemic.

Sedekah Informasi Kemiskinan [Info Sharing of Poverty]

Sedekah Informasi Kemiskinan is the initial effort of IST with civil society of Trenggalek Regency and non-members of IST who joined *Info Seputar Trenggalek* (IST) social media to help deal with poverty issues. Info sharing is not only a matter of almsgiving materially and physically, but also in terms of conveying information. *Sedekah Informasi Kemiskinan* aims to track the whereabouts of poor people who need help. Thus, these poor people can immediately get help from either members of IST or the society of Trenggalek in general.

IST social media massively conveys information about poverty and social problems in Trenggalek Regency. This is based on the concern and care of Trenggalek-based netizens on social media. The existence of poor people with all the limitations makes netizens moved to convey it on IST Facebook social media. Thus, IST social media can be used as a funnel or means of providing this information.

The poverty information almsgiving effort originated from the many poverty reports that were discussed together by netizens on IST's Facebook social media. Poverty reports contain the condition of individuals in Trenggalek Regency who do not have the ability to meet their needs. From here, community efforts to convey this information are considered necessary to continue. This is related to the fact that there are still many poor people in Trenggalek District who need social assistance or protection.

Poverty information alms are delivered by passive IST members on social media and members of the *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association. In addition, people who are not members of IST social media or outside the *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association association can report the existence of poor people in Trenggalek Regency through communication with the *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association. This effort can be used to determine the whereabouts of the poor through the information submitted. Poverty information obtained will be followed up for immediate handling. Poverty information contains the full address, complaints, and current conditions faced by the individual to be assisted.

Alms of poverty information is taken into consideration by the *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association to carry out social care actions. Members of the *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association try to ensure the condition of the reported target by visiting his residence directly. The *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association can carry out social activities to help the poor in the short term through *IST Peduli*. The forms of assistance provided include cash, non-cash assistance, compensation, house renovation, and so on according to need.

Alms of poverty information can also be used as recommendations to the government regarding the distribution of social protection assistance for the poor in Trenggalek Regency. IST has become a partner of the local government in helping to deal with

poverty issues through the program of *Gerakan Tengok Bawah* [Down-to-Earth Movement, henceforth: GERTAK]. This effort makes it easier for IST to convey social issues to local government and policy-makers. Basically, all Trenggalek people have the same right to apply for themselves or others to get government social protection programs through the GERTAK Post. IST as part of the community tries to convey recommendations through poverty information aims to help make the distribution of compensation from the local government successful so that the assistance is right on target.

IST Peduli [IST Care]

IST Peduli is a donation-raising program carried out by members of IST. It is a follow-up to poverty reports through social media. This activity is based on many reports of poverty and is supported by the solidarity of the *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association to have a positive impact on people in Trenggalek Regency who are in need. The form of benefits from *IST Peduli* tends to vary depending on the poverty report and the type of assistance needed. The benefits obtained by the poor from *IST Peduli* activities are in the form of cash assistance, non-cash assistance (basic necessities, health equipment, etc.), and IST house renovation social services. This activity is flexible and routinely held in each regional office of IST.

The existence of regional offices aims to facilitate IST activities including *IST Peduli* activities to be more organized. The existence of regional offices, especially local offices, makes it easier to track the existence of poor people in certain areas. In addition, this can facilitate access to visit residents' homes and distribute aid directly. Meanwhile, regional offices located outside the city and abroad can still carry out *IST Peduli* donation-raising activities. However, the target of donations is still aimed at the poor in Trenggalek Regency. Donations are focused first on members of IST. Yet it is possible for non-IST members to receive donations from netizens or from donors. Until now, most regional offices have not experienced any problems regarding funding. All funding is covered through donation-raising activities by active members of IST.

The mechanism of the *IST Peduli* activity starts with the creation of a poster to raise donations for individual beneficiaries. The poster includes the target's name, full address, age, and current condition as the reason why the person needs to be helped. An account in the name of *IST Peduli* is listed to collect funds from the donation. Then, the funds collected are distributed to the target beneficiaries according to their needs. Then, members of IST will visit the residence of the target beneficiaries to distribute the assistance directly.

This assistance aims to help the needs of people in Trenggalek Regency who are less fortunate. At least, this assistance can ease the burden of community needs in the short term. IST does not keep records of the precise number of people assisted through *IST Peduli*. The distribution of *IST Peduli* is carried out based on a sense of solidarity and spontaneity from IST. Funds obtained from *IST Peduli* are directly distributed to individuals in need. The form of reporting is through documentation or uploading the

results of *IST Peduli* activities on the IST social media page. Generally, the people who are the target recipients of assistance feel helped by the fund-raising program. Considering its effectiveness, *IST Peduli* are carried out regularly in various regional offices of IST in both inside and outside of Trenggalek Regency.

Ambulans IST [IST Ambulance]

IST Ambulance is a facility provided by IST aiming to help people inside of Trenggalek Regency who are constrained by transportation cost so that they can use free ambulance facilities to the clinic/hospital. The provision of the IST ambulance comes from dues from members of IST and some funds from donors. The existence of this program is a community effort to provide free ambulance facilities for people who experience cost constraints in emergency conditions. The IST ambulance is only intended for the people of Trenggalek Regency who need it. People who need IST ambulance facilities must contact IST social media or contact members of the *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association to get immediate service. The *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association also provides drivers for the IST ambulance facility. All accommodation costs are borne by IST.

Rumah Singgah Trenggalek [Humanity Centre of Trenggalek]

Rumah Singgah Trenggalek is the result of the IST community's aspirations to the local government. Going beyond a halfway house, *Rumah Singgah Trenggalek* is a local government-funded humanity centre program whose funding comes from the Regional Budget (APBD). The centre is used as a stopover for the people of Trenggalek who are undergoing treatment at a referral hospital located outside Trenggalek Regency. The existence of the Trenggalek Halfway House aims to provide easy access for the people of Trenggalek so as not to spend too much money when undergoing treatment at the referral hospital. The location of the *Rumah Singgah Trenggalek* is in Malang City and Surabaya City. Its services are carried out by IST volunteers at Trenggalek with local government of Trenggalek Regency Service of Social Affairs, Women's Empowerment, and Child Protection (Dinas Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak, henceforth, PPPA).

Rumah Singgah Trenggalek was a direct input from IST to the government regarding the referral of health facilities from RSUD dr. Soedomo Trenggalek which is outside Trenggalek Regency. Basically, there are three choices of health facility referrals, namely RSUD dr. Iskak Tulungagung, RSUD dr. Saiful Anwar Malang, and RSUD dr. Soetomo Surabaya. RSUD dr. Iskak Tulungagung has easier access because it is located close to Trenggalek District. However, RSUD dr. Saiful Anwar Malang and RSUD dr. Soetomo Surabaya are further away.

Patients from Trenggalek Regency who need treatment at the referral hospital must repeatedly travel to the hospital. The costs required by patients and families will be even higher considering that the cost of living in big cities tends to be high. Patients who must receive treatment at referral hospitals do not necessarily have good economic conditions.

Thus, *Rumah Singgah Trenggalek* can be used as a solution to overcome these problems. This was responded by the government through the opening of the Trenggalek Halfway House in RT 14 RW 05 Mojo Kidul Housing, Mojo Village, Gubeng District, Surabaya City and on Jalan Jaksa Agung Suprpto Gang 01 No. 266, Samaan Village, Klojen District, Malang City.

The requirements for using facilities of *Rumah Singgah Trenggalek* are those domiciled in the Trenggalek Regency proved by an identity card. The program is targeted to patients who benefits from it are among Trenggalek people. The benefits provided include a bed, bathroom, place of worship, and daily consumption that has been provided by the manager of *Rumah Singgah*. These facilities is charged for free to the people of Trenggalek Regency. Residents who use this facility are served directly by volunteers of IST and supported by other government work units using government funding, considering that the *Rumah Singgah Trenggalek* is a social service program funded by the Trenggalek District Government.

More Innovation, Less Administration: Youth-Engagement in Social Programs

Relawan Pasukan Pink [Pink Troop Volunteers]

Relawan Pasukan Pink is a volunteer unit formed by the Trenggalek District Government to succeed in integrated poverty reduction efforts in the GERTAK Program. Most members of the Pink Squad Volunteers are members of IST. Bambang is the General Chairman of the *Relawan Pasukan Pink* and also acts as the coordinator of the Pink Squad. *Info Seputar Trenggalek* was specifically appointed by local government to help address poverty issues by making some IST members as *Relawan Pasukan Pink*. This is motivated by the active contribution IST Community in carrying out social care actions through social media or directly. In 2017, *Relawan Pasukan Pink* was inaugurated directly by Dr. Emil Elistianto Dardak, the Regent of Trenggalek Regency, at his office.

IST members acts as *Relawan Pasukan Pink* who volunteer to ensure that poor people who fit the criteria can have the opportunity to get assistance from the government. This effort is made so that the poor are fulfilled in their right to receive social protection assistance from the government. there are two active members of IST who become *Relawan Pasukan Pink* in each sub-district of Trenggalek Regency. They have the task of conducting surveys or reviewing the conditions of the poor based on reports at the GERTAK database. Reports are obtained from social media and integrated GERTAK service post.

IST volunteers at *Pasukan Pink* also coordinate with other IST members regarding the existence of poor people who have not been recorded in the database of government beneficiaries. IST will recommend individuals who deserve assistance from the government through reports or complaints. Thus, the *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association has a role in submitting reports through poverty information alms to be reviewed by other members of the *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association who have a role as members of the Pink

Squad. This is an effort by the IST Community to ensure that the government's social protection assistance program is right on target.

There are several social protection programs In the GERTAK program that can be received by the necessitous who meet the criteria. These programs include accommodation assistance, economic development, the assistance of *Badan Jaminan Sosial Nasional* [National Social Security Agency, or BPJS], *pembiayaan pelayanan kesehatan bagi masyarakat miskin* [health service financing for the impoverished, or “Biakes Maskin”], electricity subsidies, maternity insurance, assistance for families who have uninhabitable homes (RTLH—*Rumah tak Layak Huni*), *Program Keluarga Harapan* (Family Hope Program, PKH), compensation, health fee waivers, and education assistance. *Relawan Pasukan Pink* collaborate with other work units at the Trenggalek Regency Social Service considering that the operational GERTAK Post is located at the agency. Many residents have been visited by the IST youth volunteers to date and assisted to get social protection assistance from the government.

IST Media and the Promotion of Local Tourism

IST often organizes activities in various tourist destinations in Trenggalek Regency. this activity basically is not held regularly but on certain conditions. The organization and promotion of tourism activities is based on the concern of IST members to care for existing tourism in Trenggalek Regency using their solidarity. The promoted tourism includes natural, cultural, and religious tourism. The vast social media network of IST is utilized to promote tourism in Trenggalek Regency so that it can be used as a means of regional tourism promotion. IST strives to provide the fresh info regarding the state of tourist attractions in Trenggalek Regency through IST social media. This effort is made including when there are new tourist attractions opening in Trenggalek Regency.

IST millennial members, in addition to using social media, also seeks to promote local tourism in Trenggalek Regency in direct communications. They conduct tourism promotion activities through attractive contents and videos. The activities carried out tend to vary depending on the type of tourism presented. As a form of natural tourism promotion, IST often holds beach cleanup events in the southern coastal area of Trenggalek Regency. In addition, the *Trenggalek Sedulur* Association has also held the *Sego Uleg* Festival in the Putri Maron natural tourism area. The festival was held to coincide with the opening of the Putri Maron nature tourism area in Bendungan District, Trenggalek Regency. IST youth also often organizes jaranan festivals as part of the cultural wealth of arts in Trenggalek Regency. It shows that youth-led initiatives have concern for environmental and cultural conditions in rural regions. The social activities of the IST in the form of regional tourism promotion are uploaded through social media as a form of activity documentation.

IST cooperates with tourism managers, *Kelompok Sadar Wisata* [Tourism Awareness Groups, or Pokdarwis] and local Trenggalek governments in conducting regional tourism promotion activities, hoping tourism attractions and local businesses can run smoothly

after the pandemic. They also cooperate with other social communities in order to organize activities related to nature conservation and tourism. Regional tourism promotion activities aim to make tourist areas in Trenggalek Regency increasingly recognized. This effort is expected to create tourist attraction to visit tourist attractions in Trenggalek Regency with various types of tours that are served. In addition, this effort aims to lift the economy of the community around the tourist location with the number of tourists visiting.

Conclusion

Youth-led social initiatives are fundamental in dealing with social problems and emergency conditions. As a prominent constituent of civil society in rural area of Trenggalek Regency, *Ikatan Sedulur Trenggalek* assumes a fundamental role in the realm of rural humanitarian affairs and the provision of health support. The results show that the IST as part of civil provides social assistance to the necessitous who are experiencing capital and psychological shocks. The initiative which members are millennials has carried out social services in the form of social care actions since before the Covid-19 Pandemic took place. These efforts are based on members' concerns and initiatives to maintain solidarity among IST members.

Some social services that were more prominent, namely Info Sharing of Poverty, IST Care, and ambulance services due to disastrous circumstances. The mentioned efforts fall within the realm of social innovation due to their adherence to criteria such as addressing social issues, fostering new institutional relationships (organizations), enhancing capacities, promoting well-being, and sustainability. *Info Seputar Trenggalek* as a social media database has fulfilled multifunctional roles beyond being a common platform and it serves as homebase entity of IST initiative for information sharing among IST members on digital platforms. It endeavors to contribute to the alleviation of poverty-related challenges, akin to the general pursuits of IST.

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Author's declaration

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