Worldwide access to Indonesian national research on COVID-19: Indonesia’s scientific contribution to national, regional and global pandemic response

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Jakarta, 2 August 2021 – Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Health Organization (WHO) has brought together scientists from around the world to accelerate research and development on diagnostics, vaccines and therapeutics. WHO has also been collating the latest international scientific findings and knowledge on COVID-19. There has been an exponential increase in research publications by Indonesian researchers, however, only some of them have been published internationally and indexed in international bibliographic databases. To ensure worldwide access to Indonesian national research on COVID-19, WHO and the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) closely collaborated in integrating these publications in the WHO COVID-19 Research Database.

BRIN and WHO retrieved publications from two of the major national databases - Garuda (Garba Rujukan Digital) and SINTA (Science and Technology Index) from the beginning of 2020. Publications from various disciplines, sectors and geographic levels were harvested and screened for COVID-19 relevance and national accreditation status. Articles in English and bahasa Indonesia were then collated and indexed in the WHO COVID-19 Research Database, which provides central and free access to bibliographical and full-text information.

The Database is enabled with basic and advanced search features using Boolean operators, filters and sort functions, allowing Indonesian researchers, policy-makers and knowledge brokers to perform targeted literature searches in a timely manner. As of July 2021, the Database contains more than 2 000 COVID-19 publications from Indonesia, and the majority of the articles are in bahasa Indonesia. They can be easily found by using a dedicated filter, “Indonesian Research”, and applying an additional language filter.

“The pandemic has ignited an unprecedented scale of collaboration among researchers of different disciplines and sectors and has resulted in a wealth of local knowledge pertinent to local decisions. Our collaboration with WHO opened opportunities for our nation to realize the value of our contribution to science and technology,” said Ismunandar, interim Deputy of Research and Development of BRIN.

The National Institute of Health Research and Development, a national agency critical to both producing and applying research for health and public health decisions, expressed strong support to this recent initiative. “NIHRD promotes policies for health development and strongly supports the systematic and transparent use of research evidence for decision-making in health. We welcome and appreciate the integration of Indonesian COVID-19 research into the WHO COVID-19 Research Database. We look
forward to closely working with BRIN and WHO to best access and utilize Indonesian research on COVID-19 from various disciplines and sectors. We are also keen to facilitate research institutes in other ministries and universities to access both national and global evidence,” said the Secretary of NIHRD.

“Research evidence is an indispensable instrument for ensuring quality health policies. We at WHO believe that local research complements supranational evidence to provide more relevant options for local decision-making. And it also enables tailored, targeted strategies for national pandemic response. Indonesia’s investment in science, commitment in sharing knowledge and active efforts in accessing and utilizing research evidence are invaluable to advance pandemic preparedness in the future,” said Dr N. Paranietharan, WHO Representative to Indonesia.

WHO and BRIN will continue to update the WHO COVID-19 Research Database on a monthly basis and are committed to increasing the visibility and usability of a remarkable set of national resources for national and global response to COVID-19.

About BRIN

BRIN is a government institution which oversees all research institutes in Indonesia and has a mandate to conduct, develop, assess and apply multidisciplinary research for knowledge and innovation.

About WHO

The World Health Organization provides global leadership in public health within the United Nations system. Founded in 1948, WHO works with 194 Member States, across six regions and from more than 150 offices, to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable. Our goal for 2019-2023 is to ensure that a billion more people have universal health coverage, to protect a billion more people from health emergencies, and provide a further billion people with better health and wellbeing. #HealthforAll

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