

# Country Brief: Indonesia

Indonesia has major green growth potential across renewable energy, agriculture, fisheries, and the circular economy, but its vocational training system has not kept pace. Training centres (BLKs) rely on outdated materials and equipment. Curricula are designed nationally but poorly matched to what regional economies actually need, whether that is coffee in Sumatra, fisheries in the East, or palm oil value chains elsewhere. The coal-to-renewables workforce transition remains largely unplanned, despite clear demand signals from the private sector. Remote communities are excluded from information, training, and markets. Women working in technical sectors and fisheries are already leading adaptation work but remain disconnected from formal recognition and finance.

## At a glance

- Indonesian respondents in the global survey (n=21) included a significant rural proportion (one in three), higher than most other countries in the sample.
- Limited access to relevant training was the most frequently cited barrier, followed by financial constraints and lack of awareness. Rural youth were identified as the most vulnerable group by a clear margin.
- Waste management and circular economy was the top sector association (selected by nearly all respondents), followed by renewable energy and agriculture.
- Financial support was the top request (selected by more than four in five respondents), followed by local training opportunities, networking, and mentorship. No respondent confirmed current green training programmes are inclusive.

## Key Findings

- **Vocational training centres are outdated and underequipped.** An educator noted: 'The curriculum is still largely knowledge-based; the gap is still huge between the ideal and its implementation' (Educator, Indonesia). Sector experts added that centres 'still rely on conventional materials, which are not fully relevant to the green industry' and 'lack modern equipment to provide practical training in renewable energy' (Sector Expert, Indonesia). At the Launchpads, a private sector leader asked a direct question: 'What is needed are only small adjustments at the industrial sites. Why don't the BLK start training workers for the green energy sector?'
- **National training programmes miss regional economic realities.** A sector expert was direct: 'If the region's potential is in, say, plantations or coffee, training isn't even for that sector' (Sector Expert, Indonesia). A private sector leader identified a design flaw: 'One issue is the short duration of training programmes, which don't meet the real needs of the industry' (Private Sector Leader, Indonesia). Eastern Indonesia was referenced explicitly as a context where project realities differ from national assumptions.
- **Indigenous communities hold valuable knowledge but are excluded.** An NGO representative described longstanding stewardship: 'In South Sumatra, local wisdom and culture always have a connection with nature; the community has managed the forest for hundreds of years' (NGO Representative, Indonesia). Another described social forestry as an inclusion mechanism: 'We use a social forestry approach so that village communities and coffee farmers can obtain management permits' (NGO Representative, Indonesia). At the Launchpads, participants noted Indigenous youth were 'protecting forests long before climate became a subject.'
- **Women lead adaptation but lack formal recognition.** Sector experts described supporting fisherwomen to develop climate adaptation plans and access fuel subsidies (Sector Expert, Indonesia). Yet women are channelled into administrative roles by assumption: 'An assumption that women are [suited to] administrative roles should be handled by women' (Youth, Indonesia). Technical jobs remain coded as male: 'Technical jobs are still mostly seen as for men' (Youth, Indonesia). Inclusion must be deliberately designed: 'To make programmes more inclusive, we must ensure that women are involved in the training' (Sector Expert, Indonesia).



**“If the region’s potential is in, say, plantations or coffee, training isn’t even for that sector.”**  
Sector Expert, interview, Indonesia

## Spotlight: Social forestry: from community stewardship to formal rights

In South Sumatra, an NGO described how Indigenous communities have managed forests for centuries through customary practice, yet face barriers to formal recognition. Through a social forestry approach, village communities and coffee farmers in highland areas have been supported to obtain official management permits, formalising what was already happening on the ground (NGO Representative, Indonesia). This model shows how traditional ecological knowledge can be connected to national frameworks, provided that the process respects community governance and does not extract knowledge without reciprocity. It also illustrates the gap between what communities know and do, and what formal green skills systems recognise.

### Key Recommendations

Recommendation	Evidence basis	Who should act
Upgrade BLK vocational training centres for green-industry relevance.	Educators and sector experts describe outdated equipment and curricula. A private sector leader asked directly why BLKs don’t train for the green energy sector. No respondent confirmed programmes are currently inclusive.	Ministry of Manpower (Kemnaker); BLK training centres; Ministry of Industry; private sector employers.
Develop region-specific training tied to local economic potential.	Sector expert: ‘Training isn’t even for that sector.’ Short programme durations don’t meet industry needs. Eastern Indonesia faces distinct challenges from Java-centric programme design.	Provincial governments; district manpower offices; local employer associations; TVET institutions.
Create government-supported youth green jobs forums.	NGO interviews describe communities as ‘far from the internet, far from central information sources.’ Youth describe lack of trusted guidance on green careers. Almost half of respondents cited lack of awareness.	Kemnaker; Ministry of Youth and Sports; local government; NGOs (WALHI, Kemitraan).
Plan and fund the coal-to-renewables workforce transition.	Private sector leader: ‘The demand for workers in the green energy sector has not been met, because people remain focused on coal-related sectors.’ No bridging programmes exist for affected workers.	Ministry of Energy (ESDM); PLN; coal-region local governments; TVET; bilateral donors.
Connect fisherwomen and rural women to formal training, recognition, and finance.	Sector experts describe fisherwomen already leading adaptation. Youth describe technical roles as gendered (‘seen as for men’). Women channelled into administrative roles by assumption.	Kemnaker; Ministry of Women’s Empowerment; fisheries agencies; women’s organisations; TVET.
Ensure disability inclusion in vocational and employment frameworks.	Across the global survey, disabled youth were consistently identified as the most vulnerable group. No disability-specific provisions were described in any Indonesian interview.	Kemnaker; Ministry of Social Affairs; disability organisations; BLK training centres.

Source: Country survey respondents: n=21. Supplemented by key informant interviews, youth diaries, and Innovation Launchpad discussions.

**“Soft skills are really important, because they serve as a medium to collaborate with others.”**  
Youth participant, interview, Indonesia

