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## **A Case Study of a Successful Children's Education Program - The Semai Benih Bangsa Program in Aceh, Indonesia**

Anita Bernardus, Deva Rachman, Katri Krisnati, Nuraini Razak and Shanti Ardaneswari  
ExxonMobil Oil Indonesia Inc.

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### **Abstract**

Children are often abandoned and their education neglected in conflict areas. Aceh, located in the northern tip of Sumatra, Indonesia, has been a long-torn conflict area. The area faces poor educational conditions where schooling is mostly inadequate. This has led to conditions where students are less motivated and less accommodated in terms of proper and quality education. Hence, it is necessary to change the children's mind-set towards education and creativity early, and the best time to do this is when the children are still in the formative years of their school-going age.

Early in 2003, recognizing the need for an intensified model of pre-school for children in the area, the North Aceh Women Group for Family Welfare (TP-PKK) decided that the Semai Benih Bangsa (SBB, the Nurturing Seed of Nation) program is best suited to the solution of pre school education problems in Aceh.

In collaboration with the Indonesia Heritage Foundation (IHF), ExxonMobil Oil Indonesia Inc. (EMOI) provided support to this program in establishing pre-schools at villages across North Aceh. Starting with around 83 pre-schools, the company has now supported more than 200 pre-schools in the area with more than 4,000 children participating in this program. EMOI also supported the program by providing teaching books and training programs for hundreds of local community members to become teachers of SBB.

In 2007, in partnership with *Institut Pertanian Bogor* (IPB), Bogor Agriculture Institute, one of prominent university in Indonesia, EMOI assessed the impact of the program. The results show that there are significant improvements in the quality of teaching, the quality of children's character, and the number of children attending school in North Aceh.

In conclusion, this paper presents our strong belief that education provides a positive contribution in developing one's community. The importance of cooperation and collaboration with the local community is shown to be an essential factor in ensuring the success of any development program.