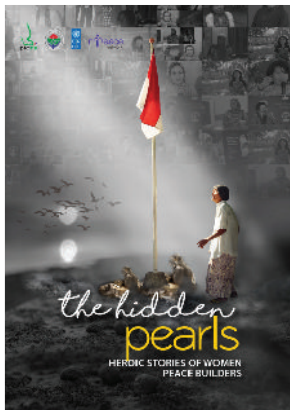




# the hidden pearls

HEROIC STORIES OF WOMEN  
PEACE BUILDERS



# the hidden pearls

HEROIC STORIES OF WOMEN  
PEACE BUILDERS

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3. All staff at the Regional and National PMU-PTDDA.
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In each conflict, women play an important role in ending hostility and mobilizing communities to begin the process of reconciliation and peacebuilding in post-conflict areas in Indonesia. Despite the increasing recognition of the experience and abilities of women as an asset in building peace, women are still seen as passive victims in each incident of conflict rather than as a resource in the prevention and reconstruction process. As a result, women often lose confidence, capacity, and access to the policy-making process, which allows them to make their contributions.

As one of the countries that plays an active role in developing regional initiatives that are incorporated in the N-Peace project, Indonesia has considerable experience in carrying out peacebuilding efforts, especially the initiatives of women leaders in the region in their efforts to create social cohesion in the community.

In Indonesia, women have made many contributions in conflict prevention and

peacebuilding, especially in the regions of Maluku, North Maluku, Central Sulawesi, East Nusa Tenggara and Aceh, which are post-conflict areas. Unfortunately, the success stories of women in the various regions have not been documented properly so they are unknown to the public. Since 2012, with the support of N-Peace, PTDDA activities have produced many success stories to inspire women all over Indonesia to contribute to peacebuilding.

In this context, the Directorate General for the Development of Special Regions of the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Areas and Transmigration as one Ministerial working unit in charge of the development of Border, Disaster, Post-Conflict and Food Scarce regions, has a significant role in driving, overseeing and disseminating the various initiatives of women leaders in the region in promoting peace and women's rights, to serve as an example and inspiration for women's movements in other regions.





Therefore, the Directorate General for the Development of Special Regions, in collaboration with N-Peace, through the Peace Through Development in Disadvantaged Areas (PTDDA) Project, has initiated the creation of the book, *Mutiara Terpendam – Kisah Heroik Perempuan Pelopor Perdamaian (The Hidden Pearls – Heroic Stories of Women Peace Builders)*. Hopefully the book can serve as an inspiration for all parties, especially peace activists and all the women in Indonesia in defending women's rights and creating a Peaceful, Just and Prosperous Indonesia.

Finally, on behalf of the Director General of Development of Special Regions, and acting National Project Director (NPD) PTDDA, I would like to thank all the parties, particularly the UNDP as a partner of the government, and N-Peace, who have collaborated and provided support in the preparation of this book.

I would also like to thank the PTDDA PMU, the author and women leaders in Indonesia who

have devoted their time and thoughts to this book. Hopefully, this book will be helpful and motivates us all to create a Peaceful and Prosperous Indonesia.

*Jakarta, December 2016*

Director General of Development of Special Regions The Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Suprayoga Hadi'.

**Dr. Ir. Suprayoga Hadi, MSP.**



## FOREWORD

**W**hen violent conflicts erupt, women suffer heavily. Their vulnerabilities dramatically increase, and many of them endure physical and psychological harm. They are therefore often portrayed as victims only. This publication looks at women in a different light. It is a tribute to the role women in Indonesia play in restoring peace and social cohesion in societies that have been torn apart by conflict.

Since 2010, under the regional initiative 'Engage for Peace, Equality, Access, Community and Empowerment', the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Indonesia has supported the project 'Peace

Through Development in Disadvantaged Areas'. The project aimed to enhance women's role in peacebuilding and conflict resolution as leaders, mediators, and facilitators. Over the years, the project has sought to document the many contributions Indonesian women bring to conflict recovery, which remain too often undocumented, unknown, and as a result, unrecognized. What has emerged are the inspiring real life stories of women who have spoken out in their communities and in Parliament, helped restore dialogue, and pursued justice and reconciliation. This publication presents seventeen such stories from five parts of Indonesia, showing the power of



women and recognizing their achievements in bringing peace and stability.

On behalf of UNDP, I would like to express our most sincere thanks to the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, in particular the Directorate General for the Development of Special Regions in the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration for the excellent cooperation and support provided in preparing this publication and in making the 'Peace Through Development in Disadvantaged Areas' project a most successful one. I would also like to express our admiration and

gratitude for all the women who have actively engaged in the project, and who - most importantly - have been the "hidden pearls" of peacebuilding and conflict recovery.

*Jakarta, December 2016*  
Country Director, UNDP Indonesia

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Bahuet', written over a light blue grid background.

**Christophe Bahuet**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** - Director General of Development of Special Regions The Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration ~ iv

**FOREWORD** - Country Director UNDP Indonesia ~ vi



## **ACEH - THE HIDDEN PEARLS**

- Peace with Dignity; Peaceful Dialogues Rehumanize Combatants ~ 2
- Strengthening the Role of Women in Tuhapet ~ 7
- Peace in Aceh and the Art of Mobilizing ~ 12



## **CENTRAL SULAWESI - THE HIDDEN PEARLS**

- Deterrence without Resentment; The Role of Female Mediators in Customary Law Enforcement ~ 18
- Becoming a Humanitarian Politician, the Woman in Parliament Speaks Out ~ 25
- Women Pursue Justice, Reinforcing Non-Violence ~ 31



## **MALUKU - THE HIDDEN PEARLS**

- Education that Liberates, for Everlasting Peace ~ 37
- Always Give Love Despite Our Differences ~ 42
- Fighting Through Musrenbang (Development Planning Forums), to Achieve Widespread Peace ~ 48
- The Peacemaker from Langgur, Kei Island ~ 54



## **NORTH MALUKU - THE HIDDEN PEARLS**

- Conflict Transformation in Halmahera; Toward Establishing an Integrated Farming Campus ~60
- Bringing the Hibua Lama Philosophy Down to Earth, Practicing Qasidah for Reconciliation ~ 66
- Reconciliation Begins with Bacarita Kampung ~ 72



## **NUSA TENGGARA TIMUR - THE HIDDEN PEARLS**

- Peace Journalism, for Women and Justice ~ 78
- Faith for Peace, the Church Embraces All ~84
- Songs, Drumbeats of Peace ~90
- Love and Peace, for Those who are Oppressed ~ 96

## **ANNEX**

About Peace Through Development in Disadvantaged Areas ~ 104

N-Peace at a Glance ~ 108

List of Abbreviations ~ 110

Peace with Dignity;

# PEACEFUL DIALOGUES REHUMANIZE COMBATANTS

## SHADIA MARHABAN

Pioneer of peace in Aceh, the sole female attending the Helsinki peace talks. One of the initiators of N-Peace Indonesia, UNDP's partner for N-Peace training on Women Waging for Peace and Training on Mobilizers.

**It is 7 pm at Canai Mamak, a famous culinary venue in the city of Banda Aceh. This restaurant is known for its variety of traditional Acehnese food ranging from light snacks to main courses such as various fried rice dishes, Aceh noodles, curries, and so forth. In addition to the cuisine, another attraction is the ambiance of the restaurant. The outdoor dining area is decorated in a minimalist style. Dim lighting from the garden lights provide a touch of romance and coziness.**

### COMBATANTS

Combatants are a segment of the population that actively participate in a battle. Civilians do not constitute the segment of the population that is entitled to participate in a battle. Noncombatants are a group of people that are not allowed to be attacked. For example: the Red Cross. The Red Cross which helps victims of attack from the enemy should not be attacked.

I believe it is the relaxed atmosphere that invites many young people and families to come to this cafe to dine and socialize. Thirty minutes later, Shadia and a man, whom I later learned was her husband, Nur Juli, join me. Although this was the first time I met one of the GAM's (Free Aceh Movement) important figures, I was impressed with her warm demeanor which revealed her many experiences as a public figure. Both Shadia and her husband were important figures in Aceh's transition from war to peace. They were the people behind the Helsinki Peace Agreement and both had chosen a path "outside the bureaucracy" to rebuild Aceh.

For me, the Helsinki Peace Agreement is like a double-edged sword: it provides the sweet fruit of peace for the people of Aceh but

deprives women and minorities in Aceh freedom with the enforcement of sharia law. Today, the Helsinki Peace Agreement is a sacred document in the way it is used as a scapegoat for the outbreak of conservative interpretations in Aceh after the enactment of Law No. 11 of 2006 on the Exclusive Autonomy of Aceh. My two hour meeting with Shadia Marhaban, one of Aceh's negotiators of peace, uncovered the polemic on 'who is really responsible for the enforcement of the Islamic sharia'. Part of the reason Shadia was able to reveal the nuances of this issue was due to her significant transformation post-Helsinki. She changed from someone who believed in the struggle for the dignity of the people of Aceh through war to someone who now believes in





Taking up arms was the only way Shadia considered to defend the dignity of the Acehnese people. Lobbying and dialogs were never a reference.

peaceful dialogues with combatants from various countries to campaign non-violent approaches to prevent injustices.

### What was Untold in Helsinki

Life as a "refugee" in 2003 was not pleasant for Shadia. Despite this discomfort, she refused to take advantage of the many offers of "green cards" she received. She felt that she was an Indonesian citizen and despite what happened would remain a citizen. At the time, Shadia was married to an American journalist named William Nelson (Billy) and they made a documentary called the Black Road together. When martial law was declared by President Megawati on May 29, 2003 at 13:00 pm, Shadia was forced to flee the next day, escaping to the forest with her husband. Her home

was raided by military forces and she was unable to return to her home in Aceh or to her house in Jakarta where her mother and the rest of her family lived. With the assistance of the Jesuit Rescue Center, she managed to flee to Bangkok.

As a refugee, taking up arms was the only means of defending the dignity of the Acehnese people for Shadia. Lobbying and dialogue were never an option. They were foreign to her. She joined the Aceh Center to campaign for the future of Aceh and its people. Together with her colleague, Munawar Liza Zainal who was a former mayor of Sabang, Shadia carried out international campaigns on the abuse of human rights in Aceh. Her proposed solution was independence. Her campaign for an independent Aceh was encased within human rights issues and



### WHO MAY BE DEEMED A COMBATANT?

- Official Armed Forces (regular) of a country
- Militia and Volunteer Corps
- Levee en masse
- Organized Resistance Movements, known as: guerillas, partisans, maquisard, freedom fighters, insurgents, Sandinistas, peshmergas, panjsheries, mujahideen, motariks, contras, muchachos, Khmer Rouge / Liberation Tiger, Mau-Mau, fedayins, etc.



“She does not represent women” was expressed by several parties that felt even though Shadia was the sole female attending the Helsinki peace talks, she did not represent their needs.

supported by historical arguments that justified Aceh’s right for independence. The push for independence was a continuation of the work that she has carried out in 1997-1999 as the head of the Presidium along with the Aceh Referendum Information Center (SIRA).

Moreover, most activist groups supported independence but suddenly, the situation changed. The tsunami measuring 8 on the Richter scale swept the cry of independence that had echoed in Aceh for the past few years. The tsunami was the deciding factor that accelerated the making of the peace agreement. With the facilitation of the Finnish government, the leaders of the GAM finally accepted negotiations with the Indonesian government. Peace in Aceh was inevitable.

Although her name is not mentioned in many documents, her role as advisor of the GAM team was significant, especially in providing information on the developments in Indonesia. As many GAM leaders lacked an understanding of Indonesia because they have been living abroad for many years due to political asylum, Shadia had a very important role in providing the political analysis of the

“pros and cons” of the GAM’s position in the Helsinki agreement.

Her involvement in the Helsinki agreement was not a coincidence. The fact that she served as loyal informant, that she fled into the forest and lived with GAM combatants, that she campaigned for Aceh’s independence all were evident of Shadia’s real dedication and struggle. As such, Bahtiar Abdullah, the GAM spokesman, invited Shadia to attend the talks in Helsinki and follow the developments of the talks once every two weeks for six months.

Although Shadia was committed to and involved in the peace talks, there were several groups that felt Shadia did not represent them. The statement, “She does not represent women” was expressed by several parties that felt even though Shadia was the sole female attending the Helsinki peace talks, she did not represent their needs. In response, Shadia straightforwardly claimed she was representing the GAM and not the women’s movement. However, due to her involvement with SIRA she was eventually appointed as a GAM community and women’s representative. The following is a



reconstruction of my conversation with Shadia regarding her position of not being a representative of women:

**Ruby:** You are not considered as a representative of women

**Shadia:** I do not represent women. I represent the GAM, and in the document, it is very clear that I represent the GAM. At that time, I had no thoughts concerning the women's movement, women's issues such as domestic violence or sexual abuse. For me, the victims of sexual abuse or domestic violence are a consequence of war.

**Ruby:** At that time were there any women's movements that facilitated?

**Shadia:** At the time I was involved in the negotiation process, there were no women's movements that contacted me. I was also surprised. I had obtained little understanding of women's issues after being invited back and forth and asked about the matter.

Although she does not represent the women's movement in Aceh, Shadia believes that all victims of war should be given justice including support for victims of gender-based violence during war. On the enforcement of Islamic sharia, Shadia emphasized that none of the texts in the Helsinki agreement specifically discussed the adoption of Sharia law as an answer to self-governance.

Even when Adriana Venny, a member of the National Commission on Violence against Women, sought clarification from Shadia of the alleged recommendation for the enforcement of sharia Islam in the Helsinki Agreement, she responded firmly: "Not a single word was mentioned about Islamic sharia during the Helsinki agreement." Tengku Malik, as one of the dignitaries of the GAM, reiterated that the Acehnese people have been practicing Islam for a long time and have even helped spread Islam in Southeast Asia, so it was irrelevant

to include Islamic sharia in the peace agenda. "It should be left to the people of Aceh," said Shadia.

### Rehumanizing Combatants

After the Helsinki Peace Agreement, Shadia's mission became "to inspire armed groups with the idea of peace with dignity." This mission originated after the successful series of empowerments of former female combatants in Aceh. After the establishment of the Helsinki Agreement in December 2006, Shadia founded the Inong Aceh League (LINA), an organization of female ex-combatants that conducts programs to strengthen basic capacities such as reading, writing, computer skills, and economic strengthening skills. "I want ex-combatants to be appreciated not because they are GAM victims or victims of violence but because of their knowledge," Shadia reaffirms. According to Shadia, all female ex-combatants have received computer skills training in Beuren and received financial support. Therefore, she finds it unusual when there is news that the majority of female ex-combatants have not received compensation.

For Shadia, while there are many aid programs that focus on providing financial aid for ex-combatants, there are no programs to develop "structured livelihoods" for female ex-combatants. In other words, the assistance programs available were short term and not sustainable in the long run. One female ex-combatant expressed the following, "Sister, we want to receive assistance. Each of us does not need to be given 1 million. We just want to have certainty of work in our villages. Plantations we can cultivate to obtain income and not depend on our husbands."

In addition to Shadia's work for peace in Aceh, she was also active abroad. In 2010, Shadia thought of starting a humanitarian mission of peace outside Aceh. She felt that she

"I want ex-combatants to be appreciated not because they are GAM victims or victims of violence but because of their knowledge," Shadia reaffirms.





Through the humanistic lens of “combatants are also human beings,” Shadia managed to open the door for dialogue with the combatant groups.



needed to meet with the various armed groups in countries that are plagued by conflict such as the Philippines (Mindanao), Thailand (Patani), Nepal and Myanmar. Her strong desire to discover new ground outside the province of Aceh and even outside Indonesia encouraged her to start a mission of rehumanizing combatant groups in neighboring countries. There was no option but to meet them. The knowledge she had as a peace negotiator needed to be shared with the combatants. The approach of “peaceful dialogue” with various combatant groups was successful in establishing a sense of trust between Shadia and the combatants in neighboring countries.

Patani is the first conflict area Shadia visited. Patani combatants were able to accept Shadia because of her status as a former combatant. Shadia conducted trainings for ex-combatants so that they had a variety of options to achieve peace with dignity. Shadia also broke through Mindanao by approaching the MILF to conduct trainings. Shadia was also present at the meeting of nine armed groups in Myanmar recently for peace talks. In her presentation, Shadia conveyed that peace is the only answer to the conflicts in Myanmar.

I am reminded of Shadia’s presentation in Romania in April 2015. During the mediation training and dialogue, Shadia’s transformation from former combatant to peace activist amazed all of the participants. This isn’t that surprising though. Her quest of the last five years in dangerous zones is born out of a guilt and a conviction for “peace with dignity.” Shadia feels

that she needs to convey to combatant groups at war to rethink the violent approaches they presently use as these methods will only give birth to more violence.

Through the humanistic lens of “combatants are also human beings,” Shadia managed to open the door for dialogue with the combatant groups. While there was a possibility of rejection of her and her message, it was not a given because the combatants perform their own research on Shadia before allowing her to meet up with them. Certainly there was anxiety and fear on Shadia’s part, but these feelings were mingled with the belief that they are human beings. During her visit with the combatants in Nepal for example, Shadia took the time to meet with their families and talk about family life. She is deeply convinced that the only way they will become peacemakers is first by humanizing them. This is because combatant groups typically have a very high militancy. From Shadia’s experience, many of the militants who had become peacemakers became very militant.

Shadia visited many combatant groups such as the MILF, Kachin, Maoist and Patani groups, but there are no publications of her visits. These visits merely serve as a reflection for her and the combatants. I was touched by Shadia’s statement on the possibility of approaching combatant groups. She claimed with a clear and resolute voice, “They are human. At this time, they have taken up arms and have political affiliation. But eventually they need to eat.” \*\*\*

# STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF **WOMEN IN TUHAPET**

## **RAIBAH**

Female villager pioneering non-violent resistance.  
Beneficiary of UNDP’s reintegration initiatives in South Aceh.

**The town of Tapak Tuan is the origin of two stories: the well-known legend of the princess and the dragon and the story of resistance of a Minang woman who used the power of a mother’s empathy to save her community. This second story is what drove us to take a six and a half hour road trip from Banda Aceh to Tapak Tuan on January 7, 2016.**

**T**apak Tuan is renowned for its astounding natural beauty, such as the white sands of the Panjang beach, the Tujuh Tingkat River, the cold waterfall, and the giant footprint on the hill. All these sights of Tapak Tuan are a delight and entice many tourists year round. The nutmeg forests that are hundreds of years old are also famous in Tapak Tuan. They are a source of livelihood for many of the residents in South Aceh, like the protagonist of this story. If in the past, the Portuguese were willing to sail halfway across the world for the charms of the spices from this region where the rencong (Acehnese dagger)

originates from, today, patchouli and nutmeg are the commodities that have saved the South Acehnese people from the world monetary crisis, proving the lingering importance of these spices to the community.

The protagonist of this story—the Minang woman who used empathy—is Raibah. She serves as a symbol for South Acehnese women’s resistance against violence in opposing the militarism of the GAM (Free Aceh Movement) and the TNI. What is also striking is her method of utilizing compassion as resistance and the ensuing path her life takes after this incident.

### **TAPAK TUAN**

Tapak Tuan is renowned for its astounding natural beauty, such as the white sands of the Panjang beach (Long Beach), the Tujuh Tingkat River (Seven Levels River), the cold waterfall, and the giant footprint on the hill. All these sights of Tapak Tuan are a delight and entice many tourists year round.

## Through Raibah's retelling, it was evident that life during a military emergency places people in the wrong position.

### Building empathy in soldiers, finding a second life

It was a silent, dark, and fiercely cold night. Not a single person dared to come out of their house when Raibah was picked up by a military entourage from her house on the hill. None of her family members were allowed to accompany her. Raibah was alone with strangers.

She gave birth twenty-five days prior. As a result, her condition was still weak. Without given a reason for her arrest, Raibah was escorted to the nearest military headquarters in the district of Tapak Tuan. Without any feelings of guilt, Raibah faced the military officials confident and fully alert. After six hours of intensive interrogation, she was finally allowed to return home.

Raibah told me this story when we met at almost midnight, two nights ago. According to her, the commanding officer felt sorry for her when she talked about mothers. The following is a snippet of the conversation that I reconstructed from Raibah's story:

**Commanding Officer:** You gave food to GAM. Did any of your neighbors also give food to GAM?

**Raibah:** Sir, I did give food to GAM, because they came to my house and what was I to do? If I did not give them food, I would have been killed. Sometimes we did not eat dinner because all the food was given to GAM.

**Raibah:** Sir, you may kill me, I am willing to die, but please let me return home to see my baby and say goodbye to my family members.

**Commanding Officer:** Why should you return home first?

**Raibah:** You have a mother, she is a mother like me. Of course, I want to know the condition of my child.

**Army chief:** (With teary eyes and a wistful expression) ... Do not talk about my mother, I will feel sad.

At 6 am the next morning, Raibah was safely escorted back to her home. There was a clamor as Raibah was

reunited with her family. The villagers all came out to express their gratitude as did others from various places located further away from Raibah's home. The villagers were grateful that nobody was arrested after Raibah's arrest. This lack of arrests meant that Raibah did not disclose any information regarding the villagers who also gave food to GAM combatants when in fact the Komomohulu Village, in the sub-district of Labu Haji Timur, was the village that was most visited by the GAM and the TNI.

"Some say that you are a member of GAM?" My insinuating question prompted a big smile along with a somewhat surprised expression from Raibah. Meanwhile, Raibah's children, Benny, Umar, Yusnida and Ros laughed. A second later, they were silent and Raibah began to speak. "I get confused when I am asked that," she said. "All of us here are often suspected as GAM members because we often provide food and food supplies such as rice, sugar, coffee, etc. If we do not cooperate, we are shot with an AK 47. So regardless of whether I am GAM or not, what is clear is that we suffer because we are a secondary target."

Through Raibah's retelling, it was evident that life during a military emergency places people in the wrong position. If one is too close to the GAM, they can be captured by the military and be killed because they are considered to be supporting the GAM struggle and vice versa, if one is too close to the military, they will also receive the same fate by the hands of the GAM. Abducted and killed was the most likely outcome. According to Benny, the treasurer of the Pala Forum who accompanied me during my time in Tapak Tuan, in the beginning, the people supported the GAM's struggle for independence. However, after various kidnappings and murders committed by the GAM, people returned to their neutral political position. Despite their neutrality though, they are often targeted by





both military groups. Benny continues to tell me about the first selection of GAM members where the recruitment targeted only people with strong militant backgrounds to join their "Kopasus" (Special Forces). However, afterwards, propelled by a sense of urgency, they conducted a massive recruitment without restrictions. It was then that it became apparent that they were not able to control the behavior of their personnel. In the beginning, GAM members used to come to the village to ask for voluntary contributions from the residents but later, they changed their methods to stopping public transportation and forcing passengers to give them money.

The night Raibah was arrested is still embedded in her memory. Not because of her successful heroic struggle in lobbying the commanding officer to release her, but Raibah feels that God has given her a second chance in life. Usually people who are taken by force by the TNI or the GAM almost certainly never return. She thinks about her children. Her youngest son, Haikal, is in sixth grade. Her eldest daughter, Ros, recently got married after successfully completing a Diploma in Nursing and her second son is finishing college in the city. She also worries about the nutmeg business.

Raibah tells me about the decline of her family-run nutmeg business. As one of the more successful nutmeg producers, Raibah was able to earn 5-6 million per day in the 1990s. Even when the financial crisis hit in 1998, the price of distilled nutmeg oil was still high at 1 million per liter. That was the peak period of success for nutmeg farmers, especially since nutmeg oil was being exported. This success made many parents in South Aceh unsupportive of their children in becoming civil servants. The income of nutmeg farmers at that time was much higher than the income of civil servants.

Today, the prosperity of nutmeg farmers is declining. Partly it is due to the nutmeg trees which are dying. Trees planted a long time ago by their ancestors measuring 1 meter in diameter are most affected by fungi. Reportedly, the mushrooms are eating away at the roots of the nutmeg trees. The problem still persists today and the government itself is looking for the cause of deterioration of the nutmeg trees. While this has a detrimental effect on nutmeg farmers, Raibah and the other farmers refuse to switch to another crop, meaning replacing nutmeg with other spices. They believe that nutmeg will someday bring them prosperity again. The connection of

**The night Raibah was arrested is still embedded in her memory. Not because of her successful heroic struggle in lobbying the commanding officer to release her, but Raibah feels that God has given her a second chance in life.**



<https://www.fotovoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/>

## **As the only woman in the Tuhapet council, Raibah feels it is important to fight for the agenda of women and children.**

nutmeg and the Acehnese people is evident in this refusal and is succinctly expressed in the phrase, "one soul, one body." Raibah reiterated this metaphor further revealing the significance of nutmeg for the people of South Aceh.

### **Once Again, Affirming Women's Leadership for Peace**

It has been two years since Raibah became a member of Tuhapet, the village council. Her trustworthiness in not betraying others and her nature of fulfilling a mandate have captured the attention of the villagers of Komomohulu. In addition to Raibah, there are four other community leaders that have been selected namely, Hasanen, M. Yasin, Zulkifli, and M. Alimi. All members of Tuhapet have an undisputed spirit of leadership and motivation to defend the weak. Raibah herself is considered to have a good heart and is a role model for behavior that does not easily sacrifice others as she proved the night of her arrest.

The night she was arrested in 2003, Raibah did not divulge the names of her neighbors who also provided food and supplies to the GAM combatants. When the Commanding Officer kept asking, "Who are the others that gave food to GAM like you?" Raibah

consistently answered, "Nobody. I am the only one. The others did not."

Tuhapet has a strategic position in the village structure. This is a prestigious position because the people who are members of Tuhapet have been directly elected by the people through village meetings. Age is not a criterion. Rather, persona and strong leadership are the main requirements. These qualities must be proven. Raibah, at only 42 years of age, has an undisputed strength of spirit and persona. The whole village witnessed it.

In addition to Tuhapet, Tuha Lapan is also involved in the decision-making in the village. The village head always includes Tuhapet and Tuhalapan in determining the strategic policies for the village, for example, determining the priorities of rural development and annual distribution of the budget for activities. They convene several times a year, perhaps four or five times, depending on the needs of the village.

As the only woman in the Tuhapet council, Raibah feels it is important to fight for the agenda of women and children. Several groundbreaking protection programs for women and children proposed by Raibah to become a priority of the village have become success stories. The first is the



## TUHAPET

In each community in Aceh, there is a Tuhapet. Tuhapet is a local, traditional government system. Tuhapet holds a strategic place in the structure of the village. It is a prestigious position because the members sitting in the Tuhapet are elected directly by the people through village meetings. Age is not a criterion but persona and strong leadership are the main requirements. All of these qualities must be proven.

assistance in improving the nutrition of children in her village. At the Posyandu (Integrated Health Services Post), children are given a cup of mung beans and milk. Currently, the village administration allocates assistance consisting of 1 can of milk, 2 liters of mung beans, sugar and salt for each family. This assistance is planned to be given once a month by using village budgetary funds.

Long before there was the village fund, Raibah in 2006 successfully urged the village administration to provide assistance in establishing a women's cooperative that was named Bunga Mawar. Initially, there was resistance from the Tuhapet members. However, Raibah provided reasons for the importance of establishing a women's group in the Komomohulu village. Here is an excerpt of the narrative:

"We won't live with our husbands forever. If our husbands die then surely we must raise our children. With the existence of a women's cooperative we can learn to produce chips to be sold while taking care of our kids."

The argument above was considered logical because it was evident that there were many widows in the village due to the GAM-TNI

conflict. The women's cooperative would raise women's economic empowerment. The basic programs of the Bunga Mawar cooperative include venture capital assistance, leasing of agricultural equipment, and purchasing rice from farmers. Currently, the cooperative is composed of 40 women and already has a turnover rate of 400 million rupiah.

Despite all the positive contributions to the village life, Raibah receives grievances from the villagers regarding the village administration. Being the only woman in Tuhapet often places Raibah in conflicting debates when defending women's issues or the interests of small groups. According to Raibah, maintaining a middle ground is very important so that all people can benefit from her existence as a member of Tuhapet. She believes if a woman is trusted to make important decisions for all people, then this will further reassure the public that women's leadership is necessary..

However, when asked about her interest in running for village head, Raibah just looks down modestly. No words are uttered out of her mouth. It is evident however, that women leaders are not haram.\*\*\*



# PEACE IN ACEH AND “THE ART OF MOBILIZING”

## Suraiya Kamaruzzaman

Defender of women’s rights in Aceh, recipient of the N-Peace Awards 2012.  
Beneficiary of UNDP’s training on Women Waging for Peace.

**Suddenly, the middle-aged woman who was standing off to the side, hugged her and whispered, “Because you have trained us, we were able to save 13 of our sons.” The woman burst into tears. It was at the 3rd Seia (Aceh Inong Union) Congress, that Suraiya Kamaruzzaman or Aya as she was better known was reunited with Mrs. Rukiyah Abas who she trained 20 years ago. Mrs. Abas’s emotional response affected everyone until there wasn’t a dry eye in the room. It never dawned on Aya that the guerrilla training she lead as part of the Flower Aceh activities during the conflict would have an unexpected result. Specifically, she never imagined this training would inspire acts resulting in freedom for the small communities.**

### What is N-Peace

N-Peace is an abbreviation for Engage for Peace, Equality, Access, Community and Empowerment, which was established in 2010 by female peace activists to commemorate a decade of the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. N-Peace is a multi-regional initiative among 8 countries that include Nepal, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Pakistan and Myanmar. This initiative promotes women’s leadership by acknowledging the major role women play in building peace and preventing conflicts as well as creating more stakeholder involvement on issues related to women, peace and security.

**A**s Mrs. Abas explained, fourteen boys had been “secured” at the military headquarters in Gampong Meunasah Hasan, District of Bireuen. She and several other women entered to demand the release of their sons. In response, a weapon was pointed at each of the women’s necks. The women reacted by forming a line. Hand in hand, they walked in unison. The row of women succeeded in forcing the security forces to free 13 out of the 14 boys. Apparently, this practice of forming a broom as defence stemmed from the guerilla training exercises where it was discussed as an organization theory and tool. Mrs. Abas remembered it and used it effectively.

This story gave Aya encouragement. Consistently fulfilling the mandate “khilafah fil ard” (moral agent) is not easy. This story of change renewed her energy in peeling complex issues layer by layer. Although she realizes she

will never manage to reach the base layer of an issue, she is determined nevertheless. Being an activist is not a promising profession. Rather, it is more like a calling. The high amount of human rights violations in Aceh cannot be responded with silence. The world must know of the injustices in Aceh. The world must also shout in rhythm with the cries of the Acehnese women whose husbands and sons have been detained and imprisoned on the accusation of being members of GAM (Free Aceh Movement). The women of Aceh must receive justice, however long it may take.

Born and raised in a family where noble values were a core component of life, Aya believes that change will happen if one has a clear concept of oneself and a commitment to non-violence and gender equality. Her strong determination in defending the rights of victims resulted in numerous awards including the Yap Thiam Hien





## Suraiya Kamaruzzaman, Recipient of the N-Peace Award 2012

As the founder of Flower Aceh in 1989, Suraiya Kamaruzzaman has struggled since the age of 20 when she was in her third year at the University of Syah Kuala, Banda Aceh. Suraiya fought to defend the rights of women in Aceh and helped the women of Aceh who were victims of military violence and sexual violence in conflict areas.

Together with her organization, Suraiya collected data on violence against women and provided assistance to the victims. Since the tsunami in 2004, Suraiya founded the Women's Crisis Center along with other women's groups in Aceh to socially, politically and economically empower women.

Suraiya is actively involved in various organizations such as the Women Volunteers for Humanity (RPuK), the Aceh Gender Transformation Work Group (KKTGA), and the Institute for Policy Research and Advocacy. In 2000, Suraiya was elected as Head of the Acehese Women's Congress and played an active role in providing gender analysis for the Draft of the Law on Social Conflict Management.

For her services in defending human rights and empowering women in Aceh, Suraiya received the Yap Thiam Hien Award in 2001. For Suraiya, the N-Peace Award is recognition of the struggle of all women who in times of conflict or in the maintenance of peace are unrecorded and unrecognized in all the regions of Indonesia.

Award (2001), N-Peace Award (2012), Tokoh Peduli Perempuan (Women's Awareness Figure) (2012) and She Can (2014). Having a clear concept of oneself, and a commitment to non-violence and gender equality are also integral to the teachings in Flower Aceh, which was founded in 1989.

As the name suggests, Flower Aceh brings a new vigor to the social movement in Aceh. It takes the distinctiveness of the Acehese women and the strength of motherhood to voice injustices. The strategies and approaches of Flower Aceh are perceived by some to go against the mainstream means of promoting gender equality. As such, these people consider them weak. Despite this, the women involved in Flower Aceh are able to bring new hope to the community by pushing for "peace." They first appeared in the Acehese Women's Congress, better known as Duek Paket Inong Aceh, in mid-February 2000 with the support of human rights activists and GAM activists, to promote their referendum and independence. The message "kru seumangat inong Aceh bak duek pakat keu aman, makmu, and adee" (keep up the spirit Acehese women to create safe, prosperous, and

fair conditions together) is a mantra for the Acehese women, expressing their aspirations to determine the future of Aceh.

Aya and other female activists within Flower Aceh, organizations under the umbrella of BKOW (Corporation and Agency of Women's Organizations) and other women's organizations, became increasingly convinced that peace is the ideal of the people of Aceh. They realized that independence could be a solution, but it was a costly one. What was evident was that confrontations and violence needed to be stopped because it was counter-productive to the character of peace itself. Therefore, Aya along with a network of women led by Flower Aceh in partnership with Madika (human rights organization based in Lhokseumawe) began campaigning using peaceful approaches. Messages of peace were printed on various campaigning tools such as T-shirts, stickers, books etc., with the following excerpts: "Women have the right to live"; "We are part of the community that is anti violence against women. How about you?"; "May DOM (Military Operations Areas) no longer exist in Aceh"; "The flame of the Aceh lamp is inextinguishable"; "They



## **Another way of looking at it is If Eric Fromm has the Art of Loving, then Aya has the Art of Mobilizing.**

*are entitled to live in peace” (this last message was written on stickers and posters depicting children playing in front of a traditional Acehnese house).* These messages are part of a strategy of suggestion. At that time, peace was still a dream. However, presenting the dream in campaign messages to the community was the beginning step of making it into a reality. Aya believed the power of suggestion would create spaces to present the dream for peace.

### **Peace and the Art of Mobilizing**

Alternative medicine, access to pharmacies, acupressure techniques, body and prana works, backyard vegetable gardens were all forms of campaigning and organizing done by Flower Aceh as a means of survival in addition to promoting food security and access to education. All these grassroots efforts were to enable women to live independently. Due to the conflicts, many people were afraid to leave their houses and not all public services were functioning properly. As such, it was necessary for women to be self-sufficient and be equipped with the practical skills for liberation and survival.

Serving as a role model, Aya also is aware of the influence of her personal life. She practices a healthy lifestyle and takes advantage of the narrow

land around her home in Banda Aceh to plant vegetables and traditional medicinal plants.

Within women’s empowerment, one of the important things is to keep the morale of the community high as feelings of despair and failure can diminish the momentum. As such, it is important for the facilitator of women’s groups to always bring fresh ideas for the short term that can be used in everyday life. I call this a basis consolidation. In other words, it is a platform that involves unlimited creativity and no fixed formulas. Another way of looking at it is If Eric Fromm has the Art of Loving, then Aya has the Art of Mobilizing.

Peace in Aceh was inevitable in the long run. However, to convince many people that what was needed in Aceh was peace and not referendums or independence was difficult. This motivated Aya to double the bases, which promoted the same ideology, an ideology of peace. Aya realizes that it was important to unite the voices of the Acehnese women to move in solidarity to promote the peace process.

Aya also felt that women working in predominately male dominated institutions should be approached to support her fight. On June 2, a meeting was successfully held. To rouse the compassion of these young women,



Aya presented data on the impact of conflict on various villages and especially the impact on women and children and the conditions they were living in refugee camps. At the end of her presentation, Suraiya instilled the audience with a sense of urgency to change the fate of women and the necessity of the peace movement. Peace as the end goal was needed in order to improve the fates of all women, children, and people of Aceh. From this meeting, the Women Volunteers for Humanity (RPuK) was born and Aya was appointed as coordinator for the initial six months to launch the foundation of the organization.

At the core of civil society organizations is the push for empowerment and liberation in contrast to government programs. They are the strong base needed for the future development of democratization in Aceh. Even after peace is achieved, it is vital for Aya to ensure that CSOs are ready to oversee the transition process in Aceh. Aya, along with Flower Aceh and several women / human rights activists are actively involved in forming several organizations such as the Gender Transformation Working Group of Aceh (KKTG), Suloh (Aceh Advocate Network) the Shura Ureung Inong Aceh Association (BSUIA), Women's Voice Community Radio, and encouraged the formation of the Inong Aceh Union and Aceh Farmers Network (Permata).

Without proper calculation and measurement, there cannot be any

successful strategies. All aspects associated with strategies of non-violence action were properly planned by Flower Aceh, including the guerilla human rights training. This was conducted at the grassroots level deliberately so that the women of Aceh women understood their constitutional rights as human beings. There was not a single activity that wasn't aimed at the realization of human rights and skills to defend one's own rights and the rights of the community. In reinforcing these skills, the broom illustration is often used to visualize a collective movement that is not easily broken.

Apparently, it is this illustration that encouraged the women in Gampong Meunasah to rise up and collectively pick up the 13 boys in their village who were secured by the military. Flower Aceh also chooses not to use violent narratives in their campaigns that advocate peace. It passes layers of sensors so that as a women's movement for peace, Flower Aceh does not reproduce a culture of violence.

Aya is fully aware that the peace movement requires many connectors (liaisons). Therefore every strategic decision, approach and tactic was well thought out in order to not offend any institutions be it the military, GAM, the national government or other social movements. Due to its neutrality, the Flower Aceh movement gradually received wider support. In fact, the military did not hesitate to display posters produced by Flower Aceh. A friend who had been caught by GAM

**Aya is fully aware that the peace movement requires many connectors (liaisons).**



**Peace can now be felt. There aren't any sounds of weapons being loaded. The people are now able to go out at night without worry of military operations from both the TNI and GAM.**



was later released because she was wearing a T-Shirt that read, "Women are entitled to peace".

The Acehese women's peace movement was crystallizing. In 2000, an Acehese Women's congress (DPIA) with a peace agenda was held, where Aya acted as the Head of the Steering Committee. Women from various districts / cities in Aceh attended to reach an agreement on the main recommendation points on the ways Acehese women wanted to achieve peace. This recommendation was to later be submitted to the Indonesian Government (President Abdurrahman Wahid). Unfortunately, the congress did not raise enough urgency from civil society representatives, specifically women to sit down and negotiate with GAM and the Indonesian government in Helsinki, even though the DPIA humanitarian recommendation process involving women from the Humanitarian Committee and Security Modalities Committee were accepted by both parties. Nevertheless, the narrative for peace of the Acehese Women's Movement continues to echo and spread so that it is not impossible that the echoes reach Jakarta. Indeed, there are many other factors.

**A New Chapter for Aceh, Sources of Violence Spread**

Peace can now be felt. There aren't any sounds of weapons being loaded. The people are now able to go out at night without worry of military operations from both the TNI and GAM. A new chapter in the lives of the Acehese people is unfolding. The Memorandum of Peace had been signed by GAM representatives and the Indonesian government on August 25, 2005 in Helsinki, Finland. Although there was only one woman in the role of advisor present in the peace agreement, the results still had to be monitored together.

Aceh today is not free of interpretation. Although nobody can be 100 percent sure that the content

of the Helsinki agreement has been implemented, the one thing that people are certain about is that the Helsinki agreement never mentions that Islamic law should be imposed in Aceh. Responding to the rapid development in Aceh, which resulted in high degradation of the Acehese values, I would like to present a summary of my interview with Aya in the form of a dialogue to determine the crucial turning point in Aceh. The following is a construction of my dialogue with Aya on January 6, 2016.

Ruby : What are the differences between the conditions in Aceh during the war and now?

Suraiya: (paused a few seconds, while taking a deep breath)... Previously the source of violence was clear, which was the military, or GAM. Now sources of violence are increasing that sometimes we ourselves are confused. During the conflicts, we were able to clearly identify the potential for violence, but now almost everything can potentially trigger violence.

Ruby: What has changed in your movement?

Suraiya: Previously the focus of our advocate was safety, the lives of women, natural resources. Now we focus on policies, strengthening of victims, use of budget and planning of government programs although we still carry out campaigns for peace.

The strategy and approach of the women's peace movement has expanded and evolved from strengthening of the base to the assistance of elite decision makers. This is done to ensure that all policies are gender responsive. Although Aya is disappointed with the direction of government policies after peace had been established are taking, she has never given up. In addition to strengthening women at the grassroots level, she now, has dialogues and intensive lobbying in all executive and legislative branches. This is the main agenda of women's organizations such as Flower Aceh and Balai Shura,





a coalition of women’s organizations in Aceh which was formed in 22 April 2000, after the first Women’s Congress of Aceh. The aim is that all the policies that protect the rights of women and children are completely integrated in the qanun (legislation) and its programs.

Islamic Sharia is not a new narrative in the religious way of life in Aceh. However, there are new interpretations of Sharia law that discriminate against women. Aya is certain that this is not in the agenda of the Helsinki Memorandum of Peace. Shadia Marhaban, one of the negotiators of the Aceh agreement, confirms that the initial draft of the Helsinki MoU, clearly states freedom for religion and not Islamic Sharia. However, I found one article that could be misinterpreted, which reads as follows: “1.1.6. Aceh qanun will be re-established with respect to its historical traditions and customs of the Acehnese people and will reflect Aceh’s contemporary legal needs.” Perhaps this article was then used as the basis for the formalization of Islamic Sharia in Aceh.

Nevertheless, it is tiresome to constantly resist the formalization of Islamic Sharia in Aceh especially in instances where women are objectified and not seen as subjects with agency. Aya is a clear example of this. She and the Bali Syura coalition shifted their course from organizing grassroots

to more lobby work and establishing dialogues with decision makers. The organizational role is now widely held by young activists. To strengthen their influence in the Aceh government, the strength of the Balai Syura was multiplied. Suraiya also immerse herself with the movement of this coalition.

The Qanun of Truth, Justice and Reconciliation (KKR) that had stalled for several years because it lacked legal basis at the national level, is now beginning to be discussed again. In fact, the Selection Committee (Pansel) KKR Commission has recently been formed to prepare for the recruitment of members of the commission and to ensure the Aceh DPRD (Legislative Council) Commission I will select people with credibility and high integrity to address the human rights violations in Aceh. Aya was appointed as a member of the Selection Committee.

What is obvious is that Aya is becoming increasingly busy. Thankfully, her beloved husband, Hadi Sutedjo and her three children - Gilang Zavatra, Dimas Gallantino, and Kinanti Larasati are very understanding of Aya’s activity. Although they are unable to live in the same house because of their studies, regular meetings with all family members present is an important agenda for Aya. In fact, having dinner with her beloved husband is important and so is scheduling time to maintain the harmony of the couple.\*\*\*

Deterrence without Resentment;

# THE ROLE OF FEMALE MEDIATORS IN CUSTOMARY LAW ENFORCEMENT

## Ramlah

Customs-based peace mediator.

Beneficiary of UNDP N-PeaceTraining of Mobilizers.

**While the road to Porame Village in Central Sulawesi is paved, it is so damaged that cars need to slow down. Every now and then, the driver has to veer off to the sides of the road to avoid potholes. It is especially bad in December. Perhaps the government wants to maximize year-end spending.**

Stretches of rice paddies and fields on the right and left of the road look dry. It is apparent that rain has not fallen in recent months and water supplies have been depleted causing the irrigation canals to dry out. Much of the land is neglected. There is just enough water for the daily needs of the master, while rain that is expected to spill out of the sky is 'dispersed' and windswept into the hills.

The Porame Village is not the only village in the Vau Hills (the name of trees that cover the hills is Vau) that is experiencing a water crisis, especially since the government-owned Regional Water Utilities Company (PDAM) obtained official permission from the village head to operate in the village. Instead of managing the overflow of water from water sources during the rainy season, PDAM managed water from the only source in the Porame

Village, namely the Uwelera spring, which runs upstream of the Sombe River. From these two sources, the water flows into water sources in the Porame Village and then to houses in the city. Naturally, this raised concern from the residents because during the dry season the water levels fall dramatically. This condition is exacerbated by modern irrigation systems where small concrete canals used for irrigation have replaced traditional irrigation systems called Keke Loe. These have proven to be inefficient in distributing water when water levels are low.

Tension between residents and PDAM rose because of this. Residents demanded that PDAM only manage the water runoff, including rainwater, instead of the springs owned by the residents. Ramlah, one of the villagers is advocating and defending the residents' water rights. Due to her willingness to advocate, she has broken





the accepted boundaries of women and even men in her village. She has pushed for water rights up to the district and provincial levels.

Being born as a mediator was not a coincidence for Ramlah who was born in 1962. She inherited the character of her mother and grandmother who were both vocal in their community. Her mother was a church activist and was involved in various charities. After she converted to Islam, she continued to be active. "My mother did everything to support me in school. To pay school fees, my mother even sold ketupat (rice cakes)," said Ramlah during our meeting at noon in her simple house. Likewise, Ramlah's grandmother was an influential person in the customary

council (tribal name). During her life, her grandmother actively fought to enforce customary laws in her village. From these two women, Ramlah's character was forged as a community organizer (CO) and mediator.

Ramlah grew up with seven siblings. As the oldest girl in her family, she has always been critical since she was young. She had a great desire to go to school while many girls in her village were satisfied with being a housewife but Ramlah struggled to go to school. Her father drove her out of the house because of Ramlah's determination to go school. When her uncle brought her to his home in the city, Ramlah quietly continued school. A young boy in a village called Nelson, took part

**Being born as a mediator was not a coincidence for Ramlah who was born in 1962.**



# Ramlah believes in the power of dialogue and how it is able to unravel the tangled thread of enmity between individuals or groups. All of the strategies used are dialogues and Ramlah herself is often part of the team of mediators.

in the rescue mission, "Ramlah Must Go to School" without divulging what actually happened.

Later on, Ramlah married a man who also had a strong character and was passionate about social issues. He died six years ago due to an illness. During his lifetime, her husband was often "a shoulder to cry on" for the local villagers. In fact, he was also known as a "wise man" who was able to make a missing person return through a ceremonial slaughtering of chicken that was eaten together. According to Ramlah, eating together is a form of customary reconciliation. If a matter is declared resolved customarily, this means that the two parties should not rehash the matter.

## Born as a Mediator

One of the characteristics of leadership that cannot be learned is charisma. Simply, a person is known for his/her inner power that shows his/her leadership. In addition to trustworthiness and charisma, Ramlah is also considered capable of finding solutions. Since she was a girl, married women often came to Ramlah to vent. She often asked herself, "Why would married women ask a young girl for help." It is this ability to find solution and the insistence of these villagers that motivated Ramlah to find ways to resolve the problems they were facing with the water crisis.

Ramlah believes in the power of dialogue and how it is able to

unravel the tangled thread of enmity between individuals or groups. All of the strategies used are dialogues and Ramlah herself is often part of the team of mediators. Ramlah insists on teamwork and involves several friends to be part of the mediation process because it usually takes a long time. It also helps having a diverse team of mediators. For example, if there is a dispute between people from different ethnic groups, Ramlah often uses close friends from each of the warring parties. They are asked to dig for a lot of information and make sure that the warring parties are willing to reconcile. The key is to keep information that exacerbates the problem under wraps until they have reconciled.

Her role as a natural mediator was strengthened through her involvement as an arbiter in a community dispute case in the Palolo Village. A theft case that was handled by the police resulted in prolonged tension. Finally, Ramlah and several traditional representatives conducted negotiations with the police to have the case resolved using customary laws. Ramlah mobilized the people in conflict and the customary council to open a dialogue with the police chief. Accompanied by several traditional leaders and community representatives, Ramlah was received by the Police Chief.

**Police Chief:** Oh, ... Ms. Ramlah, what's this about?

**Ramlah:** Chief, the residents of this village wanted to see the office of the





police chief. So I brought them here.

After some chitchat, the traditional leader spoke, "I am so embarrassed by this case. It should have been dealt with by the customary council, but at this time, customs have been abandoned. I feel that I have lost my dignity and it would be better if I remove myself from the mandate of the people today." The traditional leader was a little teary-eyed as he spoke. The pained expression of the traditional leader pleading for the handover of the theft case to the customary council managed to emotionally move the police chief.

The Police Chief finally announced that the case could be handled customarily provided the complainant withdrew the case. Only then could the customary council take over. Eventually, the customary council assigned the fairest punishment in the theft case and reconciled the two tribes.

Several other villages that received assistance from Ramlah are the villages of Rahmat, Sibedi, Uwemanje, Vayu and Dombu. All of the villages located in the district of Sigi also asked for Ramlah's services as mediator. In a case of returning customary land, Ramlah also assisted the Ngovi, Tosonde and Bambarimi villages in entering the Donggala District.

### **Customary Laws, Deterrent without Resentment**

For Ramlah, customary laws are better at providing a sense of justice without creating feelings of

resentment between the parties. The fines determined by customary laws have been measured according to the capacity of the household or community. In fact, according to Ramlah, if someone cannot afford to pay the fine it becomes the responsibility of the village to bear the cost of the fine. In the customary law system, when the traditional leader has imposed the sanction or fine, it must be paid immediately. Usually the fine is in the form of a number of livestock. The two communities in conflict then cook the livestock and eat together. Eating together is a symbol of reconciliation.

During her childhood, Ramlah often witnessed the "Bantaya" customary meetings that made her acquire some knowledge about customary laws. According to her, fines are usually manifested in three forms, namely: livestock, white cloth and plates. The livestock is a replacement for the material losses suffered by the victim. The white cloth symbolizes the purity of the hearts of the warring parties because reconciliation must be followed by forgiveness. The plates symbolize the commitment to peace. In customary law, there is an element of reconciliation and forgiveness in every misdeed. This means that the offender must apologize publicly to the victims and their families before the banquet is held as a symbol of reconciliation.

Ramlah describes an example of a severe punishment issued by the customary council. It was punishment

### **Bantaya**

The Bantaya is a customary house used for traditional village ceremonies. It is a meeting place for villagers and a place to store sacred objects. The Bantaya is usually built in an emergency situation and does not contain rooms.





<https://noerdblog.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/toro-1-ok.jpg>

## **Ramlah really is phenomenal. Not many village women take on the role as mediator or mobilizer.**

for a rape case that was committed by an offender who already had a wife. The offender and members of his extended family were asked to walk barefoot to the victim's home to apologize and it was witnessed by the public. In this case, shame was a social deterrent that was considered effective in changing human behavior.

This is what led Ramlah and Zakaria (one of the customary council advisors) to be so convinced that traditional mechanisms are more effective in providing a sense of justice for the people. Zakariah, a middle-aged man who works as a construction worker looks simple but exudes wisdom in every word that comes out of his mouth, a mouth that seems to have a cigar glued to it. We sit around with glasses of hot sweet tea. Talks about the revitalization of the customary council becomes increasingly interesting, especially when Zachariah expresses his openness to changes in the customary council, including the involvement of

women in traditional structures which he deems important.

## **Engendering the Customary Council**

Ramlah really is phenomenal. Not many village women take on the role as mediator or mobilizer. Although she is frequently scorned and derided by both men and women, it does not dampen her drive to fight for justice for women in the eyes of the customary council. The strength of her intention to help others and determination to solve every problem through peaceful means is what motivates her. "I cannot sleep thinking about the people that are facing problems who come for help," admits Ramlah with sparkling, earnest eyes. A request for help is never rejected.

Ramlah also never charges for any case that she assists to be processed by customary proceedings although it is common for victims offer her a plot of land. However, she refuses their gestures because she herself has inherited land that has not been managed properly. "What exactly do you wish to achieve?" I asked, staring into her eyes and trying to dive into the mind of this exceptional woman. Ramlah answers, "I do this for inner satisfaction."

Ramlah also never asks for transport money to go to places when she is handling a case. She is willing to sell her livestock to cover operational costs. Money, in her eyes, cannot replace inner satisfaction. Moreover, since this is for the sake of amplifying the voices of women to be heard by the customary council, Ramlah bears the costs alone.

The voices of women can determine the level of justice in customary proceedings since the customary judge always asks women to gauge whether the fines imposed on the perpetrator is sufficient enough to provide a sense





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of justice. However, the presence of women in the customary council is not simply accepted. Many of the elderly members of the council still see women as having a second-class status. This is evident by the absence of women currently sitting in the customary council.

This is ironic because many women are involved in the mission to preserve customs. Zakariah himself acknowledges that the current traditional structures are imbalanced, especially when it comes to resolving cases related to sexual harassment or violence against women. Therefore, one of the reformations of the customary council is a woman's position commonly known as *ettina*. The duty of this customary woman's position is to solve various issues related to abuse and violence against women.

This idea was welcomed by Ramlah. She likened this new reformation to water pouring down in the desert. After years of efforts in convincing the importance of hearing the female voice, spaces where women's voices could be heard were finally being institutionalized.

Moreover, according to Ramlah the economic independence of women is a serious challenge in advancing her village. Her efforts to execute government social assistance for the poor have successfully opened

access for the women in her village to obtain coconut milk press machines to produce virgin coconut oil (VCO). With the assistance of Awan Green, an organization working on environmental issues, Ramlah tested the manufacture of VCO using her own resources.

Ramlah has inspired many women in her village. One of them is Fitri. At first, Fitri often accompanied Ramlah in organizing the villages in dispute. Now, after graduating university, Fitri has become the Head of Early Child Development (ECD) where she also receives assistance from the government. According to her, Ramlah is a remarkable woman with progressive thinking. She always makes an effort so that women's voices are heard by the customary council in her village.

Today, women like Ramlah are emerging from the Parome Village. They play active roles in various fields such as Early Childhood Education (ECE), agriculture, economic empowerment and so forth. Now, Ramlah's fight is no longer isolated to her; she is surrounded by active women. However, the challenges of a sustainable, economic empowerment are still unresolved. This is because most of the government programs for economic empowerment only emphasize production while neglecting marketing. In other words, a market needs to be created. \*\*\*

## **Today, women like Ramlah are emerging from the Parome Village.**





# BECOMING A HUMANITARIAN POLITICIAN, THE WOMAN IN PARLIAMENT SPEAKS OUT

## Soraya Sultan

Women's rights activist and member of the regional parliament. Members of N-Peace Network in Indonesia. Beneficiary of UNDP's initiatives on Strengthening Women Organization in Central Sulawesi.

**It was crowded the night we went to the coffee shop. It was the three of us, Dewi Rana, her son, Syakhwan, and I that positioned ourselves in the corner at the front. It was easier to monitor who was present from that location. Shortly afterwards, a white Freed car stopped in front of the coffee shop. A minute later, we heard a greeting, "Hi sis Ruby, how are you?" "It's been a long time since we met," I replied to the young woman. She hugged me and we started talking about what we've been doing since we last saw each other.**

**S**oraya Sultan, the young woman, is an old friend whose name is well-known because of her organizational work during conflicts. Not only that, her success in becoming a member of parliament in the Donggala District is due to her arduous efforts. Even Dewi Rana emphasized Aya's struggle to enter the parliament amidst rampant money politics.

The conflict in Poso at the end of 1999, besides leaving a deep trauma, also created tensions between people of different religions. During these messy conditions of conflict, Soraya Sultan, a female Bugis activist, chose to work at the base by organizing women. From Soraya's point of view, women's

issues were not regarded as political issues. Focusing on women's issues was not the point. Rather, security and elimination of violence was the main target. However, her decision to assist women who were victims of conflict in villages established her as one of the female activists to advocate the rights of victims.

Armed with the strong militancy she learned from the People's Democratic Party (PRD), Soraya and several of her friends such as Eva Bande and Bobi Marjan officially established the Central Sulawesi Advocate Group for Women's Equality (KPKPST) in 2000. The platform of the group was to support the victims of military infatuation (korban rayuan militer). As the conflict broke out,

people could not be guaranteed safety in their day to day lives. However, some women felt that dating military personnel would provide them with security and safety.

80 female victims from 6 districts namely North Pamona, Tentena, Lage, Sepe, Silanca, Poso Pesisir were assisted by Soraya in seeking justice. It was not easy because the military has its own judicial mechanism. Thus, the strengthening of the victim became a priority for the successful outcome of the case. In addition to increasing the capacity of the victims, KPKPST also forms volunteers and complaint posts in villages to bring institutional services closer to the community.

Besides building solidarity among the villagers against the high incidence of violence against women, Soraya also felt that strengthening local

### **Fighting from inside the Parliament Building**

Being a representative of the people was not her goal in life. This was just a means to fight for the fate of women in a more strategic way. The Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP) was chosen as the only party that was in line with Soraya's struggle. Due to her perseverance in obtaining votes in the 2009 elections, Soraya successfully won a seat in the Donggala District Legislative Council.

This was achieved after Soraya went through a fierce battle in obtaining votes. Soraya stressed that the voting process cannot be left just like that. The polling stations at the district level and all levels must be carefully guarded as there were many cases of missing votes. Therefore, the assistance of volunteers

## **There are three policies that Soraya successfully enforced during her time as a member of the Donggala District Legislative Council namely the Local Regulation on the Protection of Women and Children, the Local Regulation on Social Security, and the Local Regulation on Assistance for Free Education.**

capacity in assisting cases needed to be carried out under the guidance of KPKPST. Two years ago, 50 cases of violence against women were assisted by KPKPST. A dialogue of stakeholders was attended by representatives from the Provincial Police, the Palu District Police, the Sigi District Police, the Donggala District Police, the Central Sulawesi Ministry of Law and Human Rights, members of the Palu Legislative Council, traditional leaders and NGOs at Kedai Taniris on December 9, 2014. The aim of the discussion was to review the law reformations on handling cases of violence against women and community cultural challenges that still regard violence against women as a disgrace to themselves and the family.

to ensure that the voting process was stable in the regional elections that she won was crucial.

As a member of the Council, Soraya is well aware that women are not fully accepted in the masculinist political system including the district of Donggala. This woman who was born in 1978 had to have a survival strategy for her and for other women in parliament.

There are three policies that Soraya successfully enforced during her time as a member of the Donggala District Legislative Council namely the Local Regulation on the Protection of Women and Children, the Local Regulation on Social Security, and the Local Regulation on Assistance for Free Education. These three forms of



<http://2.bp.blogspot.com>

assistance targeted underprivileged female victims. Soraya feels these three policies will enable her to build partnerships with civil society in terms of the formulation and implementation of Local Regulations.

Unlike the struggle outside the parliament, Soraya sometimes feels that her energy is wasted on debates that are not sincerely aimed to understand more about the issues surrounding women. It took two years to understand the characteristics and work patterns of the Regional Legislative Council (DPRD). The study into these characters was significant. Each political party has its own targets and each individual has his own way of thinking and not all are advocates for women's rights. "An activist entering a political party is a test of one's commitment in defending women's rights," said Soraya confidently. This was because the layers of interests present in a political party require strong negotiation skills. The method can be different, but the substance is still the same. She was also often provoked in using masculine methods in response to the dominance

of masculinity in politics.

The use of media was very strategic. Soraya is well aware that raising issues through the media is significantly helpful for her efforts inside the parliament building. Thus, she used the media as wisely as possible to promote the urgency of discussing women's issues in parliament. A strong base, which is female victims that are organized, was also very important in providing input for policies that have been passed by parliament. Unfortunately, during her term as council member, partners from civil society were lacking because there were no players from the Donggala District.

The coping mechanism used by Soraya was indifference. What this meant was that during her interactions with other council members, Soraya used rationality rather than feelings. If she believed in an issue she was promoting, she ignored any form of gossip or rumors associated with her. Focus and calculation were the keys to her success.

Her working traditions were not the only things that changed during

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<http://paramparis.com>

her term in the Regional Legislative Council, but also the way in which Lebaran was celebrated. Giving angpao and religious holiday bonuses (THR) to the people who have contributed and to villagers from the electoral district was a necessity. During her term as council member, her garage, which was usually used to park her car, was used to store pastries, drinks, sarongs, mukenahs, jilbabs to be given to her political voters. According to her, approximately 20-30 million rupiah was routinely allocated for these gifts.

Although her term as council member was brief, Soraya felt she gave her best contribution in improving the lives of women in Donggala. Until now, she still monitors the implementation of the local regulations that she had fought for as a member of parliament. The organization that she had left five years ago i.e. KKPST was strengthened again to respond to local government policies. Soraya's failure in gaining votes from the electoral district was mainly due to the absence of strict monitoring of the voting process by the KPPS (election organizers), resulting in the diversion of her votes.

It seems that working in politics became the long-term choice for

Soraya. She was the head of the campaign team for the Palu mayor candidate, Habsa Yanti Ponulele, for the Regional Elections 9 on December 9, 2015. Soraya assisted the preparation of the campaign concept and campaign strategy, including connecting with women's groups. I myself met with Habsa Yanti Ponulele and her campaign team on the night of 10 September 2015 to provide input for the substance of the campaign. Her face looked tired but enthusiastic to listen to the input from several female activists that at the time could not be ignored. The agreement to involve the women's movement in Palu and create a campaign strategy that supported women was followed up by Soraya by inviting fellow activists to a meeting a few days later. Yanti Habsa Ponulele had confidence in Soraya. "We are trying to garner women's votes," said Yanti Habsa Ponulele as she glanced at Soraya sitting across from her. A gesture that revealed she really was receiving assistance.

Although Habsa Yanti Ponulele was not successful in the mayoral elections, Soraya is still optimistic. For her, the world of politics is able to raise her adrenaline to continue to compete.



Currently, she is appointed as the deputy chairman of PDIP in the field of women’s empowerment in Central Sulawesi—a position that is not easy. Moreover, she also feels she has a moral responsibility to revive KPKPST which has been non-active.

**Being a Humanitarian Politician**

According to Soraya, female politicians are more honest, clean, and humanistic compared to male politicians. Male politicians seem to have great power and tend to use jargon, sometimes hypnotizing their opponents when in fact many of their words are empty. Soraya sums up her experience during the five years interacting with politicians from various political parties. From her experience working with female politicians from various political parties, they placed

needs of grassroots women, they were usually willing to fight.

Because of her commitment to transparency and accountability, Soraya received much opposition from fellow members of the Regional Legislative Council and also from the local government. This was because the Draft of the 2010 Local Budget (RAPBD) was found to have been circulated among civil society. Soraya considered this a very reasonable matter and did not think it should have created a big fuss. There should not have been any secrets in state official documents. This event made it clear that both the parliament and the government were not ready to be completely open about the budgets.

In keeping her commitment to remain honest, clean, and humanistic, Soraya had her own recipe. First,

**Because of her commitment to transparency and accountability, Soraya received much opposition from fellow members of the Regional Legislative Council and also from the local government.**

the fate of women at the forefront. Although many female politicians were not very gender-sensitive, when it came to obtaining votes and addressing the

she pushed for consistency with the functions of the Regional Legislative Council that is, drafting Local Regulations, second, she wanted



<http://perempuanposo.com>



<http://perempuanpos.com>

**Soraya's courage seems to be inherited also by her father who was a soldier. However, her independent and responsible nature was taught by her mother.**

to control the implementation of development, and third, to ratify the budgets. If these three functions were carried out, work optimization would be achieved. Also, she remained loyal to the base. This meant that grassroots women would remain a major part of her agenda wherever she may be, including if she joined a political party. They were her concrete base for change.

Although she was busy in the political party, Soraya was also very active in organizing women to fight for injustices occurring in corporations. For example, the reclamation project of the coast in the city of Palu and surrounding areas is considered troubling by the women who oppose the project. As International Women's Day was approaching, Soraya felt that the voices of the women in refusing the reclamation should be consolidated. In her speech at GOR on March 23, 2015, Soraya stressed that the reclamation project has been gradually marginalizing women from economic access.

Soraya's efforts are not half-measures. Using the flag of the Central Sulawesi Underprivileged Forum (FRMST), Soraya and another member of the presidium, Arianto Sangadji reported the PDIP Faction Chairman Donggala Legislative Council, Burhan Lamangkona, to the Central Sulawesi

Police Chief, Police Brigadier General Dr. Taufiq Ridha, Governor of Central Sulawesi.

Burhan was accused of threatening Soraya and her friends from FRMST on January 14, 2015. "However when we responded, Lamangkona rebuked us and pointed at me with a machete wrapped in newspaper," said Soraya. Another report filed was the beating of Risnandar during a protest march.

Soraya's courage seems to be inherited also by her father who was a soldier. However, her independent and responsible nature was taught by her mother. Since her separation with her father, HJ Rohaya, Soraya's mother became the backbone of the family. She raised her seven children by working hard. The perseverance her mother has shown every day helped build the strong character of Soraya. Although she was often admitted into the hospital, Soraya's strength comes from her family that supports her. Her husband, Mohamad Yusuf is a civil servant who is always willing to take turns in caring for their only child, Tsabitah Maritza. Without a family who would support her, Soraya would have long floundered. Today, she bears the heavy duty of changing political parties internally and at the same time voicing women's rights. Hopefully, she will be able and successful in achieving both tasks. \*\*\*



# WOMEN PURSUE JUSTICE, **REINFORCING NON-VIOLENCE**

**Yorice dan Zaenab**

Duo of activists who fought for the land ownership rights of rural communities. Beneficiaries of UNDP's small grants initiatives.







February 17 was the day of  
the arrest of our mentor,  
Followed by the arrest  
of six farmers suspected  
of criminal offenses,  
Let us commemorate this day,  
a historic day, a sad day  
Unity is a platform for  
successful development

**T**he voice of the middle-aged woman trembled as she sang the verses of this sacred song. Her smile widened. Her eyes were steady and serious and bright with the sheen of tears. Occasionally, she paused when she lost her composure and words. A younger woman who was sitting next to her led her back to the song. With renewed spirit, the older woman sang all the verses until the end of the song. This story is about these singers, Yoice and Zaenab who are sisters.

Yoice and Zaenab are female combatants; at least that is how the residents of Bohotokong label village members who are active in defending the rights to use the Onderneming land. Located in the district of Bunta, Bohotokong village can be reached by a four-hour drive from the Syukuran Aminuddin Amir airport in Luwuk. Once the plane landed, before even dropping off our bags at the hotel, we drove to the city of Luwuk. In the middle of our journey, our driver, Fahri received news that one of

his relatives had died. From his face, I could see he was distraught. We were quite concerned for our safety because throughout the ride the phone was constantly ringing with inquiries about Fahri's emotional state. On the other hand, Fahri's grief allowed us to bypass the "open-close" system that was in effect in these hills.

As soon as we arrived at Zaenab's house, we were immediately bombarded with updates. "They have already made measurements," Yorice told us. Their faces radiated with happiness at our arrival. Apparently, Dewi Rana, who accompanied me to visit them, was the former director of the Bantaya Institute that had once assisted the Bohotokong farmers. As such, the arrival of Dewi, which had been announced in advance, invited the enthusiasm of many of the residents, especially the enthusiasm of the majority of farmers who were part of the farming organization, Ortabun.

Yorice was special in many ways, particularly in her commitment in consistently using non-violent resistance. Her spirit in defending the rights over her homeland is still ongoing although her struggle has lasted twenty years. What make Yorice's spirit so strong are the teachings of her parents. Mr. Lapastara, Yorice's father, taught her to adhere to the values of struggle because once you decide to fight, you can never give up. Her father once told her this, "If you decide to fight think about it properly, once you start you can never give up. If you do, it is a betrayal and I will no longer acknowledge you as my daughter." This is what made Yorice and Enab (nickname of Zaenab) so faithful in fighting for the farmers together.

### **Women Farmers Rise, Non-Violence is Reinforced**

There isn't any documentation of the start of the first Bohotokong women's movement. According to Yorice, her involvement in the struggle of these farmers was triggered by the arrest of six farmers who were

considered troublesome. One of the six farmers was Yorice's husband. Seeing this incident, Yorice felt the need to engage more intensively. Zaenab, her sister, later became involved to support her. The duo, Yorice and Zaenab were able to mobilize other women who also had one wish: the revocation of the plantation concession (HGU).

The land conflict in Bohotokong caused the relations between families and neighbors to become closer. They not only shared information quickly, but also helped each other in distress. The power of "camaraderie" became the foundation of the women's movement in Bohotokong. The solidarity of the Bohotokong women was certainly not a fabrication. Since 2005, their husbands have been in and out of prison for being accused as "thieves," because they took coconuts and cacao beans from the HGU certified land belonging to PT. Saritama Abadi.

These bizarre allegations were unacceptable to the Bohotokong farmers because according to them, they planted all the palm and cocoa trees and a variety of other trees on the disputed land. They also cleared the land and tended to it until it bore fruit. Of course, the accusation of theft could not be accepted because the consequence was prison. For Yorice and the other farmers, however, prison was not a scary place anymore. The loss of their land was much more frightening.

One by one, the farmers were arrested. They were jailed and then released. This cycle continued countless times. From this situation, Yorice began to consolidate the women. The reason was that the women were also part of the movement. They wanted to convey to the public that the land conflict had gone on for far too long and has taken extraordinary amounts of energy and caused many women to become disadvantaged. When their husbands were arrested, the responsibility for the maintenance of the farms and responsibility of taking care of the family was laid upon their shoulders.

One day, a procession of 200 Bohotokong women went to the



**Yorice was special in many ways, particularly in her commitment in consistently using non-violent resistance.**





**Another tactic used by the Bohotokong women in desperate situations was undressing or lifting their skirts up. “If they did that, the police did not dare to do anything,”**

traditional market in the district of Bunta. They chose the market as the center of their political activity. Once the procession arrived at the market, most sellers dispersed but others remained because they were curious to find out and listen to the speeches of the Bohotokong women. The spectators sympathized with the women but the situation did not change for the farmers. Conflict after conflict continued to plague the farmers of Bohotokong.

One thing to note is that the actions of the Bohotokong women never ended in an uproar. Part of the reason was because women were placed on the front lines to prevent clashes from happening. The peaceful rallies of the Bohotokong women were quite effective in preventing the police from enforcing actions of violence.

Another tactic used by the Bohotokong women in desperate situations was undressing or lifting their skirts up. “If they did that, the police did not dare to do anything,” said Zaenab with pride. Apparently, sexual harassment allegations were quite traumatizing for the police. Rather than being accused of sexual harassment, it was easier to leave and not engage with the women.

This prolonged land dispute inspired women in the village to continue to survive. Not only did they pay the school fees of their children, but also they supported the struggle of the farmers. Dialogues with the decision makers at the district and provincial levels have cost them much of their livestock, in addition, to the transport costs for hearings and demonstrations at the district.

The women attempted a joint venture to produce bread as a means to raise money. This venture was initiated when many of their husbands were arrested. The women needed money in order to visit their husbands. This idea for producing bread grew and they formed a group with other women. With everyone contributing financially, they started their bread production business. The marketing team consisted of Enab, Ulfiah, Ita and Galing. They distributed the bread to the Gonohob, Nuhon, Laonggo, and Dondo villages. The revenue was then used to finance their day-to-day lives and also to visit their husbands in prison. In many ways, the bread saved them and the story of the bread and the prison is very memorable for the women of Bohotokong.





### Fostering the Movement, Strengthening the Farmers

That evening about fifteen farmers of Ortabun convened at their gathering place or the camp as they called it. It was a wooden stage house measuring about 10x10 meters. It was simple but solid—solid as the farmers’ struggle for 20 years. The camp was set up exactly to the left of the village head’s home. Not far from the camp was the Ortabun farmers’ office that had two rooms that were used as a guesthouse as Mr. Bahsin Zuhijah, the Bohotokong village head told me, “Sis Ruby, if you visit Bohotokong you do not have to sleep in a hotel.”

There was no special agenda for my visit last December the 27th other than to meet the members of the Ortabun farmer group. As a result, after talking privately with Yorice, we were then driven up to the camp to meet the members of Ortabun. They welcomed me warmly. Still immersed with feelings of flattery, the village head then said, “Every Sunday afternoon we have a meeting just to share information.”

Everyone was that meeting. I saw not only parents gathered at the camp that afternoon but also some teenagers. Yorice said that this was

a platform to share information, including the passing of information about the farmers’ struggle to the younger generations. This purpose is what makes Yorice often become a gatekeeper in reminding neighbors to attend the Sunday afternoon meetings.

Five women farmers sat a little apart from the men. This seemed odd to me because the contribution of the Bohotokong women’s struggle was so undisputable that I felt feelings of inferiority should no longer exist. Apparently, although the farmers are active in fighting for their rights, not much is done by Ortabun to empower the women farmers. It was evident that gender perspectives have not yet been discussed in the talks either individually with Yorice or in groups with members of Ortabun.

Nevertheless, Yorice strongly believes that women should be involved in development. During the struggle, she also did not hesitate to tell other women that the problems being faced by the people of Bohotokong affected everyone. Therefore, if a substitute was necessary, they should be ready to become involved.

As the afternoon went on, more women and men farmers started to come one by one to gather at the

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camp. The head of the Ortabun farmers group reiterated the importance of maintaining the fighting spirit of the Bohotokong farmers at the start of the afternoon meeting. In fact, the head reassured the members that if someday the HGU was revoked, the regular Sunday afternoon meetings would still be held. This was a platform for the exchange of information. Moreover, to address the great development challenges ahead, the relationship between the people and leaders needed a common ground, which was the farmers' group meeting.

This is true. These afternoon meetings have been held for twenty consecutive years to maintain the spirit and consolidate the purpose. "With routine meetings the company had started to conduct re-measurements. What if there were no more meetings?" asked Yorice.

The thought of no more meetings was a dark thought when there was already so much uncertainty enveloping Bohotokong. A strong positive energy filled my chest, however, when suddenly I heard Zaenab's voice singing a verse of the song of struggle: "Move aside, move aside, move aside. Bohotokong farmers are coming through." Now the story of their struggle has already reached the palace but the decision is still stuck in the throat.\*\*\*

# EDUCATION THAT LIBERATES, FOR EVERLASTING PEACE

## Rev. Dr. Margaretha Hendriks

Female pastor pioneering peace through education.

**“Child, that is mama Etha collecting toy guns in exchange for a bag.  
Go and swap your toys .....”**

**“Who is mama Etha? Is she a police woman?”**



**R**ev. Dr. Margaretha Hendriks-Ririmasse or better known as Mrs. Etha is not a police officer, but a reverend who is also an academic. She is a lecturer and once served as Dean of the Faculty of Theology of the Indonesian Christian University of Maluku (UKIM). Her work is not limited only in Maluku; Mrs. Etha is among the small amount of women to successfully make a way into the leadership of the Protestant church, at the national and international

levels. She is one of the four heads of the Indonesian Communion of Churches (PGI) and is the Deputy Director of the Indonesian Theological Schools Association. Internationally, she has gained experience as the Vice Moderator of the WCC (World Council of Churches), an organization of Protestant churches from various countries. Although she stands out as a leader of the church, Mrs. Etha is always receptive and open to dialogue with people of different religions. In





Maluku, Mrs. Etha is known as one of the founders and leaders of the Caring Women's Movement (GPP), one of the organizations that initiated peace in Maluku through interfaith peace campaigns by women. Today, Mrs. Etha is still active in the church and the world of education, in addition to being a peace activist.

communication between groups that are experiencing friction. The groups in dispute may be Protestants, Catholics or Muslims. Each religious community, has a leader, thus three (3) GPP heads were appointed at the time, namely; Mrs. Retty Assegaf (Muslim), Sister Brigitta Renyaan PBHK (Catholic) and Mrs. Etha as a representative of the Protestant group.

During 1999-2000, Mrs. Etha along with members of GPP held a peace campaign to voice the cries of women and children to end the conflicts that have lasted a long time in Maluku. The governor, Muspida (Regional Leadership Council), DPRD (Provincial Legislative Council) the head of the TNI / ABRI (Indonesian National Armed Forces), community and religious leaders as well as the mass media (RRI, TVRI, local newspapers) attended and were moved by these women. "The one who is most able to end the conflicts is the government and it is their responsibility," mother Etha stated firmly. "Women and children are the ones that lose the most in wars. However in Maluku, it is the women who are first to rise as pioneers of peace. The women of Maluku are unique in a way that although we come from different backgrounds, some work in government

## The Maluku Caring Women's Movement (GPM) and Mrs. Etha, two names that are inseparable.

### Starting from the heart, to raise awareness

*Sustainable peace is possible only with women's full participation, their perspectives, their leadership, their daily, equal presence wherever we seek to make and keep the peace (Ban Ki-moon).*

The Maluku Caring Women's Movement (GPM) and Mrs. Etha, two names that are inseparable. She is one of the leaders of GPP, representing the Protestant group. "GPP was born when we finally realized that the unrest had claimed so many victims. It was time to end the disputes. The unrest in Ambon occurred from early 1999 and GPP was formed in mid 1999." Mrs. Etha described. The initial goal of GPP is very simple, that is, women helping one another when communities of different faiths are in dispute. GPP facilitates

organizations, some are NGO activists, housewives and so on, but it does not prevent us women to unite and fight for peace."

This women's movement started simply, with each woman in her own house. Mrs. Etha encouraged all members of GPP to be pioneers of peace in their homes by praying at times that have been agreed upon. Prayer is meant to maintain the connection between members of GPP with different faiths and from different communities. "Initially, collective prayer was performed in the evening. It was then adjusted to the Muslim prayer times. At the time agreed upon, all the members of GPP say a prayer together in their own homes, requesting the end of violence to create peace in Maluku," described the woman born in Haruku. It is hoped that the continuous prayers recited by women, will open the hearts of families and community members who hear them, so that they no longer want to be involved in violence and conflict. The women also firmly reject violence and war by voicing the motto "**We do not want to be widows and our children do not want to be orphans**" and this turned out to be able to deter husbands and men from fighting.

"Our other campaigns, during early establishment, were to spread ribbons and leaflets that read: **stop conflict and violence**. At a gathering, we said, let us go into the community and end the riots. The women asked, how? Let's distribute flowers. Nobody is selling flowers during chaotic conditions like this. Another woman suggested, let us distribute ribbons. But, there were no ribbon shops open. Then we found a solution. There was a member who had some cloth. The cloth could be cut into pieces to make ribbons. But the color was green. Okay ... green ribbons are fine, green means life! Then on the green ribbons, we wrote: Stop conflict and violence. We distributed them on the roads and also at the markets. If the

Christians wear red, and the Muslims wear white, we (GPP) wear green," chuckled Mrs. Etha.

The dialogue above between mother and child is a manifestation of one of the activities that was designed as a campaign for peace among children. Post-conflict, toys with aspects of violence dominated the children, especially guns. For this reason, the women of GPP designed a program where toy guns are exchanged with bags or other more educational toys. GPP activities for peace, are no longer aimed at women, but reach a wider target of children, adolescents and the elderly. Furthermore, various activities that are more complex have been executed. The activities are also diverse, ranging from trauma healing, painting competitions, training as well as live in programs in various places, among different communities.

### Live in, recognizing and opening the mind

*If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other (Mother Teresa).*

Mrs. Etha is an admirer of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, O.P, a priest from Peru, and founder of "Liberation Theology." This theological concept is infused in his daily life, as a person, as a representative of the church and as well as a dean. In 2007, Mrs. Etha initiated the live-in program for prospective pastors who were students in UKIM. She sent the prospective pastors to stay a few days in the homes of the Muslim community. "Many were suspicious, this is not an easy thing, but getting to know each other through live-ins is one way to remove prejudice. At that time, the car had arrived, ready to pick them up. I searched for them, nobody was there, apparently they were hiding, still scared. Sounds of commotion at night also scared them. I am going to die, I am going to die ... apparently the trauma of the riots have left a lasting

## This women's movement started simply, with each woman in her own house.



## **The idea of the live-in program did not happen suddenly. In the beginning of the conflicts, Mrs. Etha and the women of GPP had the initiative of living together alternately, at the homes of different communities.**

*impression on many people, including the prospective pastors" Mrs. Etha said, chuckling. The live-in was not only conducted once, but there were several batches that participated. Evaluations showed that the program is considered sufficiently effective in uniting and removing the trauma and the prejudices of prospective pastors regarding the different communities.*

The idea of the live-in program did not happen suddenly. In the beginning of the conflicts, Mrs. Etha and the women of GPP had the initiative of living together alternately, at the homes of different communities. *"Admittedly, at first we were all trembling, afraid. Staying overnight in a community that is still in conflict, we could not sleep. If there was a little bit of a commotion, we became anxious. Is it true that these live ins can bring peace, or will we give up our lives in vain," she said. "It turned out that they respected mothers. In Maluku, the mother is a revered figure. Seram, the largest island here is known as the Mother Island. The mother figure is respected here, so we were safe, no one dared to do anything."* The live-in program is effective in removing trauma, suspicion and phobia among differing communities. Through women, family members come to understand, that living peacefully side by side is a common need that is inevitable.



### **Stop disputes, let us unite**

If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he/she becomes your partner (Nelson Mandela)

The Christian University of Maluku (UKIM) was not spared in witnessing the unrest in Maluku in 1999-2004. Hundreds of lives were lost in vain, dozens of buildings were burned flat to the ground during the clashes. The UKIM campus was one of the buildings affected, burned, and destroyed by the masses. *"90% of the UKIM building was burned due to the conflicts, so we had to build everything back from scratch. In conflicts nobody wins, everyone just loses,"* said Mrs. Etha *"But there is no need to hold a grudge. To build a better future, one must be able to forget the bad things that happened in the past. We must forgive one another, dare to lend a hand, side by side. That is what women have started. The key to achieving peace is eliminating prejudice and building togetherness."*

During her time as Dean at the Faculty of Theology UKIM, Mrs. Etha worked very closely with the Islamic State Institute (IAIN) of Ambon. One of the collaborative programs designed, was inviting IAIN lecturers to teach at the campus. *"We also invited Islamic lecturers to teach Islam studies at our university,"* explained Mrs. Etha. *"Through this educational collaboration,*



*we really encourage and foster the spirit of openness and pluralism."* Muslim university students who were interested, were free to study Christian theology at UKIM, for comparison and to mutually reinforce each faith. *Peace cannot be achieved through violence, it can only be attained through understanding,* as said by American author, Ralph Waldo Emerson. Learning different theological contexts opens our eyes and enriches our faith so that we can better understand each other. Today, joint studies in the subjects of Christian and Islamic theologies in Ambon has a positive impact, where participants become more open, tolerant and understanding towards others with different beliefs.

In the midst of her activities, mother Etha is also a frequent speaker in conferences, seminars, and workshops on Religious Harmony and Freedom. She was involved in initiating inter-faith peace negotiations and reconciliation in the Malino II meeting. Outside Indonesia Mrs. Etha was a guest speaker at a conference in Italy, conducted public lectures in Serbia and spoke at the Conference of Churches in South Korea and many other countries regarding the peace process in Pattimura. She always emphasizes that it is important to eliminate the stigma that Indonesian Muslims are not tolerant and are fundamentalists. *"The majority of Muslims as moderate and even liberal, and are willing to build mutual trust and cooperation in creating peace in Indonesia,"* she said. *"As fellow pilgrims, we as religious people should realize that we have the same goal, which is to create peace in this world and salvation in the hereafter."*

Justus Pattipawae, a peace activist from the Tifa Damai Foundation said, *"Mrs. Etha has long been recognized as a female leader in Ambon, Maluku. She is known as a woman who has a religious basis, as the Head of PGI (Indonesian Communion of Churches) and the Vice President of the World Council of Churches. She has consolidated women of different religions through GPP. Mrs. Etha is an internationally known figure from Maluku. Today Mrs. Etha still continues to be active, and continues to be used. In the church, she is a member of LPJ (Church Development Organization) in capacity building. She is also active in the Forum for Religious Harmony."* Hilda Rollobesy, a colleague of Justus in Tifa Damai and activist of the Lapesdam NU Maluku (Maluku NU Institute for Human Resources Development) also agrees, *"Mrs. Etha continuously strives to build peace in Maluku, she took part in Malino II and meetings to discuss other matters of peace"*.

This admirer of Martha Christina Tiahahu has a hobby of reading and is particularly fond of the works of Marianne Katoppo, a writer from Manado who is also known as a feminist theologian. She reiterated, *"It is only through education, that Christians and Muslims are able to respect each other's differences. Through education, we can stop thinking about other people as objects of Christianization or Islamization. The purpose of education is to open horizons, but in the context of maturity to respect each other's beliefs. Through education, society becomes more open and tolerant."* Education that liberates, that is one of the requirements in preserving peace. \*\*\*



**This admirer of Martha Christina Tiahahu has a hobby of reading and is particularly fond of the works of Marianne Katoppo, a writer from Manado who is also known as a feminist theologian.**

# ALWAYS GIVE *Love* DESPITE OUR DIFFERENCES

## Noni Rafiang Tuharea

Women's empowerment activist and peacemaker.  
Beneficiary of UNDP's small grants initiatives.

***"Eh Auntie Noni, I said Auntie Noni, you should not be friends with Muslims."***

***"Eh why do you say I shouldn't be friends with Muslims?"***

***"Because Muslims are bad Auntie Non so you shouldn't get close to them, let alone be friends with them."***

***"Where did you get the idea that Muslims are bad?"***

***"From the stories, in the riots we saw Muslims killed Christians. It's on TV too. Muslims are using bombs."***

***"But Auntie Noni is a Muslim."***

***"Ah Auntie Noni, don't joke around. It's not possible that Auntie Noni is Muslim."***

***"Eh it's true. Why do you say it's impossible?"***

***"Auntie Noni is nice so you cannot be a Muslim."***

**A**untie Noni, also known as Noni, is the nickname of Noni Rafiang Tuharea. This woman with shoulder-length hair and glasses works as an activist for the Maluku Community Development Participation Organization (LPPM). She, who was born and raised in a Muslim community, does not feel awkward in working and mingling with the villagers of Nuruwe, West Seram District, who are almost entirely Christian. *"I salute Noni because although she is a Muslim, she never discriminates who she provides support to. Muslims, Christians, Hindus, as long as they need help, she reaches out,"* said Pieter Wairissal or Bung Piet

as he is usually called. Bung Piet, who is Noni's colleague, as well as the Director of LPPM claims finding someone like this is not easy in this province, given the segregation of areas based on religion after the prolonged conflict.

Her figure is petite, sweet and charming. That is the first impression one gets from an encounter with this woman. During college, she was a member of the Islamic Students Association (HMI). After graduating, she became a volunteer at LPPM (Institute for Research and Community Services) assisting sex workers and transgender people on issues related to HIV / AIDS. The conflict in Ambon resulted in an



increase of the number of people living with HIV due to the sharing of needles. Gradually, Noni's career in LPPM continued to grow and she is now the Program Manager. One of the villages assisted by LPPM was Nuruwe, Kairatu Sub-District, West Seram District (SBB). Noni could have chosen to assist another village that has an Islamic base aligning with her own beliefs, but she chose Nuruwe even though Nuruwe in SBB is known as a village that is quite scary because of the fairly high crime rate due to poverty.

Noni's dialogue above with the children in the village really happened. Every afternoon, if she was in Nuruwe,

Noni always urged the children to bathe and eat together. *"It is important to teach them good hygiene sis. They seldom bathe, let alone brush their teeth. In the room, there are dozens of toothbrushes belonging to the children here,"* revealed Noni. *"My activities, in addition to assisting the women, are also to teach the children good hygiene. The first time I came here, I brought a suitcase full of toothbrushes and taught the kids to bathe with soap. The adults here do not care about cleanliness; most do not have toilets at home and defecate in the sea. I taught the children and mothers to use the toilet so that good hygiene can be maintained,"* recounted

**The adults here do not care about cleanliness; most do not have toilets at home and defecate in the sea.**





**“Production House” is a term used by the local women to refer to the simple house with half-boarded walls and a thatched roof.**

Noni. The toilet mentioned, is a small stall, outside, and separate from the LPPM office. It has walls made from sago palm leaves and is roofless. There is a shower where the water pours into a barrel. In the corner, there is a squat toilet. Although fairly simple, this toilet that doubles as a bathroom is clean and cozy.

Noni as the tireless counselor routinely trains the children and mothers of the Nuruwe Village on both environmental and personal hygiene. Her love of helping the poor and marginalized, is not only limited to the children, but also extends to their parents. Proof of her love for the adults is her tireless efforts to build and assist a women’s production enterprise to utilize seaweed, which is abundant in the Nuruwe Village, SBB.

### **Building the future, Bina Masadah becomes a symbol for hope**

The sound of the waves welcomes you and greets your ear as you step into the LPPM production house on the shore of the Nuruwe Village, SBB. “Production House” is a term used by the local women to refer to the simple

house with half-boarded walls and a thatched roof. The thatched roof is made of woven sago leaves as are the majority of houses in SBB. The humble structure is the workplace of 12 women from the Nuruwe Village who manage the production of seaweed.

In the kitchen, there are two kerosene stoves, two frying pans and a large pot. However despite the limited equipment, these women successfully produce tens of kilograms of snacks made from seaweed each day. Several basins and a knife have been purchased by the women themselves revealing their emotional investment in the program. This activity is a continuation of the “Seaweed Processing Vocational Training Program for Coastal Women in the Nuruwe Village, District of West Seram, Maluku Province,” a result of the collaboration of LPPM with the Ministry for the Development of Villages, Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), through the Peace Through Development in Disadvantaged Areas (PTDDA) joint program.

This activity commenced on Tuesday, August 18, 2015. *“In the beginning there was a social event in*

the village, specifically in the Nuruwe Village Hall. It was attended by the village head, community leaders, religious leaders, and other figures. The opening at the village hall was a strategy used to garner the attention of the village towards this group. There was the social and then announcements and recruitment. The recruitment process began by distributing forms, filling the forms, and tests, yes there was a counting test," said Noni, smiling "The tests were important to determine interest, willingness, and counting skills because this was an entrepreneurship. At the final stage of the interview, there were twenty or more people who registered and I interviewed them one by one. Each person took an hour or so as I also tested them to find out how they could contribute," recounted Noni. "I was shaking my head and asked why are you wasting time with all the tests?" Bung Piet piped in, recalling with a laugh. It turned out that the test model determined the level of commitment of the women, which was vital to the sustainability of the program.

After the tests were completed, a meeting with the successful candidates was held to inform them of the training plan. After the women agreed, they were asked to sign a commitment letter. They were also told there would be a penalty if they did not complete the training. The State Government was also asked to sign a commitment letter to support the program by providing a space for training.

The Seaweed Processing Vocational Training Program for Coastal Women in the Nuruwe Village, District of West Seram, Maluku Province lasted one week. The training material included Character Development and Business Motivation; and Management of Simple Businesses and Business Practices. "I used the modules from the ILO, namely SYB (Start Your Business). I taught them how to develop a business. How to initiate creative ideas, identify markets, identify competitors and create a business plan. There were eleven

modules. I used the "Get Ahead Module" from ILO for women entrepreneurs," said Noni. She continued, "I also urged the participants to identify the strengths and weaknesses of this business. Finally, the women chose seaweed processing because the material was available and found in abundance because there were many seaweed farmers."

During the training, the women were divided into two groups, Excelcia and Bina Masadah. Eventually the two groups were merged into one group, and the name Bina Masadah was chosen as the common identity. "Bina Masadah. Bina means woman in Nuruwe, Masadah means there is still hope. Women here are not taken into account; they are not considered productive members. Many are subjected to violence (domestic violence). Through this training, there is still hope to develop themselves and have an income. Having an income means they have value in the family. It means they are taken into account because they are contributing," said Mrs. Asnadlea Tanamal, a former pastor's wife and head of the group.

Participants not only consist of local residents, but also former women refugees such as Veni Vanyos who was displaced from Bacan, North Maluku in 2000. She said, "I am very happy to participate in the training. During the fifteen years I have lived in Nuruwe, this is the first time I am selected to work with LPPM. I am very grateful for the knowledge I have gained. I am nobody; just a housewife who does not know anything. In the last fifteen years there was training and assistance in the village hall but I was never selected, so I am so grateful there is LPPM and that I was selected. At first, I didn't know anything about seaweed. I just knew that seaweed could be bought in the store and then prepared. Bina Masadah does not use chemicals. Everything is natural. I now know the health benefits of seaweed and that is what's important. Snacks are mostly made of chemicals. Secondly, I am also able to earn a living. Although the wages are still small, it

**It turned out that the test model determined the level of commitment of the women, which was vital to the sustainability of the program.**





**The recruitment model used by Noni, although tiring, is an innovative strategy that is able to establish a binding commitment among women so that the program is able to run continuously.**



is very rewarding." The involvement of former refugees is a strategy of bridging communication between the refugees and the local residents. It serves as a means of reducing the potential for friction and segregation.

Noni believes in the quote by Ole Danbolt Mjos, who was a Norwegian physician and politician as well as the Chairman of the Nobel Prize Committee, which states: "Peace will not be achieved until the majority of the people find a way out of poverty." For Noni, an increase in income will be able to bring peace and prevent conflict on multiple social levels, such as, small-scale familial, communal, and national levels.

### **Passion for Sustainable Production**

The seaweed processing program is a synergy between LPPM and other agencies in the government and universities. A week after the production and business management training by Noni, there was training for packaging and packing from the SSB Office of Industry and Trade (Indag) and assistance from the Pattimura Polytechnic for training on Accounting and Stock Management. The next stage was assistance in relation to sanitation, layout, hygiene / cleanliness, and organization. Although there were various obstacles, six months after completing the training, the program was still running.

*"Initially I did not think they were enthusiastic about it because they had participated in training several times before. Since this was a BI (Bank Indonesia) partner village and an industrial and trade assisted village of the SBB Office of Trade and Industry, there were a lot of programs that were offered but the previous programs were no longer running. There was also assistance from DKP (the Local Office of Marine Affairs and Fisheries) but there was no production schedule etc,"* Noni recounts vaguely. *"Some women were complaining saying 'We are*

*given equipment but what about the other things and materials? How about marketing?' Only when there was a new exhibition was there an order."*

Some agencies have conducted programs in the Nuruwe Village, however, because there was not anyone to facilitate, the program was unsustainable. The recruitment model used by Noni, although tiring, is an innovative strategy that is able to establish a binding commitment among women so that the program is able to run continuously. Moreover, after the program is running, Noni and Piet also periodically continue to provide assistance and encouragement to the women in the Production House.

Mr. Hasanuddin Sy Silawane, affectionately known as Pak Din is the Head of Division of the Legal Bureau and concurrently the Acting Head of the West Seram (SBB) Office of Industry and Trade. He stated, *"As the acting head of the local office of the industry and trade, I strongly support the LPPM's program. The activities executed by LPPM can be used as a model to be adopted by the local office. Usually the industry and trade office conducts training. After it is completed, there is no further assistance so that the program is halted. We recently conducted training on the processing of banana and taro in Waipirit. A week ago, we also held a fish processing training. We decided there will be no training programs next year and to just focus on mentoring and improving continuity. The regional budget (APBD) will help to support marketing, quality of production, packing, and linking production with the market."*

Mr. Wils Mail, a seaweed farmer as well as the husband of Hesti Matita who is a member of the Bina Masadah production house also recounts, *"So far, there have been obstacles in improving the welfare of the local community through seaweed cultivation. Bina Masadah has been helpful in meeting the needs of families. Initially there was no response. The local office held trainings but there was no guidance.*





*LPPM is highly beneficial because after the training there is mentoring. This is very useful for the women. Initially the husbands, including myself, objected to our wives joining the training because it was time consuming. After the process began however, it proved useful as there was additional income for the family and eventually I did not object to it."*

Mr. Mail comes from the island of Saparua and has been living in Nuruwe since 2005 as a seaweed farmer. In addition to his wife who works at Bina Masadah, Mr. Wils also assists in the marketing process by distributing the product to stores from Kairatu to Ambon that ordered the product. *"The time from planting to harvesting takes 45 days. I now have seaweed seedlings from Lampung. After 10 years, I now own 75 longlines. Drying takes 3 days, and the price is Rp 8 thousand/kg. Made into sticks, it is sold at a price of Rp 10 thousand. The price of seaweed in 2009 was Rp 27 thousand/kg and in 2012, it was Rp 5 thousand/kg. Processing the seaweed into sticks and other various products helps to raise the price of seaweed that I plant."*

Mr. Pilmon Matital, the State Secretary also commented on these activities. He said, *"The state strongly supports the activities of LPPM. This is the first time a productive community group has been mobilized. Very few people want to be consistent with one group. Mr. Piet and Ms. Noni are very*

*consistent with this group."* Musa Tukane, BPD head of the Nuruwe Village also had a similar view when he expressed his thoughts. *"I support the activities of LPPM. LPPM brings a good name for Nuruwe. Initially this village had a bad name but now it is good due to the activities of these women."*

Noni has another success story on her hands. She said, *"I am pleased with the existence of Bina Masadah. This means that there is hope for the women of the Nuruwe Village. Small conflicts often happen because women have no jobs. They quarrel and even fight. Small conflicts can turn into major conflicts. The women are happy to be able to earn money. Economic factors and economic dependence are usually the initial causes of domestic violence. Bina Masadah, not only enables women to be self-sufficient, but at the same time, allows women to have pride in themselves. It also helps reduce conflict within households and among neighbors (former refugees)".*

Noni, the Muslim girl among the Christian community she is assisting, unknowingly applies the Latin maxim *"Verba movent exempla trahunt,"* (Words fly or are forgotten, however examples inspire) in her life. What Noni does enables the children of Nuruwe to understand that there is good in people of different religions. Difference should not be used as a reason to create friction, but an opportunity to learn about one another. \*\*\*

**Noni, the Muslim girl among the Christian community she is assisting, unknowingly applies the Latin maxim "Verba movent exempla trahunt," (Words fly or are forgotten, however examples inspire) in her life.**

# FIGHTING THROUGH MUSRENBANG (DEVELOPMENT PLANNING FORUMS), TO ACHIEVE WIDESPREAD PEACE

## **Ir. Posinda (Sinda) Adonia Titaley/Pupella**

Initiator of Peace in Maluku, UNDP's partner for Peace Through Development (PTD) programme.

The sun had just greeted the earth when the plane from Jakarta swung its legs onto the Pattimura airport. Drowsiness was evident in my eyes, and muscle aches and fatigue clung to my whole body. Nevertheless, there was no time to relax since we had to prepare ourselves to go to several locations that day. That Monday, April 13, 2009, three friends and I started the day as consultants of the Peace through Development (PTD) Midterm Review (MTR), a joint program of the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

**W**e had a representative waiting among the pillars of the Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda Maluku). The clock read twenty-five minutes after 08:00 am, which meant that it was still 6:25 am Jakarta time. We had a courtesy call with the Head of the Maluku Bappeda and staff at 08:30 that morning so she was in a rush. However, we were tired and our hurried steps were still slower than hers.

In that office lobby, only a few hundred meters from the Pattimura monument was where I met Mrs. Sinda Titaley for the first time. At first glance, her appearance was mediocre as she was the average height of an Ambonese woman. What amazed me was that even though she was already beyond middle age, the beautiful lines that were etched on her bold face showed the distinctive characteristic of the Maluku people. Her eyes showed intelligence and her demeanor was



**Her influence and network in Maluku is vast and astounding, ranging from high officials to ordinary people.**

assertive, offset by a sincere and motherly quality.

*"Come on let's go... the Head of Bappeda is waiting for us" she urged us warmly, breaking the ice. She entered the rooms in the Bappeda office with fluidity, while greeting everyone. Although she no longer worked there, her authority and influence was still felt from the brief interaction with the Bappeda staff. During the discussion with the Head of Bappeda, she was mostly silent but on some occasions when she had a chance to state her opinion, it was delivered in a straightforward and precise manner. Over time, I received more opportunities to get to know her better. The more I got to know her, the greater my admiration for this figure. Her influence and network in Maluku is vast and astounding, ranging from high officials to ordinary people. At the same time, her elegance is never lost and she always carries herself with an air of humility and simplicity in her everyday life.*

### **The pearl of Pattimura**

Sinda is actually her nickname. Her full name is Ir. Ny. Adonia Posinda Titaley/Pupella. *"Her mother was a teacher and her father was a military officer. She was an only child,"* describes Mrs. Tilly Soukotta, one of her childhood friends. *"She was a smart girl. After graduating from Ambon, she continued her studies at the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Indonesia (UI). After retiring as the Head of Bappeda in 2007, she continued her Master's Degree at ITS in Surabaya."* Zakiyah Samal, who is often called Kiky, was one of the female activists in Maluku who had worked with her. She said, *"I never attended university with Mrs. Sinda, but I learned so much*

*from her. Mrs. Sinda is one of the figures that have helped me form who I am. She teaches with words and leads with example the importance of discipline, professionalism, and prioritizing quality in your work."* As the first woman from Maluku who served as the Head of the Maluku Provincial Development Planning Agency (Bappeda), Sinda began her career as a private employee in Jakarta. After marriage, she moved back to Ambon with her husband who was a pastor and started working as a civil servant (PNS). Her career continued to rise and she became one of the few female bureaucratic leaders moving from the position of the Head of Physical Infrastructure of BAPPEDA Dati I Maluku, the Maluku Provincial Mining Office, and the Maluku Provincial Office of Tourism to the Head of the North Maluku BAPPEDA. Her career continues to grow through discipline, hard work and a passion to continuously create and innovate.

After her time as a bureaucratic official, Sinda as a retiree continued to work. Her intelligence and experience was legendary. Thus, she was entrusted to become the leader of Peace Through Development (PTD), a joint program of the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in advocating participatory and conflict sensitive planning processes. As the leader of the PTD program, she did not hesitate to dive directly into the field and oversee each program being implemented.

Although she has served as a government official for quite a long time, Sinda's appearance was always simple. Her lifestyle was in harmony with her husband's calling as a pastor.



**Under the leadership of Sinda, PTD Maluku carried out several campaigns on traditional values. In 2007, the PTD supported the implementation of the Kapata cultural exhibition which showcased Maluku cultural ways of storytelling and speaking.**



**Peace that is Framed with Customary and Traditional Values**

Maluku is a province with an astonishing history of conflict even for the local people. This region, populated with people of different ethnic and religious identities was harmonious and peaceful until it was suddenly became overwhelmed with conflict and unrest in 1999. Various peaceful traditions, such as *pela gandong* (value of fraternity), suddenly became forgotten. One of the causes of the conflict, according to Sinda's observations, is the diminishing understanding of traditional values and local wisdom. This was in line with Lela Suad's research that was published in the *Journal of Women* in 2004. It states: "the people of Maluku are experiencing an identity crisis as a result of the influx of outside and new values. These values have changed the governance system that has existed among the Maluku people. Conflicts occur due to the fading and diminished understanding of old values related to customs."

Under the leadership of Sinda, PTD Maluku carried out several campaigns on traditional values. In 2007, the PTD supported the implementation of the Kapata cultural exhibition which showcased Maluku cultural ways of storytelling and speaking. The show was accompanied by music and Maluku traditional clothing. It conveyed moral messages of peace. Dozens of attendants were moved to tears, remembering the peaceful culture that had existed for centuries in Maluku which had become lost and forgotten.

A unifying philosophy and identity of the thousand islands is the *Siwalima* which later became the provincial logo. "*Siwalima is the number 9 and 5. Siwalima is similar to Pancasila. Many people know it and know it by heart, but not everyone knows exactly how*

*to apply it. Similarly with Siwalima for the people of Maluku, everybody talks about it, but they do not really understand it,"* said Sinda. "*Siwalima itself contains the philosophy that we have differences however, we can be united.*" In 2009, the PTD held a seminar jointly organized with the Maluku Cultural Institute (LKDM) on the *Siwalima*. The interest in the seminar, evidenced by the number of attendees that reached nearly two hundred people, was double the committee's initial target. After the seminar, PTD also supported LKDM to publish the book "*Cita Budaya Maluku: Dalam Pola Pemahaman Sistemik*" (The Maluku Culture: A Systemic Understanding) to introduce the philosophy of *Siwalima* to a wider audience. PTD also facilitated a meeting between the Local Education Office and educators to design a conflict-sensitive curriculum through learning the local content in formal schools. Through Sinda, PTD managed to oversee the issuance of the Mayoral Regulation No. 02 of 2010 on the Local Content Curriculum for Primary and Secondary Education to create among others things, an educational system that is based on the values of local wisdom. Another agenda on the local content curriculum was sustainable city development that is environmentally friendly and a social order that is based on the values of brotherhood and appreciation of difference.

**Fighting for Peace, from the Stern**

Stefan Wolff, a political science professor from Germany and one of the world's leading experts on conflict once said, "*Leadership, diplomacy, and institutional design are the three most effective weapons in waging peace. Focus on leadership, diplomacy and institutional design can help explain how peace can be maintained and even how*

## **Under the leadership of Sinda, the PTD Maluku program reached various parties, including vulnerable groups such as children, parents, the disabled, women and youth.**

*it can fail.” Sinda, who has undergone a long bureaucratic journey, understands this message well. “The executive bureaucrats and legislative members are usually very busy on land. They were focused on designing regulations for Musrenbangda (Regional Development Planning Forums) that are participatory and conflict-sensitive We (PTD) have made an innovation by inviting them on a ship. Then, these busy people were unable to go anywhere and even their mobile phone were useless without a signal at sea,” Sinda recounted, laughing. Leadership, diplomacy, and institutional design indirectly became the discussion and concern of the meeting on the Lambelu motor ship.*

The event entitled, “Building Executive, Legislative, and University Dialogues” was held for three days while exploring the Ambon-Bitung route. Participants included members of the Regional Legislative Council (DPRD) and Regional Work Units (SKPD) from Maluku, Ambon City, West Seram District (SBB) and Central Maluku District (Malteng) as well as academics from the University of Pattimura (Unpati), journalists, and representatives of Bappenas and UNDP. *“This program was so successful that it was repeated for the second time with different material. In the second dialogue, Maluku Governor, Mr. Karel A. Ralahalu were even pleased to open the event,” Sinda recalled happily. The meeting on the ship was an innovative strategy that was later on adopted by several other agencies, as it was considered an effective way of bringing*

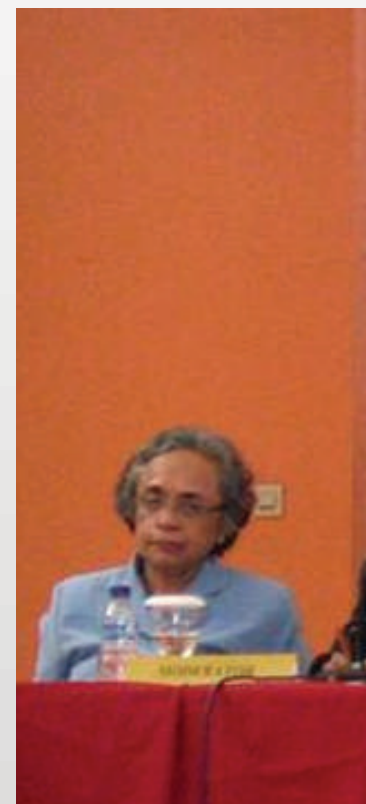
together the various parties who were always busy.

### **Fostering Peace, from the Bureaucracy to the Madani Group**

Hasanuddin Sy Silawane, often called Pak Din, is the Head of Division of the SBB District Legal Bureau. He was once the PTD Project Manager in SBB and he stated, *“Mrs. Sinda is a figure of the Maluku people that is rarely encountered. She has a long-term mindset in developing Maluku. Her thinking is progressive and forward.”* Kiky Samal, had a similar sentiment when she said, *“She is a very intelligent woman. Her foresight is always accurate, for instance, we once discussed about food emergencies when people have not thought about it. Several years later it really happened and there was so much discussion on the matter.”*

Under the leadership of Sinda, the PTD Maluku program reached various parties, including vulnerable groups such as children, parents, the disabled, women and youth. A diverse background of people benefit from the programs designed and overseen by Sinda, ranging from traditional leaders, religious leaders, legislative members, bureaucrats/ executives, academics, journalists, and Kewang (forest rangers). Issues that she advocates are peace and women, local customs, education, youth issues and the environment.

PTD focused on the planning process through participatory and conflict-sensitive Development Planning Forums (Musrenbang). Sinda





**PTD organized the “Capacity Building of Journalists to Support the Publication of Musrenbang Results and Coverage of Maluku Elections through the Perspective of Peaceful Journalism.”**

and other PTD staff went into the villages to facilitate any aspirations directly from the people. For example, they would invite women to participate and speak out on their common interests. In addition to the community, PTD also collaborates with the media. In 2008, in cooperation with the Maluku Media Center (MMC), PTD organized the “Capacity Building of Journalists to Support the Publication of Musrenbang Results and Coverage of Maluku Elections through the Perspective of Peaceful Journalism.” This activity was carried out based on the Musrenbang process, which is used as a channel for the aspirations of the people. However, differing interests made the Musrenbang process become a trigger for conflict. Journalists were encouraged to understand to be sensitive when broadcasting the news. In other words, it was better to broadcast news that was positive and promoted peace. PTD also was working with the Maluku Women Journalists Forum (FJPM) to conduct training on how to write and cover the news on conflict-sensitive and gender-sensitive issues for female journalists.

Sinda, through PTD was also aware that damage to natural resources would

eventually become a threat to the peace process. Furthermore, PTD also played a role in environmental issues by organizing workshops and training for Kewang (forest / sea rangers). PTD Maluku, under Sinda’s leadership, also initiated the State Government (Village) to issue State Regulations on Sasi Mangrove (Maluku customs in the management of mangroves) and State Regulations on the management of coastal areas. Another success of PTD was encouraging the issuance of the Mayoral Regulation (Perwali) No. 66/2009 on Public Awareness in Waste Management. PTD together with the Ambon city government also facilitated the provision of waste management infrastructure. A well-maintained environment, in addition to being pleasing to the eye, also brings peace to mankind.

This woman who was expecting the birth of her first grandchild, while still a bureaucrat, also assisted in the creation of the Concerned Women’s Movement (GPP). GPP was a pioneering organization that initiated peace through a women’s group. Today, GPP supports the establishment of the Maluku Ambassador of Peace (MAP). It also supports the youth group (Young





Ambassador of Peace) and the women in the Genuine Ambassador for Peace (GAP). Currently, MAP is still active and Sinda continues to be involved in contributing her thoughts at almost all activities. Kiky Samal remembers as she speaks of Sinda: *“Formerly, when she was in government, she had little to do with NGOs. Since becoming involved in the PTD, she got to know about NGOs and admired their movements and has always encouraged the women of Maluku to move forward. After retiring from the bureaucracy, she became an activist in Maluku Ambassador for Peace and several other organizations.”* Thus, Sinda’s shift from bureaucracy to civil groups (civil society) has manifested in many different ways.

Sinda played a large role in successfully implementing the PTD Maluku program and she was supported by Mr. Din Silawane, who

said, *“She is very meticulous and detailed in her work. She really pays attention to the program and there are no half-measures. Bappeda has the capacity to integrate all programs so that they are all targeted and all are under the same control. The SKPD program does not deviate from the Bappeda. Her energy seems inexhaustible at her age, which is no longer young. She visits all the villages directly, including villages that are hard to reach.”*

Knowing Sinda reminds me of the spirit of Christina Marta Tiahahu, a female activist from Maluku. Both are like pearls—beautiful, classy, radiating, yet sturdy and not easily cracked or shaken. This is a treasure that is the pride of the province that has more than one thousand islands. Therefore, this nickname—pearls from the earth of Pattimura—is worthy of both women. \*\*\*

**Currently, MAP is still active and Sinda continues to be involved in contributing her thoughts at almost all activities.**

# “THE PEACEMAKER FROM LANGGUR, KEI ISLAND”

**Sr. M. Brigitta Renyaan FDNSE (Brigitina Renyaan)**

Nun, peacemaker, and humanitarian

*“Peace is not something you wish for, it is something you make, something you are, something you do, and something you give away.” (Robert Fulghum)*

The room measured 3 x 2.5 meters and painted white. At first glance, it seemed ordinary, as most rooms look in general. Midday in the year 2012, it was stiflingly hot and distressing and bloody conflicts in Ambon were still occurring here and there. However, in that tiny room there was a feeling of calm, a feeling of something different. Facing the east and wearing a nun’s habit, Sr Brigitta Renyaan was fervently praying in front of a statue of the Virgin Mary. On the other side, facing west, wearing a mukena was Zakiyah Samal, solemnly practicing her midday prayer. This was a scene that was most unusual, given the current tumultuous conditions in Ambon. Segregation of Christian and Muslim regions separated the two communities into different living areas that continue to regard the other suspiciously. The experience of

watching two people of different faiths praying and praying for each other in the same room apparently made an impression on Mr. Yoseph Liokan who is now deceased. This room was in his house. It was initially rented but later donated shortly after he witnessed the incident. Currently, the house has been turned into a Trauma Protection Center (RPTC) or safe house for children and women in the city of Ambon.

## **Changing Blood into a Blessing**

*Tuesday, August 10, 1999, exactly at 11pm.*

The Ahuru villagers had just fallen asleep. Suddenly, they were startled awake by various shouts and sounds from homemade bombs. A rumbling of the masses could be heard in the distance, mixed with the screams of women and the crying of frightened



children. Residents of six RTs (neighborhood units) simultaneously saved themselves escaping into the forest and the cemetery. Some residents and children of the Solandres Orphanage sought refuge at the St Yacobus Ahuru Church. About three hundred people chose to seek refuge in the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (PBHK) Novitiate. The attack lasted until around 2:00 am and gradually calmed down. However, the convent was still used as a place of refuge a few days after the incident.

*“Two days after the incident, early in the morning, I had to go to the Gonzalo retreat house, to see the children refugees there. On that 12th of August, a painting contest was held for the children with the help of a journalist from the Netherlands. It turns out there was a battle in Air Besar. It was not far from our area. Many were killed,*

*including Sr Sofia’s nephew. Only his head was found,” Sr. Brigitta shuddered recalling the incident. “It was not easy to gather the children for the painting competition to pass the time and alleviate their trauma. Many parents were angry at the refugee camp, asking why during chaotic conditions, the children are asked to go to the convent.” Unexpectedly, on the next day after the contest, there was another attack. “It was horrible, clearly seen during the daytime. It turned out that not only were the men attacked, but also women, children, the elderly, adults and teenagers. I mustered up the courage to call the governor to report the situation and ask for assistance for the refugees,” she recounted.*

In the midst of uncertainty, many people urged the nuns to leave the Novitiate and evacuate to a safer place. Only a few young nuns left, but Sr

**“It was horrible, clearly seen during the daytime. It turned out that not only were the men attacked, but also women, children, the elderly, adults and teenagers...”**





**We should all prepare ourselves, to release our feelings of anger and hatred for these rioters. We are ready if it is the Lord's will that we all die today in this way...**

Brigitta chose to stay with the refugees. *"These women were full of fear and the children were crying constantly. I finally gathered them together and gave them some guidance. We should all prepare ourselves, to release our feelings of anger and hatred for these rioters. We are ready if it is the Lord's will that we all die today in this way,"* she said. *"Attacks continued to occur from August to December 1999. If calculated, there may have been more than twenty incidents. However, thanks to God, we were still protected."* Although she was urged to look for a safer place, Sr Brigitta remained unmoved and chose to stay at the Novitiate that had been turned into a place of refuge. Living in uncertain conditions, poor sanitation, lack of health facilities, food shortages and isolated from friends did not hinder her intention to continue to assist the refugees. Finally, on May 18, 2000, the Novitiate which had been used as a refugee camp for months was destroyed and burned down during the riots. Her direct involvement in the

conflicts and living with the refugees inspired her to continue to work and contribute in various peace efforts.

### **Constructing Peace for Children and Women**

Sr. Brigitta's life was threatened not only during the riots in 1999 but again in 2002 while carrying out activities in the village of Soya. *"They were also strongly against the word "peace" in Ambon. Thus, as a strategy, in efforts to establish peace, attributes with the words "peace," "resolution" and so on were unnecessary. The people are more able to accept things that were concrete such as education, healthcare, economic empowerment, and social assistance because the benefits could be felt directly. This was more fundamental in the efforts to achieve sustainable peace,"* she said.

This consideration is what motivated Sr Brigitta to then form and become active in three charitable foundations: Yayasan Kasih Mandiri Ambon (the Ambon Self-Reliance Love Foundation),

the Astidharma Foundation and the Women's Awareness Movement (GPP). The Yayasan Kasih Mandiri Ambon was established to assist female victims of violence. The aim of the Astidharma Foundation is to fight for the fate of children and give priority to education while the Women's Awareness Movement (GPP) is an interfaith women's movement that became one of the driving forces of peace in Maluku by carrying out efforts to re-establish welfare post conflict.

Since 2002, Sr. Brigitta has turned the donated house of the late Yoseph Liokan into a safe house for children and women, who are communal (riot) victims and victims of personal violence (domestic violence). After the conflict, Sr. Brigitta along with other activists led a counseling program once a week. Children of various ages, backgrounds and religions, gathered and learnt the meaning of tolerance. This was very important for the children who witnessed the bloody conflict in the capital of Maluku. The counseling of these children continues and in 2008, Sr. Brigitta founded the Children's Center and PDAUD (Early Childhood Peace Education). This Center continues to be run to this day. Sr. Brigitta agrees with the words of James Russell Powell, an American poet who said, "Children are God's Apostles, sent forth, day by day, to preach of love and hope and peace."

Sr. Brigitta is not only active in counseling children, but also diligently listens and finds solutions for women victims of violence. Sr. Hendrika Lakasienan, the leader of the PBHK Sisters in Maluku also said, "Sr. Brigitta is a fellow sister who has a strong commitment for the empowerment of women and children. She is truly concerned and very assertive in finding injustices or violations of the rights of children and women. She will really act, assist, and find solutions for every problem, primarily related to children and women." At the end of 2012, Sr.

Brigitta was appointed the Deputy Head of Integrated Services Center for Women and Children (P2TP2A) in Ambon City by the mayor. "I always travel around the city and other districts in Maluku, even to other provinces in Indonesia, for the fostering, strengthening, mentoring, and capacity building of women and children. The Safe House that we manage is still running well. We also remain faithful in caring for the women and children who are victims. As female peace workers and human rights defenders, we often receive threats, terror and pressure in the work that we do. Working under such circumstances will not hamper our steps or make us stop," she said.

The humanitarian work and dedication of Sr. Brigitta does not stop in the Maluku province. She has also assisted various humanitarian and peace missions in various regions. When the tsunami hit Aceh, Sr. Brigitta volunteered at the Children's Center in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) to assist the children affected by the tsunami. She is also known to actively fight for the rights of children and women in various seminars, conferences and congresses in various regions of Indonesia such as Jakarta, Bali and Manado, and other countries such as Thailand and Cambodia.

Sister Brigitta played an active role in the formal peace process in Maluku, referred to as Malino II. She was one of the few women selected to be involved in the negotiations. Sr. Brigitta is also listed as one the thousand women to be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005. She was also nominated by UNDP as one the candidates of the N-Peace Award. Hilda Rolobessy, a friend of Sr. Brigitta who is a Muslim activist in Lapesdam NU said, "Sr. Brigitta is so humble, kind, responsible and committed to her work. Her work is undisputable; a Moluccan activist who continues to fight for peace. She is an exceptional; both as a person as well as

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**Post conflict, she continues her work in establishing the Safe House and promoting peace for the women and children through Yayasan Kasih Mandiri.**

*a leader of the Yayasan Kasih Mandiri (Self-Reliance Love Foundation). She deserves to be nominated for the N-Peace Award because since the beginning of the conflicts in Maluku, she has been a leading figure in advocating peace and establishing communication between the conflicting parties and the security forces. Post conflict, she continues her work in establishing the Safe House and promoting peace for the women and children through Yayasan Kasih Mandiri. She is also active in FKUB in continuing to mediate and promote peace in Maluku."*

However, for Sr Brigitta personally, her happiness is not achieved through the various award nominations, but when her struggle in the peace and humanitarian process brings benefits to the victims.

**Moving Forward Fearlessly, Defending What is Right**

Sr. Brigitta M. Renyaan FDNSE, who will soon move to another order and change her name to Sr. M. Brigitina Renyaan recounts her childhood,

*"I am the eldest of nine children. Two died before the age of two years. My father, Ernset Rahayaan, is currently 84 years old and my mother Engelberta Yamleyan is 83 years old. When they got married, each had a personal prayer at the church. It turned out it was the same prayer: if they were blessed with a child, the first child will be dedicated to God. My father had five siblings who all male, so he silently prayed for his first child to be a girl. God granted all his wishes."* This woman born in Langgur, Kei Kecil Island, Central Maluku District, later became a nun at the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Convent, Ambon, Maluku in 1975.

In addition to serving as a nun, Sr. Brigitta also worked as an educator. She was an elementary school teacher at Xavier Ambon Elementary School for more than fifteen years. *"This school is open for everyone, not just Catholics, but also Christian and Muslim students. We never discriminate against any religion and welcome all religions well,"* she said, adding that this is also done by the other teachers. She then tells







about her background of becoming a teacher, *"My father graduated from Sekolah Rakyat (SR) (Public School) and at the time he was going to be sent to Papua to become a teacher. However a tragedy occurred, his younger brother was caned in school, when he had two boils on his rear. He came home bleeding angering my grandfather. He brought a long machete to school and got angry in front of the principal. Apparently the principal became vengeful and said, "Ernest is not allowed to go to Papua." Eventually my father became a teacher for his seven children. There was a blackboard at home. If there was no chalk, we sharpen pieces of sweet potato, dry them and used them as chalk. Every day there was an announcement, as well as a division of tasks such as one must fetch water, another must clean the house and so on. Thus, we were taught to be independent since we were young. My father also loved to sing patriotic songs to us as a lullaby. One song that resonates in my heart is: "Move forward fearlessly, defend what is right ..."* Sr. Brigitina sang with her melodious voice.

Her beautiful childhood inspired her to promote peace and happiness for the children and women around her, particularly for the victims of violence. She had memory flashback from childhood when she filled a slot on one of the children's shows on Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) in Langgur and sang this song:

*I see the motherland, she is grieving  
Your tears are flowing, remembering  
your lost gold and diamonds  
Forests, mountains, paddy fields,  
and the sea, home of treasures  
Now mother is struggling,  
sighing and praying  
I see the motherland, we  
come to make you happy  
Behold your sons and daughters,  
encouraging mother  
Mother we still love you,  
your faithful sons  
Guarding the legacy, for the  
homeland and nation*

**However a tragedy occurred, his younger brother was caned in school, when he had two boils on his rear.**



# CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION IN HALMAHERA; **TOWARD ESTABLISHING AN INTEGRATED FARMING CAMPUS**

## **Electronita Duan**

Academic and driver of women's economy, recipient of the N-Peace Awards 2011.  
Beneficiary of UNDP's small grant for post conflict initiatives in North Maluku.







**Electronita Duan, Recipient of the N-Peace Award 2011**

As a recipient of the award for her role in promoting peace and preventing conflicts among the communities in Tobelo, North Maluku Province, Electronita Duan or Ms. Eton as she is frequently referred to, believes that creating economic and educational opportunities is the most effective way to prevent conflicts and ensure the continuity of peace. Ms. Eton is one of the founders of the SANRO Foundation which engages in community development.

The frenetic sounds of Maluku traditional pop music broke through the heat of the blistering day. People were walking back and forth from one house to another saying “Happy New Year.” The atmosphere was similar to Eid in my village, Genteng - Banyuwangi, where people rush out of the house to greet each other to say “maaf lahir batin” (forgive my physical and spiritual wrongdoings). This is the first time, I feel the people’s enthusiasm for the new the year. I do not think it is because the New Year festivities are preceded with Christmas. Rather, in the Minahasa Tobelo tradition, the turn of the year is a pivotal moment as with the celebration of Eid or Christmas. In fact, for the New Year celebration, some residents of Tobelo sell their land to ensure that their kitchen remains ‘billowing’ and celebrations continue to be held. Minimally, they make sure there is enough food and pastries at home for one full month.

Just like Eid and New Year celebrations, the people also serve pastries and cakes, fruits from the garden for the turn of the year celebrations. They also donate funds to rent a complete sound system to liven up the New Year celebrations. Music and ronggeng (re: dancing) are performed throughout the day. I observed from inside the car on the

way to Poltek Padamara, a group of youngsters enjoying the thumping rhythm of traditional music. The Tobelo youngsters must be good at meronggeng. This is a medium of communication among the youth. No matter how high your education is, if you cannot meronggeng, something is lacking.

Suddenly there was a power failure. “Oh ... I’m relieved. Let’s take a break for a while,” Eton looked a little relieved with the power failure. The home of Duan’s family is located opposite of the sound system, so you can imagine that extremely loud music that can be heard. Only overwhelming fatigue was able to put to me asleep under the frenetic pounding music.

This expression of joy can be seen along the streets of Tobelo. This is the fruit of the peace agreement that was sworn by Muslim and Christian groups on 20 April 2001 in the Hibualamo Field. Electronita Duan, or commonly called Eton is one of the women who has contributed to the peace-building efforts in her village. The founder of credit union, Prof. J.L Nanere started this initiative when almost all banks were closed due to the conflicts. Eton, was one of the backbones of the credit union to empower communities. The cooperative started with 50 members with a capital of Rp 50 million. Currently, there are more than 14,000 members,



## **This is what Eton calls Integrated Farming or integrated and sustainable agriculture. A new concept developed by the Padamara Polytechnic.**

mostly women with a turnover of Rp 45 Billion.

A Peace Polytechnic was also established to enable the youth in North Halmahera to rebuild their villages. The polytechnic is growing rapidly. Its mandate is not only to restore the fractured community relations through the younger generation, but also creating sustainable agriculture, so that people of Halmahera are able to build food security. Due to her persistence in establishing peace in the land of Halmahera, Eton was awarded with the N-Peace Award (2011) representing Indonesia in Asia and She Can (2013) an award for inspiring women initiated by Tupperware.

### **An Integrated Campus for Sustainable Farming**

The Padamara Polytechnic study area is about 300 hectares. Once entering the entrance area of the Polytechnic, we can immediately see an agribusiness display. Besides selling organic fertilizers and organic crops there is also a cafe in the display area that sells organic fruit juice and dishes such as steak that uses self-grown ingredients such as fish, chicken, and beef. On the right of the entrance, there is a stretch of nursery gardens with wooden fencing covered with insectnet. The purpose is besides protecting the plants that are still young from insects it also protects plants from direct exposure to sunlight.

Further inside, in the central area, we are able to see a cottage structure that functions as classroom, staff room, administration room, class laboratory,

Student Activity Unit and so on. In the rear, some livestock pens can be seen. Goat pens are located next to Arab chicken coops, with breeders that have been imported from Kediri. Across from the goat pens and chicken coops, cowsheds can be found. Cow dung is also used for biogas. Two cylinders have been prepared to contain the cow dung. There are two uses for it namely gas energy and compost. Fifty meters from the pens, there is storehouse for fertilizer attached with a space storing fermented materials, similar to an agricultural laboratory.

This is what Eton calls Integrated Farming or integrated and sustainable agriculture. A new concept developed by the Padamara Polytechnic. The development of this concept was supported by a company in Surabaya. Eton explains in detail that integrated farming is the optimization of agricultural produce on a limited amount of land. This concept was first developed in Indonesia in 1980. President Suharto gave much attention to integrated farming. Eton claims that integrated farming can break the chains of dependence of farmers on urea fertilizers. Simply put, crops, livestock and fish can be grown in one area and support each other. The main objective is so the farmers can prosper. In the Polytechnic's integrated farming concept, the produce can be sold in cooperative business outlets. Another marketing alternative is through the company in Surabaya, which is expected to open the door for export to Europe.



<http://i.yimg.com/vi/ochpds3HXjU/hqdefault.jpg>



In order to develop this integrated farming a specialized stock of experts is needed. The Padamara Polytechnic is in the process of producing these experts. Thus, Prof. Nanere and Eton have revamped the Polytechnic campus into a study and work laboratory for students and lecturers. The ratio of 70% practical work and 30% theory is suited to the concept of integrated farming. This means that students will be performing many integrated farming practices after receiving adequate material.

To promote the integrated farming concept, Eton has established a community radio. At the time of my visit, the new community radio was still in trial. They were just waiting for permission to operate. Information about the farm will be released on the community radio as well as interactive dialogues regarding agriculture that will liven up the radio broadcasts.

The role of the credit union cooperative that has been established since 2006 will also be integrated. Currently they have an asset of several hundred million that is utilized by farmers. Eton is very confident that the roles of integrated agencies

under the Saro Nifero Foundation, should be synergized in order to support a common goal, namely the establishment of an integrated and sustainable farming system. In this case, the credit union plays an enormous role in supporting the development of an integrated farming system in the community.

Eton is currently assisted by the academic community in establishing a Vocational School or an Agricultural Vocational Middle School (SMK). Some people feel that this idea is unrealistic, viewing the lack of support from local government funding for agricultural development. On the contrary, Eton and her team feel that the presence of the SMK is an opportunity for the uptake of Polytechnic graduates and will be a source of potential. The SMK alumni will become potential Polytechnic university students.

Nevertheless, it seems Eton has to work hard to convince the Polytechnic team that the major changes being prepared by the campus is not without proper planning although the overall blueprint is still in the hands of one person, which is Eton, candidate for the Polytechnic's new director. Yes, it takes

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a considerable amount of time to make sure all the teams understand the large concept of the integrated campus and integrated farming. Thus, it is natural that irrelevant comments are often heard in the campus.

"Why should we make chicken, goat and cow farms. What do we want to become?"

"The Polytechnic is not yet independent, and they want to open a vocational school (SMK)."

Patently, Eton explains that it is time the campus created a space for internships for students and lecturers. Eton is confident the new concept of the campus will give birth to graduates who are ready to work, not taught to work. The campus should be able to create business opportunities. If the campus can create business opportunities, the independence of the campus in the future will be more certain. According to Eton, currently government assistance for the operations of the campus is minimal. Therefore, the campus must develop collaborative programs with various parties.

To boost the capacity of Polytechnic students, Eton is also restructuring the

faculty. The policy of "equalization of titles" to be issued by the Minister of Education will open up great opportunities for the Polytechnic to advance. Currently the equalization of the Strata 2 title with ten years of work experience in the field is still in progress.

Previously, the Padamara Polytechnic had a program called Oz Team, which was a six-month live in program in Australia to learn about agriculture. The program opened many new insights for the youth of Halmahera from other countries. From the blog [www.anakhalmahera.wordpress.com](http://www.anakhalmahera.wordpress.com), I saw various exchange activities. Almost all of the program alumni contributed a positive value. The impact of this exchange program has opened more doors to success.

Support for the strengthening of the Padamara Polytechnic was also presented by UNDP in the form of the PTDDA program that is manifested in training for the management of agricultural produce. This activity is in line with the concept of integrated farming that develops aspects of agribusiness. Another important activity is consolidation of women in



North Halmahera who are advocates of peace to discuss sustainable peace. A women's awareness forum will be formed from the workshop, which will reorganize women's empowerment strategies in Halmahera to achieve sustainable peace.

**Bringing the “Seven Habits” Down to Earth**

Stephen R. Covey, author of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* is an inspiring figure for Eton. Upon receiving new knowledge about the Seven Habits, Eton found that the values were very fitting to be applied to the context of Halmahera. Briefly the seven habits are described as follows; 1) Be proactive; 2) Begin with the end in mind; 3) Put first things first; 4) Think win-win; 5) Seek first to understand the other person; 6) Synergy; 7) Have a balanced life.

Judging from the contents of the seven habits above, they are quite relevant to the conditions in Halmahera where post-conflict, self-reliance, public independence, and self-renewal are much needed especially in the youth. Nevertheless, the lecturer of this course often changes because the lecturer of the Seven Habits must be consistent with the values that he teaches. However, Eton insists on maintaining this course even though many people have tried to remove it from the curriculum. “If Seven Habits is not included in the curriculum, it becomes very difficult to educate the students about these character values. This course can disseminate the values of peace,” Eton expressed firmly on the way home from a small tour around the campus.

Eton's best friend, Badriyah confirmed that the Padamara Polytechnic has successfully opened

a space for the meeting of different groups. Certainly, it is important to maintain the meeting space for future generations.

Bearing the family name Duan is a moral responsibility for Eton. Eton's father, Z. Duan, was a teacher, and her mother A. Djou was a role model in the community. Of their 10 children, Eton is the eighth child. Unlike many of her sisters, Eton felt that education would bring a change in her life. Thus, when her parents decided to give a sum of money to her brother, Eton's hopes to continue higher education were dashed. This motivated Eton to find another way to continue her education. Eton's success today is due to her opposition of the patriarchal perspective in the family and society.

To this day, the struggle to subdue the way of thinking that “women are secondary” has not ended. Her single status is often used by people to demean her role. Along with her best friend, Badriyah, a counselor for victims of domestic violence, who is also a widow, in a casual conversation that afternoon at the Duan family home, they inadvertently agree that being a woman is not easy. When unmarried people always ask, “When are you getting married?” When a woman gets married, they ask “When are you going to have children?” The cycle of being a woman, wife and mother, seems to be inexorable. Society considers it strange if a woman in a particular context decides to live alone, rather than compromise her dignity. Nevertheless, Eton does not feel discouraged because the task of creating food self-sufficiency through integrated farming practices, starting from the Padamara Polytechnic Campus, needs all of her attention and energy. Just like a mother raising her baby. \*\*\*

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# BRINGING THE HIBUA LAMA PHILOSOPHY DOWN TO EARTH, PRACTICING QASIDAH FOR RECONCILIATION

## Badriyah

Female artist, initiator of Qasidah for reconciliation.

*Peace. Peace. Peace.  
Everyone loves peace.  
But wars are increasing.  
Leaving me bewildered.*

### Hibualamo

Hibualamo in the Tobelo dialect means 'Big House'. This local philosophy is rooted in the understanding that the entire population of North Halmahera is descended from a common ancestor and share a single lineage and they occupy one 'Big House' where they live in harmony, tolerance, and are united without religious separation. It is a place where they can solve problems together.



This fragment of lyrics is familiar to the ears of many gambus music lovers in Indonesia. The group Qasidah Nasidaria popularized this song in the 1980s. Although it is old, the paradoxical message in the lyrics of the song "peace and conflict" is like two sides of the same coin. Tobelo, a small town in North Maluku has a story of peace and conflict: a group of Muslim women used the Qasidah Islamic Women Al-khaerat as a medium to encourage the reconciliation of Christians and Muslims in 2002.

To reach the capital of North Halmahera, we had to cross the sea on a speedboat. The journey took 30-40 minutes depending on the speed of the boat. Speedboats with three engines are 10 minutes faster than those with

one engine. It was 50,000 Rp to travel one way. The boat trip was followed by a 3 hour car ride in an Avanza car for 120,000 Rp. Once the car is filled up with six or seven passengers, the driver immediately departs. A cool breeze from the countryside blows through the open windows. Within 10 minutes, the silver Avanza car was driving alongside hills covered with lush trees. Occasionally, we would see an expanse of coconut groves before we entered the residential area. There was a bridge and a sharp bend and finally we were at our destination.

The atmosphere was so tranquil during the journey to Tobelo, the capital of North Halmahera, that it was a shock to hear the uproarious music when we entered the village of Kodok. Youth were dancing on the



street. The people were shaking hands while greeting each other: "Happy New Year." Families visited one another. Muslims visited Christians and vice versa. It was as if there hadn't been any conflict among them ever.

Fifteen years ago was a dark period for this region. It was the end of 1999 when North Maluku was dragged into a civil war. Hatred and distrust were the key triggers for mobilizing the masses to satisfy their anger. As such, it was inevitable that there were attacks between villages; and burning of homes, places of worship, and various village assets.

Women, children, and the elderly were evacuated to areas that were considered safe. Besides being a hindrance to the warring sides, they were also rescued because they

could have been used as soft targets for the opponents. Meanwhile, the husbands, brothers and sons fought in the battlefield. Both sides were losing equally. Both lost belongings and loved ones. Someone needed to talk about reconciliation. One of the women who stood out and actively pushed for reconciliation is Badriyah Fadel. Qasidah to her was not only the medium of her hobby of singing, but it also was a strategic medium to strengthen relations between Muslims and Christians.

**Qasidah for Reconciliation**

Not much is heard about women involved in reconciliation. Not only because their role is considered "periphery," but also because stories of conflict resolution are dominated by

**It was a dark period, fifteen years ago, in the end of 1999, where North Maluku was dragged into civil war.**





## **Badriyah was not the only woman troubled by the conflict situation in North Halmahera.**

the narrative of traditional and religious figures. Most of them are men. If there is a woman who is involved in the reconciliation process, it is usually on the periphery.

Badriyah was not the only woman troubled by the conflict situation in North Halmahera. Since the outbreak of conflicts in 1999, community relations were frayed and fragmented. The words 'brother' and 'sister' was no longer used among the villagers. There were casualties and thousands of people died in vain.

Historically, the Tobelo were the original ethnic group there. With their Hibualamo customs, they are known as a community that upholds the value of fraternity called "ngone oria dodoto" in their local language. This phrase meant "we are all brothers." This custom was what encouraged all parties to agree to end the war on 20 April 2001. In a local ceremony that was held at the Hibualamo field and witnessed by the Governor of North Maluku Muhyi Effendie, North Maluku Region II Restoration of Security Sector Commander Colonel (Mar) Mohammad Alfian, and religious and

community leaders from both groups, both sides emphasized their will to unite.

A youth leader named Bernard Bitjara (also known as Benny Doro), who at the time was dubbed as the North Halmahera War Commander, urged to look forward and not look back. As quoted by the website [www.antara.com](http://www.antara.com) on October 3, 2007, Benny proclaimed;

*"It's not like this kind of activity has never been done before. However, in the past we did not do it with a clear heart. We should not just see the rubble scattered about. It is like driving a car, we don't just look in the rearview mirror, but must look ahead. We have a responsibility to our family and children and should not let our children follow in our footsteps."*

The oath for peace was spoken. From the view of the Muslims, Musclis Baba and Mochtar Hamza were also considered one vote. They were both very confident that the outbreak of conflicts in North Halmahera was caused by an outside provocation. Today, with the belief that they are all brothers, future provocations are silenced by these cultural means that uphold presence of mind and a clear heart.

Since then, customary events always strove to involve all of society, both Muslims and Christians. The



[https://id.staticflickr.com/7/6150/6082017618\\_a26a43f8ae\\_b.jpg](https://id.staticflickr.com/7/6150/6082017618_a26a43f8ae_b.jpg)

Qasidah Islamic Women Al-khaerat Group that Badriyah leads is often used as a medium to strengthen inter-faith communication in North Halmahera. For example, the Qasidah Group received a special invitation from a church in Mamuya to perform at the opening ceremony of the church. Without hesitation, Badriyah agreed.

The tambourine was struck along the procession. Members of the Qasidah Group sang songs depicting the theme of brotherhood. While singing, the vocalist occasionally greeted the religious leaders who stood in the front. The atmosphere was relaxed. A group of Muslims rang the church bell and the bell was accompanied by the beat of tambourines. One of the songs being sung was called 'True Peace and Tolerance.' Here are the following lyrics;

*Tolerance let us be tolerant  
Living in peace and harmony  
With our neighbors  
Because it is a divine command  
To mankind in this world  
Do not judge him by  
his ethnic group  
Do not judge him by his class  
But see him as one  
nation of Indonesia  
One language ... Indonesian  
Instill in our souls  
Our motto is Unity in Diversity  
We are different but we are one  
Development in all  
fields will advance*

There was no resistance from the Muslims in Tobelo. However, there was a strong reaction from the Muslims in Ternate. In fact, there was a prominent figure that called it apostasy. He even sent a special message to Badriyah and her elder sibling, which read;

*"If you want to convert to Christianity, just convert to Christianity. Do not bring the name of Islam. Mrs. Badriyah and her elder sibling are apostates."*

Indifference was the most effective coping strategy for Badriyah. This woman, who volunteered at the Dompot Dhuafa Republika Foundation (DDR) in a program to foster orphans, who also was a North Halmahera war widow, admits that she is already immune to the various accusations from people. Anjing menggonggong kafila berlalu (the dogs are barking, the caravan moves on which means they are useless protests) is her philosophy. Reconciliation is the moral responsibility of every person in North Halmahera. Badriyah is quite certain that what she is doing does not violate Habualamo customary values.

The church is not a forbidden place for Muslims and entering a church did not mean converting to Christianity. Humanitarian activities for assistance from foreign governments were also often held in churches. If the assistance was needed by the Christian

**Anjing menggonggong kafila berlalu (the dogs are barking, the caravan moves on which means they are useless protests) is her philosophy.**

## Badriyah, further forged her mediation skills when she joined the Daur Mala organization as an advisor in cases of Violence against Women (VAW).

community and vice versa, mosques are also used as a social place for humanitarian activities.

The increasing numbers of the population of the Mede and Popilo villages in North Tobelo recently also encouraged Badriyah to get more involved although many parties with mainly religious and traditional leaders who still underestimate the role of women in conflict resolution do not approve. Badriyah mobilized women to remove the Mede and Popilo village boundary markers that have been placed by village officials. According to her, the separation of villages based on natural resources cannot be the only consideration. Another important element that must be considered was the human element. Division of the villages based on the character of the people also was needed to be considered to prevent conflict. Although the process was quite tough, the negotiation of the village boundaries was able to be resolved peacefully. Unfortunately, these events have not convinced the decision makers on the importance of women in decision-making roles on conflict resolution.

### Fostering the Hibua Lama Philosophy, Mediating Families

Anselmus Puasa claimed that the customs of *Hibualamo* can be used as a platform for dialogues on the differences and diversity of community perspectives. As a philosophy of life, values, and symbolic meaning, *Hibualamo* can instill a deep spirituality towards the creator: Jou Madutu, Jou Maduhutu, Juo La ta ala: God Most High. This means that spiritual values can also be translated into human relations by upholding truth, justice, community service, and respect for diversity.

The spiritual value of helping others strengthens Badriyah in carrying out her work on mediation. She has five

siblings and it was there that she started mediating. Badriyah, further forged her mediation skills when she joined the Daur Mala organization as an advisor in cases of Violence against Women (VAW). For her, mediating warring families is just as difficult as mediating communities during conflict. The shift of conflict from the public sphere into the home made this woman born in 1969, unable to stay silent with the amount of VAW cases occurring.

Together with Daur Mala, Badriyah carried out a massive campaign on VAW. In fact, stickers that read 'domestic violence is a crime' were placed in public spaces. Her aim was to build public awareness, especially among men to not commit domestic violence. The stickers were also intended to encourage women to have the courage to report any experiences of domestic violence. Husbands became cautious. "Now when husbands get angry they do not hit their wife, they hit a wall or a pan. Many women complain that their pots have leaks because they have been punched by their husband," she smiled widely remembering the faces of the women she helped.

Badriyah, as an advisor for victims, has also made many changes in the handling of women's cases in police stations. When she was assisting in a rape case of a minor, the officer on duty was typing the Investigative Official Report (BAP) when another police officer came in and immediately asked the victim, "What is the case?" A few minutes later, another officer came and asked the same question. Feeling angry at the police behavior that she considered insensitive, Badriyah immediately protested, "Sir, isn't there a special room for cases like this? If everyone that comes in to the BAP room asks about the case, that is tantamount to abusing the victim."

Today, Women's Desks are available at Tobelo police stations so that cases of Violence against Women



<http://v-images2.antarafoto.com/>





<http://2.bp.blogspot.com/>

and Children (KtPA) such as domestic violence, rape, or sexual abuse can be handled with consideration to the privacy of the victim. Badriyah's persistence in assisting cases such as these cannot be deterred by anything. *"I do not want other women to suffer like me,"* expressed Badriyah. Forced to marry at a very young age of 17, Badriyah had to make the extreme decision to separate from her husband and take the responsibility of raising their two sons.

Today, in addition to serving the community, Badriyah has also opened a small business. She took advantage of her banana crops to produce chips. If one banana trunk is priced at Rp 10,000 - Rp. 20,000, by selling it in the

form of cooked chips, she can obtain a profit of up to Rp. 500,000. Badriyah also developed her baking skills after her divorce from her husband. She feels that she is finally out of her dark period. Currently, her first child, Riskiah, an economics graduate is already working while her second child, Fauzanah Fauzi is in her third semester in FKIP. Her youngest child, Farha is currently in her first year of junior high school. She ensures that her life with her children had no shortages. "I do not want my children to think that a life with their father was more fulfilling. I would be embarrassed if my children were not taken care of," she said with confidence.\*\*\*

**Badriyah's persistence in assisting cases such as these cannot be deterred by anything. "I do not want other women to suffer like me," expressed Badriyah.**

# RECONCILIATION *BEGINS WITH* *BACARITA KAMPUNG*

## Indri Ayusuf

Female companion of fishing communities, through Village Story Sharing.

**The dispute over the 2007 Regional Elections in North Maluku is the longest electoral dispute in the history of Indonesia. The dispute over the North Maluku Regional Elections was initiated by the annulment of the vote count from the North Maluku Elections Commission (KPUD) by the General Elections Commission (KPU). The North Maluku KPUD had determined the gubernatorial and vice gubernatorial candidates, Thaib Armaiyn and Abdul Gani Kasuba as the legitimate winner of the Regional Elections. Meanwhile the General Elections Commission had confirmed that Abdul Gafur-Abdurrahim Fabanyo were the winners.**





www.indonesiatimur.co

http://statistik.kabwatuna.com

The conflict between these two electoral management bodies caused grassroots communities to carry out actions of solidarity in support of their respective candidates. This resulted in public discord and strong and uncontrollable disputes between the supporters of the gubernatorial and vice gubernatorial candidates. Who would have thought this dispute would affect the supporters of the candidates and nearly severed community relations in a fishing village in the city of Sofifi.

A female activist named Indri Ayusuf, who had been commissioned to provide assistance for the fishermen in the capital city of Sofifi said that the dispute over the 2007 Regional Elections has resulted in the discord of the grassroots community. At a meeting at her home in the afternoon of December 31, 2015, the young woman who was five months pregnant was very enthusiastic as she recounted her experience as a counselor.

According to her, although her work and educational background are not in line, Indri, a graduate of the fisheries faculty of the University of Khairun Ternate, feels she is suited for the job as counselor. Especially working with fishermen groups that face the complexities of life – not just economic matters but also unequal gender relations. “During large harvest times,

the fishermen only receive a small amount of money. Conversely when fish are hard to come by, the fishermen are able to earn a larger amount of money.”

### **Mentoring as a communicative art form**

Initially, mentoring was regarded as work for Indri, meaning, that her interest in community assistance emerged during her work with an organization called eLsil, a coastal and maritime organization. When she was assigned to the Sofifi fishermen community, to assist fisherwomen, she found interest in interacting with the community. The polite and inquisitive nature of the villagers, were favorable in enabling Indri to further explore the characters of each person. This is the main requirement in staying with a community in a certain region, the ability to understand the character of each person. An understanding of the character of each person, will affect the communication patterns of each person.

For this reason, Indri was determined to carry out a “guerilla” from one house to another to establish a line of communication with each resident. Finding the right time to chat with the fisherwomen or dibo dibo (women who buy fish from fishermen and resell them) was not easy. Usually





**Armed with field knowledge from the guerilla and the need for change, Indri implemented two strategies, namely strengthening the analytical capacity of fishermen communities through the People's School of Fishermen and building a network of fishermen and decision-makers through Bacarita Kampung (Village Story Sharing).**

their husbands are not fishermen. These were the two categories of groups that were organized by Indri at that time, so that the only free time was 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Yes, the nighttime was a golden time for Indri. With the intention of establishing communication with the women and exploring their characters, she visited their homes one by one. The visits lasted an average of 15-20 minutes to avoid boredom.

One morning when the water faucet in the Mr. Jamrud's house stopped working, Indri without hesitation took some water from the tap next door, which was only separated by a narrow alleyway. A woman then admonished her, "Ms. Indri, why did you take water from that faucet? It belongs to the other group. Ms. Indri's is part of our group." For the next few seconds, Indri was dumbfounded and thought hard about what Mrs. Resti said, a resident follower of Abah Jamrod. Quickly she realized there was something seriously wrong in the village she was assisting.

The aroma of conflict could no longer be masked. Armed with confidence and great curiosity, Indri decided to meet with Abah Jamrot, a senior figure who was a considered a leader by the community. With careful consideration, Indri expressed her intention to enter the next village. Abah Jamrot was heavily reluctant in allowing Indri to enter the "neighboring" area because of the serious disputes.

However, Mr. Jamrot did not say it out openly. He just assured Indri that assisting his village was sufficient. However, Indri insisted with various arguments to enter the next village.

With the help of Abah, Indri gained an opportunity to get to know the residents of the neighboring village. The residents of the neighboring village looked at her with suspicion, as if to ask "Why has this woman entered our territory. She has lived several months in Mr. Jamrot's house, which means she is in favor of the other village." Indri was nonchalant. Her goal was to win over the village, which turned out to be led by a woman named Mrs. Icha.

Abah and Mrs. Icha are actually close relatives. They have the same grandmother. However, since the 2007 Regional Elections, which caused a dispute between the supporters of the candidates, their family was torn apart. The community was also divided. In politics, you do not hesitate to sacrifice anyone to win.

Armed with field knowledge from the guerilla and the need for change, Indri implemented two strategies, namely strengthening the analytical capacity of fishermen communities through the People's School of Fishermen and building a network of fishermen and decision-makers through Bacarita Kampung (Village Story Sharing). Indri believed both these strategies will enable the two villages to reconcile.

### Transformation through the People’s School of Fishermen and “Bacarita Kampung”

The conflict between the groups in the Gurafin Village, North Oba Sub District had solidified although everyone knew clearly that there were no advantages that were gained from the dispute. The two groups were reluctant to think about reconciliation. It seemed that both sides were waiting for third person to initiate reconciliation. Indri saw that the position was still vacant. She decided to maximize herself in being the third person.

If the leaders of the two villages were directly approached, it may cause an uncontrolled reaction at the base. It is better to build awareness at the base regarding the impacts of the dispute by creating opportunities for discussion between the two villages. Then came the idea of the People’s School of Fishermen (SRN), which functioned to strengthen the social analysis skills of fishermen and obtain practical and strategic knowledge to lobby decision-makers. SRN is held every Saturday night and is usually attended by about 20 women and men who wish to gain new knowledge.

Although Indri has knowledge on various government assistance programs, which can be accessed by fishermen in the form of direct cash assistance as well as fishing equipment, however they were not selected by Indri. Instead of utilizing the Bacarita Kampung platform as a promotional medium for herself, Indri preferred to use another approach namely facilitating decision makers in both the executive and legislative branches to directly visit the villages and conduct dialogues with the residents.

Through Bacarita Kampung, Indri successfully brought together the

fishermen and the Head of the North Maluku Fisheries Office, who was often represented by Mr. Ismail. Initially, the people were reluctant to talk because they were afraid, however after a few people started to ask questions and ask for clarifications, the others in turn, also began to ask questions.

Bacarita Kampung became an awaited forum for the fishermen of Sofifi. Although it is only held every three months, it is always eagerly anticipated by many of the residents, regardless of which village they come from. They received many benefits from the Bacarita Kampung forum, in regards to government assistance and methods to access this assistance.

If Bacarita Kampung is a platform for the meeting of fishermen and the government, the People’s School of Fishermen is a learning medium to follow up on the agreements that have been made through Bacarita Kampung, including the learning of proposal writing skills, lobbying skills and other practical skills.

From this point, the people’s confidence began to grow. Tensions with the residents of the neighboring village began to dissipate. They started to interact during the learning process at SRN and attended the regular meetings of Bacarita Kampung. As if they have forgotten that the two parties had not spoken since the 2007 Regional Elections.

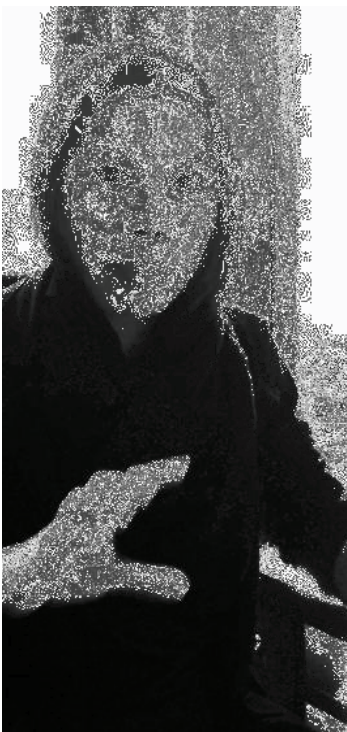
In 2009, Indri finally managed to reconcile the fishermen and the government of North Maluku. A grand meeting was held on the waterfront for dialogs on fishermen assistance programs, which was attended, by government representatives and the fishermen community, which was represented by ten fishermen. Finally, the fishermen were able to enjoy assistance from the government.

**If the leaders of the two villages were directly approached, it may cause an uncontrolled reaction at the base.**



<https://img.okezone.com>

## **The dispute over the 2007 Regional Elections with candidates for governor and vice governor, Abdul Gafur and Abdurrahim Fabanyo and Thaib Armaiyn and Gani Kasuba was able to mobilize grassroots communities to oppose each other.**



### **Reconciliation for Comradeship**

The communities in North Maluku have deeply rooted customs. Ethnic ties and kinship are the basis for peace. Although ethnic ties are strong, when it comes to making political choices, they are very individualistic. Even ethnicity cannot be used to mobilize political interests.

The dispute over the 2007 Regional Elections with candidates for governor and vice governor, Abdul Gafur and Abdurrahim Fabanyo and Thaib Armaiyn and Gani Kasuba was able to mobilize grassroots communities to oppose each other. In fact, according to Indri, supporters from both camps voluntarily flocked to the city to defend the pair of candidates they supported. They brought lunch from home. The women were also mobilized to support their husbands. Regardless of whether their husband was right, they stood up and supported them.

Similarly in the village of Gurafit, where remnants of the hostility from the Regional Elections can still be felt. When Indri became aware that there was a dispute going on, she approached each person intensively until they believed her. The women's groups were more easily approached because they tend to just be supporters, however approaching the women's groups was very effective to create a bridge for the reconciliation process.

The most effective approach is to be directly involved in their daily activities such as cooking and baking. In both of these activities, Indri helped to make cookies or prepare marinades without any feelings of awkwardness. She blended in naturally. This established communication between the women of the two villages.

While formally, women from both villages met at the courses at SRN. Initially it was very stiff although games

were used. For example, Indri made a game for the identification of the maximum amount of vegetable names to be done in groups. The aim was for the women to communicate with each other because to reach the target of the game, communication was a must. After a while, the women were willing to communicate with each other. This was repeated until they felt comfortable in communicating.

After a considerable amount of combing and preparing the basis for reconciliation, it was time to talk to the two influential figures, namely Abah Jamrod and Mrs. Icha. Indri approached both of them. She was quite surprised initially to find out they were still close relatives. Thus, this factor was used as an opportunity to approach them.

Indri met with Abah Jamrud separately to talk. Indri asked if Abah Jamrud has gained any benefits after the Regional Elections. The fact was the people who used to love Abah Jamrud have turned hostile. If calculated, Abah Jamrud is actually in a losing position. Likewise, with Mrs. Icha who also feels she has not gained anything. Mrs. Icha's tears could no longer be contained. At the bottom of their hearts, they missed each other.

In short, Indri managed to bring Abah Jamrud and Mrs. Icha together. Indri's opening question was "What have we gained from the Regional Elections?" Both were silent for several seconds. Their heads bowed. "Nothing." That is the reality faced by the grassroots communities. They have been mobilized to support their candidates militantly. After that, they are discarded. Both Abah Jamrud and Mrs. Icha are aware of this situation. Seeing the changes that have occurred at the community level, they felt the conflict did not bring any benefits and should be stopped.





Indri's earnestness in assisting the fishing community in Sofifi has brought many changes. Among them is the revitalization of the tradition of gotong royong (mutual cooperation). Since the regional electoral dispute caused the community to form strongholds, social conditions also changed. The people tend to be individualists for fear of being labeled as supporting a certain group. Today conditions have changed because trust has begun to be built. The decision-making mechanisms at the village level are also becoming more open and engage the people in every discussion. If previously, social assistance was not accessible to the people, now social assistance can be accessed by everyone through procedures that are more transparent.

The fisherwomen have also begun to change. At several village meetings, the women can be seen to be making more effort in their appearance. They are starting to wear lipstick. Previously, many husbands complained because their wives did not make an effort in their appearance and had body odor. Therefore, they often went to cafes in search of female friends. Indri slowly conveyed this matter to the wives. It was

difficult to make the change because of the large amount of work the women had, starting from the time they woke up at dawn until the afternoon, which sometimes did not allow them to dress up considering the field of work they are in.

Although she no longer assists the community directly, Indri still shows her concern through the writing of a column in the Halmahera News. In fact, Indri always recounts the moments the women have experienced in her articles. It is not easy to assure your parents and extended family about your job as village counselor or NGO activist. "Your daughter is not an office worker?" a question and insinuation that is always directed at both her parents in every family gathering. Thus, Indri made a compromise to please her parents, without having to give up on her passion in women's empowerment. Currently Indri has a steady job in the finance and administration division of the local newspaper, Halmahera News. However, most of her time is still dedicated to supporting women victims of violence under the legal framework of the Daur Mala Organization. \*\*\*

**The fisherwomen have also begun to change. At several village meetings, the women can be seen to be making more effort in their appearance.**

# PEACE JOURNALISM, FOR WOMEN AND JUSTICE

## **Gadrida Rosdiana (Anna) Djukana**

Journalist for peace, driving away conflict potential and motor of social reconciliation

*"We must use journalism that contributes to extinguishing the fires of hatred and conflict, promotes the process of reconciliation and peace, and even provide early warning on occurrence of conflict and violence" (Maria Hartiningsih, 2015).*

The house painted purple was located on the corner of the one of the housing complexes on the outskirts of Kupang city. Adjacent to a vacant lot, it was surrounded by teak trees and forest *kedondong* fruit trees. In the yard, all the way to the road, was a neat row of poly bags containing various vegetables healthy to consume. *"I once stayed in the hospital, thus I'm used to drinking various vegetables, it's good for health, since health is actually expensive,"* the hostess explained. Surrounded by a variety of plants, the tiny house felt shady, in the midst of the hot Kupang weather. Although it was already January, it had not

rained. Faintly from afar the sound of Christmas songs could be heard where some neighbors were preparing family Christmas celebrations.

Inside the house, a variety of souvenirs from many places decorated every corner. Books were neatly placed on the table, a sign that the occupant, besides being fond of small decorations, was an avid reader—the basic life force of a writer and journalist. Although the house appeared full of objects, the impression of cleanliness and tidiness was evident. *"I'm a person who likes cleanliness, at the office I even place signs and notes reminding friends to constantly maintain clean surroundings,"* said Gadrida Rosdiana



Djukana also known as Anna as she smiled warmly.

Anna has a hobby of reading and organization. Various books interest her, from serious textbooks to novels and storybooks. Her favorite novelists are Sydney Sheldon and Leo Tolstoy. *"I also like to watch serious western films and also cartoons,"* she said. *"Good journalism is honed by diligent reading. Good writing should always go through a process of listening and reading,"* Such was the philosophy of the lover of the color purple. Another book she liked was *Pippi Langstrumpf* (Pippi Longstocking), written by Astrid Lindgren, about a child born in Nas-Vimmerby, Sweden. The story inspired Anna and her husband to have a child named Rade who resembled Pippi. Although Rade existed only in her and her husband's imagination, Rade Parera was very much a part of their lives. *"It might be funny for others, but for the two of us, she is in the spirit of our lives and our house. Yes, we often chat with her. Rade who was playful but kindhearted like Pippi. Well, an imaginary child. So that several of my*

*activist friends call me Mom Rade,"* she laughed with glowing eyes.

### **Knitting Peace, Practicing Management of Differences**

Born in Kupang on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May in 1968, she was the first child of eight children (of whom one died), of Bapak Gabriel Djukana and Ibu Christina Djukana-Riwu Kore. She studied for her S1 degree in Law and at present is taking her S2 degree in Development Law at the same campus at Nusa Cendana University. During her student days, Anna was active in the Indonesian Christian Students Movement (GMKI) and continued to LSM upon graduating. *"At first I joined the Yayasan Cinta Damai, a well-known advocacy LSM in NTT at the time. I loved to write, so that when Pos Kupang opened a vacancy for female journalist, I applied to become a journalist at Pos Kupang. I learned much in the media. Learning journalism is also about differences. Through the media, I met many people and interviewed many different resourceful people, whether Catholic or Muslim or Hindu,"* she related.





**Anna's dream in the midst of a biased media propelling corporate interests was to have a mainstream daily that was kept alive by ideological readers.**

Anna followed and wrote the news on the funeral mass of the Archbishop of Kupang until the tahbisan of the new Archbishop. She also welcomed the parade of the Maria Fatima Statue for Catholics. Anna took part in covering Muslim activities such as Takbiran evening led prayers until the Idul Adha celebration. This variety of experiences gave her a good understanding of pluralism and forged her ability to look at everything from various differing viewpoints.

The woman with Sabu blood, who was raised in Kupang, then related her life journey in understanding diversity and appreciating difference. Anna, a Protestant, married Floribertus (Loury) Parera who hailed from Maumere and is a Catholic. Her profession is that of a journalist, while her husband is a musician. *"Ours is a mixed marriage. My husband and I came from different backgrounds, which taught me how to manage differences,"* she said, while adding that her thesis also studied mixed marriage. Diversity and difference for this classical music lover are not only understood as theory, but have become a daily practice.

### **Peaceful Journalism, with Partiality for Vulnerable Groups**

Anna began her career as a journalist at the Pos Kupang Daily then moved to Surya Timor NTT Ekspres. Eventually, with similar minded colleagues, Anna founded the KURSOR Daily. She also became the Chief Editor (Pemred) of City Daily KURSOR. She described the philosophy of the daily's name: *"KURSOR is like Kompas, indicating direction. If we use a computer, KURSOR functions as a pointer. Our target is the upper middle class, the educated, who are thirsty to read something different."*

Anna's dream in the midst of a biased media propelling corporate interests was to have a *mainstream* daily that was kept alive by ideological readers. She had a conviction that a media can only survive if there was spirit, and this is what Harian Kota KURSOR was struggling for. *"The daily was founded in 2003 and to date is still faithfully awaited by its readers. At first it was published every day, but for the past two years it published twice a week, sometimes three, four times if required since there was printing limitation. The daily circulates in Kupang City, even to Soe and Rote. Actually there is a high*

*demand for Sabu, Kefa, Ende and Alor, however the capital is limited," explained Anna.*

The KURSOR city daily has three characteristics: respecting diversity and pluralism, and providing space for vulnerable groups in the community. Vulnerable groups here meant women, children and the disabled. Head of the Child Protection Agency (LPA) NTT, Veronica Ata, nicknamed Ibu Tori, said, *"Anna Djukana has worked for a long time in the media and has special attention for issues of women and children. She is Chief Editor of KURSOR, that writes prolific articles in the interest of women and children. Anna, also one of the managers of LPA, is on the expert council for law at LPA. Her expertise is in law and the media so she also frequently writes about the law and child issues"* said the woman who received the award Indonesian Woman of Change from the U.S Embassy in 2015.

Anna again revealed, *"This media is heavier by writing facts but providing a different perspective. The KURSOR Daily is a serious paper, for instance in the incident of a group fight, other media might write about the aspect of violence occurring. We are different, and only interview resource people that give a perspective of peace,"* she explained, adding that KURSOR always provided a different perspective from all other media in Kupang. KURSOR constantly wrote facts based on actual incidents, however with an objective that was partial to peace and vulnerable groups. Peaceful journalism, as quoted from Kompas's senior reporter, Maria Hartiningsih, has a major role in signaling the possibility of conflict. Peaceful journalism also constantly promotes reconciliation and develops a climate of peace that is positive for readers. Anna Djukana, as a senior female journalist in NTT, has many similarities with Maria, who is always promoting peaceful journalism

## **Her lengthy experience as field reporter was beneficial as editor of KURSOR.**

and issues of vulnerable groups. Incidentally, in 2005, Anna together with Maria went to Iran to study harm reduction related to the issue of HIV/AIDS.

Ansy Rihida, Director of Legal Aid Organization of the Indonesian Women's Association for Justice (LBH APIK) NTT said, *"Anna is not only a person who speaks or writes well on paper, but she is really a journalist who is able to facilitate and nurture peace. As a person, Anna frequently becomes a unifier, a figure who knits sides together in the midst of activist dynamics. She is someone who is fluid in dialogue and lobbying. In the political dynamics of NTT, Anna is able to voice calming opinions for all conflicting sides"*.

Her lengthy experience as field reporter was beneficial as editor of KURSOR. Anna once attended a peace journalism training conducted by one of the press organizations in collaboration with an LSM working on issues of conflict and peace in 2000. Anna also diligently follows various discussions and reads numerous materials related to peace journalism. A strong understanding of peace journalism is useful in the daily tasks of supervising and assigning KURSOR reporters for field coverage and assisting Anna in editing. Up to now, Anna is also frequently asked to become a resource person for various training related to peace journalism for reporters.







**Gender also needs to be integrated into editorial policy, starting from the news, editorials and various columns.**

Anna also constantly promotes gender perspectives to become a policy in various organizations she is involved in and also in the mainstream media. Everything from reporter recruitment process, to the curriculum for training of new reporters up to media material, according to Anna, should have a gender perspective. Gender also needs to be integrated into editorial policy, starting from the news, editorials and various columns. In this regard, Anna proved this when the KURSOR City Daily won first prize twice as a pioneer in *gender mainstreaming* in the media during competitions held by Population and National Family Planning Body (BKKBN) of NTT Province and the *United Nations Fund for Population Activities* (UNFPA).

**Lopo Belajar, Place for (Future) Women Leaders to Learn**

This shoulder-length, wavy haired woman, together with female activist friends in NTT founded *Lopo Belajar Gender* in 2010. *Lopo* in the Timorese language means house, so that this organization is a house or a forum of mutual learning of women's issues in Kupang. Anna has been the moderator since 2012. The members of *Lopo Belajar Gender* come from several different professional backgrounds, such as legislators, academics, activists, journalists and executives. At *Lopo*

*Belajar Gender*, they routinely hold thematic discussions, conduct research or assessments, initiate student debates related to law and gender, engage in mutual campaigns in the framework of Anti Violence against Women Day, and conduct training for female candidate legislative members to discuss the evaluation of legislative elections.

*Lopo Belajar Gender* is also known for the Young Women Activists School icon. Participants of the school are young women who are delegates of student organizations comprising GMKI, PMKRI, HMI, GMNI, Mahasiswa Hindu, and religious youth organizations such as Protestant, Catholic, Muslim organizations. The school has a headmaster assigned to regulate learning group management. Participants study for eight weeks with various issues such as women's movements, concept of gender, feminism, analytical tools, women's leadership, gender-based violence, democracy, law and human rights, reproductive health, human trafficking, peace and so on. A different facilitator presents each topic. *"With this school for young women activists, hopefully there will be cadre forming of women activists. Our target is young women, students across religions and ethnic groups. There is a selection process, first we prepare the letters, then conduct recruitment, mainly for Cipayung organizations (GMKI, GMNI, PMKRI,*





HMI, PMII). Each participant must have commitment to enter fully for eight weeks, being absent for two consecutive times means they will be expelled," said the brown-skinned woman. "This school besides teaching to become activists, is also a facility to identify different groups, so that participants will understand difference and continue to strive for peace in NTT."

Ibu Tori, the Chairperson of LPA NTT, as well as Chairperson of the Management Body of LBH Justitia said, "Besides the media, Anna also works for Lopo Belajar Gender. Anna has a role in observing the potential of young women in NTT to continue work in the struggle of women, children, and peace. Anna is able to perform her tasks well as coordinator as well as moderator here."

This year, the Women's Activist School will produce the fourth graduating class. The first class of participants was in early 2014, and then in 2015 there were two classes. "There is a visible change in the participants, for instance, behavior in the home and organization where formerly women had to make the drink, now they are aware that the task of making the drink and washing dishes is not only

the women's. Now they (alumni) must be clever at speaking," said Anna. Ansy, Anna's friend also says, "As a woman activist, Anna was a good moderator, provided clever ideas in nurturing democracy and peace. Another of Anna's strengths was that she was able to enter at various generation levels and penetrate the ties between ethnicities and religions in NTT."

Anna still holds a dream of someday having her own women's magazine. Another dream of Anna's is that she will be in an economic institution that is strategic for women so that with her authority she would be able to make policies that will help women come out of poverty. "My present thesis is on regulations that impoverish women," she explained. The light in her eyes signal Anna's strong determination to always promote women's groups and strive for peace. Knowing Anna, reminds me of the quote from Tolstoy, her idol: "Freethinkers are those who are willing to use their minds without prejudice and without fearing to understand things that clash with their own customs, privileges, or beliefs. This state of mind is not common, but it is essential for right thinking..." \*\*\*

**“This school besides teaching to become activists, is also a facility to identify different groups, so that participants will understand difference and continue to strive for peace in NTT.”**

# “FAITH FOR PEACE: THE CHURCH EMBRACES ALL”

**Reverend Dr. Mery Loise Yuliane Kolimon**

Academic, Activist, and First NTT female elected Head of MS GMIT Period 2016-2020

*“The Church is not limited to matters of faith, but must play an active role in resolving various issues of humanity.” (Merry Kolimon, 2016)*



**S**unday, 10 January 2016 08:15 WITA. Morning had just broken and the rays of the sun shone brightly. The day felt different as if there was something special about it. All the papers in Kupang carried the headline of the Gereja Masehi Injili in Timor (GMIT) proclaiming that in that afternoon, Koinonia Church in Kuanino Kupang would install the new Head of the Synode Council (MS). It was the first time in history that the Head of MS GMIT would be a woman. The face of the new Head of MS decorated the front pages of newspapers with headlines such as these:

"GMIT Enters a New History" (Victory News).

"Reverend Mery Kolimon Embraces Everyone" (Pos Kupang).

"Hand over of MS GMIT Period 2015-2019, Congratulations on Serving the Congregation" (Timor Ekspress).

In fact, the euphoria continued until the following day with the newspapers still focusing on the new Synode Head. A headline read:

MS GMIT's period of 2015-2019 pledges to finish its homework, namely sexual violence, violence against children, domestic violence, human trafficking, and other social problems. (Victory News, 11 January 2016)

"You are not alone. I am with you. Mery Kolimon officially becomes Head of MS GMIT" (Pos Kupang, 11 January 2016).

## The major challenge faced was from the patriarchal community since dignity was felt to adhere more to males especially in conflict resolution.

### Feminist Leadership with Non-Violence and Partiality to Peace

Mery Loise Yuliane Kolimon or as she is more familiarly known, Mery Kolimon, is a woman who received extraordinary attention in early 2016. The slender woman with a firm and intelligent gaze, defeated two rivals in the election for Head of the Synode Council in Rote Ndao several months ago. "I was actually nominated from the last period, however due to my pregnant condition, it was doubted whether a woman could lead, thus I was not elected during the last period. My child is now four years old," said Reverend Kolimon in an interview at her house, a day before she became the Head.

The Christian Bible Church in Timor (GMIT) is the second largest Protestant church in Indonesia after Huria Kristen Batak Protestant (HKBP). "GMIT was established in 1947, meaning it has existed for 68 years. Currently, GMIT has over one million adherents, two thousand churches, and more than one thousand clergy and this was in the island. GMIT also has adherents in NTB and Batam which is beside NTT. It was doubted whether or not women were physically, emotionally, and spiritually capable of leading. But praise to God, the church then gave an opportunity for a woman to lead it," continued Reverend Kolimon.

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*dignity was felt to adhere more to males especially in conflict resolution. Firm women were seen as being short-tempered and if they were soft they were said to be very feminine," said Reverend Kolimon. This was strengthened by the opinion of Bapak Yustus Maro, Reverend Kolimon's husband, who said, "Patriarchal culture is very strong and mainly in the church here. They generally won't accept a woman's leadership. However, in the field, we can find many female clergy. This shows that women are also capable of leading churches".*

Leadership, according to Reverend Kolimon was not merely women's leadership, but feminist leadership. She believes that it was time for feminist leadership to be introduced in the church. *"Feminist leadership means participatory leadership which involves everyone as subjects in the decision-making. Authority is not held by one person, but is shared by everyone. GMIT leadership is council leadership, meaning collective leadership. The church should not merely take care of*

*matters of faith, but should actively engage in issues of humanity".*

Women instinctively resolve problems in a familial manner. NTT with its harsh nature produces people with a harsh character. Generally, a difference of opinion would be handled through violent acts. However, women were superior in that they handled conflict without violence (*non violence*). Among the strategies taken by Reverend Kolimon were efforts to embrace. In other words, she would invite various opposing parties both internal GMIT as well as across religions, to participate together in dealing with communal problems. Reverend Kolimon also was known to be active in the Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama (FKUB) NTT. In relation to her election as the Head of GMIT, religious leaders from the MUI as well as other Muslim and Catholic organizations joyfully welcomed the outcome and issued positive statements in the media.

NTT is one of the provinces of Indonesia that should be emulated for its inter-faith harmony. In 2012 for

instance, there was a comparative study between FKUB of East Java and GMIT NTT, comparing the strategies and programs related to religious harmony. In September 2015 at the opening of the 33rd GMIT Synode Assembly in Rote Ndao where Reverend Kolimon was elected the new Head of MS GMIT, Muslims and Catholics took part in celebrating the event with dances and chorus even though the Synode program was actually an internal activity of Protestants.

### The Smart Down to Earth Woman

Reverend Kolimon was born on the 2nd of June in 1972 as the eldest of six siblings. Her father hailed from Alor and her mother was born and raised in Soe. *"My mother only finished elementary school (SD). As a woman, she had to give up school so her male siblings could go to school. But my mother was very tough, mainly in selling. She had a strong wish that all her female children would go to school"* said Reverend Kolimon. *"I was fortunate to have her as my mother and was blessed by God to be able to study for my S2 and S3 degrees in the Netherlands. With this good fortune, I could be useful for my fellow humans."*

*"Ibu Mery Kolimon is a very clever person. However, she is also very humble and down-to-earth. She does not hesitate to directly take part in advocacy or go down to the field,"* commented Sarah Lery Mboik, usually known as Lery, a senior female activist from NTT as well as a former member of the Regional Representative Council (DPD RI). *"As a student, she was already active, and often took part in extra-curricular activities, inside and outside the campus. When she was Vicaris, she also had many LSM experiences so that as a theologian and as an academic, she*

*had a lot of field experience,"* explained Bapak Yustus Maro, Reverend Kolimon's husband.

This mother of two, besides being a lecturer, was also the Director of Post Graduate Studies in Artha Wacana Christian University (UKAW), Kupang. She also was the Coordinator of the Timur Eastern Indonesian Women's Network (JPIT). Through all these endeavors, the feminist perspective and the organizational, managerial ability of Reverend Kolimon can no longer be doubted. Her extensive network gave her an understanding of various perspectives and different viewpoints.

Reverend Kolimon believes that pluralism is not merely living life with a mutual tolerance, but an active, continuous effort to seek mutual understanding between existing differences. The NTT community needs to learn to receive and give criticism as a form of practice of heterogeneity. There is an extraordinarily large number of cases of intolerance occurring in Indonesia at present and these are a challenge and a test for religious leaders. Reverend Kolimon, as the new GMIT leader, stresses that the church is not merely a type of cooperative that only benefits its members. The Church needs to be present at all times and be beneficial for all, even for adherents of different faiths and convictions.

### The Church, Partiality to the Marginalized and Peace

Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) is a province with a host of problems. The Ministry for Village Affairs, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration mentioned that NTT was the most vulnerable and disadvantaged of all regions in Indonesia, mainly in terms of economic sources. According to Reverend Kolimon, NTT stored many problems,

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such as human trafficking and drought. "There should already be rain in January when it is time to harvest. However, so far the rains have not fallen. So that the threat was not only a failure to harvest, but also a failure to plant for the next crop" said Reverend Kolimon. She continues, "NTT is also known as Pah Mento, meaning 'dry island'. However, there is quite a lot of local wisdom here that deals with food resiliency for instance. This can be studied and the church needs to involve adherents who are experts and understand the problem. Among these ideas that need to be immediately implemented, is the idea of the water planting movement, where rain is collected and adherents are invited to plant water."

Reverend Kolimon is convinced that the key to peace is friendship between humans and nature. A destroyed natural environment will cause poverty and riots. As such, programs such as water planting are a priority and will be promoted to the church congregation. Apart from nature, another social problem faced was related to human

trafficking. "The church must place partiality to the marginalized. In trafficking, what is lost is not only youth but also old people and there are many such people. The Church has a very neat structure and one that is (even) more intense than RT/RW needs to be utilized. The Church can pressure people to be more mutually attentive as well as find ways to strengthen data on the people leaving their villages. Efforts should be made for the church to be able to help, since GMIT has an extensive network, even in Malaysia. Secondly, it is important to endeavor education. We interviewed a trafficking victim who came home and made a film that was shown from kampong (village) to kampong (village) and this was effective in making the community realize the dangers of human trafficking."

Reverend Kolimon admitted that the people who inspired her life were African theologians. Her dissertation, "A Theology of Empowerment: Reflections from a West Timorese Feminist Perspective" was published by Contact Zone in Explorations in





Intercultural Theology and argued that empowerment originated from the resistance to racism in Africa. She also produced many studies on the gross violation of human rights of 1965. According to her, past unfinished social and political situations could also become a cause of conflict and a justification of recent violations. This woman, who is athletic, mainly jogs, but she always makes time for spiritual dancing to balance her life. *"Spiritual dance is important in nurturing the spirit and soul. Listening to injured souls*

*all day is often exhausting and also affects our lives. This dance also helps us in managing the body and breathing."* Being extraordinarily busy does not make Reverend Kolimon forget to spend time on herself and her family. She is very attentive to her husband and children. But what is the message she wishes to instill in the adherents she leads? One rhythmic sentence she continued to assert is: **"Let us plant water, stop human trafficking, not leave the kampong, and nurse the land"**. \*\*\*

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# "SONGS, DRUMBEATS OF PEACE"

**Sischa Rosa Linda Solokana**

*Activist; musician*

*"Music is the language of the spirit, It opens the secret of life, Bridging peace, abolishing strife." (Kahlil Gibran)*

**Monday, 30 November 1998  
sometime past 11 AM.**

The heat of the sun was just starting to burn overhead. In Kupang, it was approaching high noon. School had just finished the first recess. The students were sitting quietly at their own desks, enjoying the faint aroma of pandanus green bean porridge being poured into dozens of bowls by Ibu Sina, the third grade teacher. Coincidentally, on that day the schedule consisted of providing supplemental food.

Suddenly from a distance there was a roaring sound. It was getting closer and louder. People shouting and throwing things. The children were startled, but still sat quietly, bewildered by what was happening. "Ruuuun...people are killing each other, come on run" shouted Ibu Hani, the headmistress, running around the school, breaking up classes. Abruptly filled with horror, everyone, students and teachers, scrambled out and rushed toward their houses.

Little Sischa was one of the children who ran home in a hurry. She entered the house through the back door. "In front of the house, we could not enter, people were carrying large knives,

chasing others with bows and arrows", she said reminiscing. In the distance, smoke began to billow from burning houses, mosques, shops, and the university. "A person, wielding bow and arrow, entered the house. Papa was furious, his shout thundered, "Get out." Sischa, shivering in fright, immediately hid under the bed. "Mama who was taking a bath, also panicked, and came out wrapped in a towel, "Where is Ricky... Where is Ricky?" she screamed. Sischa remembers clearly. Hastily putting on her clothes, her mother immediately went out to look for Ricky, her only son and Sischa's older brother. "Ricky at the time was in high school and already a teenager," Sischa continued reliving the past. "People arrived in trucks, bringing all kinds of weapons, including many Molotov bombs. A cousin also threw a Molotov, nearly hitting Ricky. Mama was furious, she still holds a grudge to this day." Molotov bombs were in the form of glass bottles, filled with gasoline, nuts and nails. Upon being thrown they exploded, and the nuts together with the nails would cause injury, even the loss of lives.

This experience happened seventeen years ago when Sischa was only eight years old. However, it left a deep



impression and still lingered today. *"In front of our house, two Muslim neighbours who owned a shop were frightened. All doors and windows were marked with signs of a cross so that kids passing would not burn the shop".* The incident lasted only about one week, however for a month, the markets, shops, food stalls remained closed. *"After a week Mama gathered enough courage to go out and look around. She came home in tears, saying that all shops and houses on the coast, were burnt level with the ground",* she recollected. The riot left a lasting impression—scars and trauma—on her mother's soul. For Sischa, however, the bad experience metamorphosed into something positive: motivation for her to immerse herself in humanitarian works and peace.

### **The Process with CIS, Forging Herself into an Activist**

Sischa Rosa Linda Solokana, the youngest of two children was born to

the couple of Samuel Solokana and Dinje Solokana – Hotty. The father was from Alor ethnic tribe, mama from Sabu however Sischa was born in Kupang on 21 February 1990, and spent her childhood to adult years, also in Kupang. Like most parents, Sischa's mother hoped her child would become a civil servant. *"At first I also preferred children to become PNS, because though the salary is small they can depend on it for their living."*

However, Sischa preferred to dream of being a teacher. *"You can be a teacher, but it's better to be a lecturer so that you can give more to other people, humanize more people. But lately she was more interested in humanitarian and social work, this was very conspicuous in Sischa. Since SD she was used to leading, directing, and assisting her friends to help, viewing people's disadvantages as advantages. In fact she once said, 'mama I want to die in Bosnia, I want to live and help people with a hard life in Africa,"* said



**She only joined CIS in 2009, but was among the quick learners.**

her mother, usually called mama by Sischa.

*"I started from semester four, to become a volunteer assistant and counselor for drug addicts at Permata Hati Kita Foundation, Kupang," she said. Nonetheless, Sischa initially joined CIS for another reason. "At first I just wanted to learn photography, searching in facebook, found the name Alfred Djami (Ape), it was Ape's older sibling who then invited her to join CIS", Sischa admitted. CIS Timor is the organization where Sischa is based up to now.*

*CIS the acronym of Center for Internally Displaced People (IDP) Services, an organization that was established as a place for volunteers to gather to help and facilitate refugees, after the Timor Leste referendum in 1999. The initial program of the organization was more on logistics aid for refugees. Volunteers took part in building houses, cutting leaves, distributing logistics, medicines and so forth. Besides infrastructure, CIS also developed the program Relawan Informasi Komunitas (RIK), with the task of screening news by listening*

to the radio, reading newspapers, watching TV then to refugee camps to tell the latest development. *"Even the refugees who like to watch sinetron, it is said that they ask for the story update,"* laughed Sischa.

She only joined CIS in 2009, but was among the quick learners. *"I joined, not long representing CIS in Alliance We Can NTT to attend the jamboree in Jakarta. The Alliance is an activist consortium active in gender", she said. Sischa's colleague, Firmansyah A.D. Mara or known as bang Jack told his experience in interacting with Sischa, "I have known Sischa for some time, before we worked together at CIS Timor. She and I were from one alma mater, I was the senior, she was in the semester below. To my knowledge, for me she was... An extraordinary woman, with capacity above others. Capacity in organization, public speaking, facilitating, mastery of languages, English... I mean among youth of her age, ah 'why take the trouble. But she proved that with her skills and capacity, she became a much-needed person in any community". Like Jack, Sischa*





was an alumni of Health promotion Education – Faculty of Public Health Nusa Cendana University Kupang.

Anato Mareira alias Nato, another of Sischa's seniors also gave similar opinion, "Sischa Solokana one of the volunteers of CIS Timor, was a woman with vision and purpose in life. In my opinion, Sischa is a visionary although still a beginner not as professional as several seniors before her. But she had a talent that led her here. Sischa was also disciplined at work, in her struggle for women and youth. Sischa possessed ability in that struggle. She also appeared as facilitator in several youth activities including in Atambua. With her discipline and ability, she managed to pass the selection to attend the meetings for youth in Barcelona last November 2015."

Firmansyah A.D. Mara alias bang Jack continued, "Besides working at CIS we joined many communities, and she became an important woman there,

*well, a figure who is greatly needed, a key actor in (every) community she attended. In peace work experience itself, we joined the community called Peace Maker Kupang (KOMPAK), a community working in peace campaign for training young people. The latest experience recorded in the institution, she represented KOMPAK to the international meeting in Barcelona. An extraordinary figure, because, the first of what is it, as compared to other women of her age, well it might be a far comparison. And indeed she is a person who is eager to learn. In this organization she handles disabled children and just completed the achievement reached. For the first time in NTT, we made a celebration for disabled persons (The International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD). She was the one who coordinated, many achievements have been made. Become facilitator everywhere and (become) a highly reliable person".*

**Sischa Solokana one of the volunteers of CIS Timor, was a woman with vision and purpose in life.**





**Sischa's plan conformed to the designed program The Peace Through Development in Disadvantaged Areas (PTDDA) UNDP**

**Framing peace, facilitating improvement of advocacy and mobilization capacity**

In 2014, UNDP requested delegates from Kupang and Atambua to attend selection of Training on Mobilizers (TOM) in Bangkok. Sischa Solokana was among the participants chosen. *"Upon completion of training, I had a follow up plan for internal CIS and KOMPAK,"* Sischa related enthusiastically, *"The Social Affairs Ministry requires a regional action plan to handle social conflict. PTDDA detailed this again into women's empowerment and child protection in social conflict,"* she added. Upon participating in training in Bangkok, di CIS Timor, Sischa became coordinator and facilitator for non-violence, peace, diversity, and gender.

Sischa's plan conformed to the designed program *The Peace Through Development in Disadvantaged Areas (PTDDA) UNDP*. In August 2015 PTDDA in collaboration with CIS Timor staged "Training (to improve) Capacity for Advocacy dan Mobilization: Women, Peace and Security." *"Initially the training planned to only invite participants from Kupang city, but eventually was followed by one island Timor: Atambua, Kefa, Soe, Kupang District and Kupang City itself,"* she added, her eyes shining. The abovementioned training was held for three days in one of Kupang's hotels. *Twenty-four participants joined and stayed on until the end. Participants involved, besides from CSO, also included academics and government instrumentalities. The training taught*

*effective advocacy techniques, thus was easy to understand and apply in daily life" added Sischa "Quoting priest Melki from Kompas Atambua, the main message for participants was: advocacy is not like a sermon , it does not need to be long and rambling"*

The Provincial Women's Empowerment Body (BP3) of NTT for instance, after taking part in TOM changed to become very open and increased understanding of gender as related to peace and vulnerable groups (the disabled, women and children) in conflict areas. Ibu Liliana Sanam of BP3 voiced her opinion, *"I was greatly helped by this training, I learnt many things here. The training was interesting, something new for me. Usually training is boring, but here I can practice. Apart from that, it was presented clearly and not boring,"* Besides the training, ibu Liliana also gave her opinion about Sischa, *"Although a local facilitator Sischa's capacity is not less and not much different than facilitators from outside the region. She is practical and to the point in providing material. We remain close friends and in contact although I don't attend training any longer".*

*"Among the major changes participants acquired was they understood that their method of advocacy so far was not effective. For instance, when meeting officials, the conversation rambles so that it does not touch the core of the problem. On the third day, participants are trained to become advocators, different method of communication is used. In essence, the*





officials are important people, we have to be to the point, only important points need to be remembered and conveyed," Sischa emphasized

### **Mother and Song, Endless Inspirations**

Sischa admitted that since childhood she was fond of songs. "Since I was only 4 days old, although not yet able to hear clearly, mama already turned on a walkman. After the first word, I immediately made sounds with my mouth, a kind of singing. Since I began to walk, I immediately liked to hold a broom and imagine playing a guitar, I don't remember when I first loved music, but the family tell me about my childhood". She considers one of the inspirers was her own mama, a woman of Sabu blood. "Mama was born one of 13 (thirteen) siblings, but only 8 survived. Mama was number 8 of 13 girls. Mama had a godfather Atoin Amaf (raja) so that she inherited sufficiently vast land. Unfortunately when mama was born, her papa experienced misfortune, and mama was often labeled as a child bringing bad luck. Mama was discriminated against in the family, often experiencing bad things".

Young Sischa was taught to be a strong child, able to stand on her own feet. Her mama's experience also became Sischa's motivation to join CIS as a volunteer. "I want to voice gender equality. I began the CIS journey really from zero, starting as volunteer, starting from nails until becoming facilitator," she related, "I became involved in the issue of peace in 2010. At that time there was a ward program with gender equality and peace, sponsored by Oxfam. I love music, and coincidentally among the activities was campaign through music. I wrote songs and chose songs for the peace campaign".

Sischa no longer remembers how many songs she wrote and sang, however she has uploaded several songs to YouTube. One of the songs campaigning for peace was composed with her brother Ricky Solokana and tells of the war period, when children cried and were afraid. "I have seen and experienced war, the victims are always women and children." Together with her effort to bring change and peace in her region, Sischa plays the melody softly on her guitar.

### **"The Children Song" by: Ricky & Sischa Solokana**

YouTube channel: Sischa – The Children Song (Account name: Orang Alor)

Verse 1:  
I came on the way  
And world just began  
I looking for the happiness  
and I am living in the air

Verse 2:  
I fall down away  
Into the deeper dark side  
I feel the pain and children cry  
and its burning on the fire

Verse 3:  
Maybe you are never  
there my friend  
To see what you must  
see 'bout the fight

Refrain:  
So feel this all the pain  
So watching over this  
They called all the flame  
Their crying through the rain

Back to verse 1 – 3 & Refrain

Bridge:  
So you must see something  
And you must feel something

Back to refrain 2x

Outro:  
I came on the way  
And life jus began  
I feel the pain and children cry  
It's burning on the fire

And life jus began  
I feel the pain and children cry  
Its burning on the fire

# LOVE AND PEACE, FOR THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED

**Sr. Sesilia M. Bernadette SSpS.**

*Nun, counselor of refugees, women's rights activist*

“Where does peace come from, if not initiated from within each home?” (Sr. Sesilia, 2016)

**T**he sweet girl was crouching down, face bowed with a glum expression. She was somber, tracing her finger along the ground. Her age looked to be around fifteen years. Her hair was reddish and curly and tied back with a dull-looking rubber band. When she looked up her face was beautiful with a high nose and curly eyelashes. It was her clothes that looked dirty and unkempt. Her three siblings were lying weak at home. Her youngest sibling was two years old. Sr. Sesilia who brought the sick children to the doctor, before placing them in the convent temporarily, recounted, “I had to cry, when I went inside the house. All three small children’s bodies were feverish. I asked, have your siblings eaten yet? She ran to the back, grabbed a packet of instant noodles, crushed it, opened it and divided it among her younger siblings. Raw instant noodles, uncooked were eaten by the sick children.”

The children lived in a house made of plywood with a thatched roof. It

had dirt floors. The house was situated in the middle of a plantation without any roads to access it. The house was partitioned into three areas: a common room/living room, a bedroom, and a kitchen that was also used as a storage area. Their father is a retired military officer and their mother is working in Malaysia. The girl softly told Sr. Sesilia: “I was also forced by Father to go to Malaysia. I did not want to. I still wanted to accompany my younger siblings and go to school. I was forced and taken to a camp in Kupang. The wife of the person in charge dressed me up like an adult, so that I may receive a work permit. I was afraid. I took the bus and ran home. It turns out Father was being pursued by a broker, who was going to take me to Malaysia. Father got angry and took the machete. I hid to be safe but I became more afraid so I finally ran to the police station,” recounted the girl, teary-eyed. “The father told me he was given 50 thousand by the broker but according to his wife, the broker paid him 350 thousand for his child to be brought to



**“The family finally met in court. They hugged each other, crying and thanking me,” recounted Sr. Sesilia.**

*Malaysia,” Sr. Cecilia added. “I’ve been working on the issue of trafficking in Atambua, so later the police contacted me to help this family.”*

*When Sr. Sesilia found these abandoned children, their father was already in jail while their mother had been working in Malaysia for a year. “My first child is also working in Malaysia. It has been more than a year as well. We have never heard from her,” the mother said, with a faraway look in her eyes. “I was also working in Malaysia. I called my neighbor when I heard about this incident. I was confused because I was still under contract and I also did not have any money. I called Sr. Sesilia’s mobile phone number, given to me by my neighbor. Sister told me to just go to the Embassy and request to return home because my children had been abandoned. I was finally able to go the Embassy, after riding the bus without paying, asking the bus driver for help. Finally, the Embassy helped me to return home.” “The family finally met in*

*court. They hugged each other, crying and thanking me,” recounted Sr. Sesilia. “The father said, thank you for coming, if not for this saint, I would have sold all of my children.”*

### **The “Saint” from Bandung**

Sr. Sesilia’s own life story is no less dramatic than the incident described above. She was born in the Tangeh Village, Badung District, Bali Province, the fourth child of ten children in a family of Hindus. She recalls, “I attended a Catholic school. The first time I looked at the cross, I ran away, scared... there was a bad person hanging. My friends who attended the school said he is not a bad person, but a good person. I then became a Catholic. The housemother, a nun who always encouraged us to pray, was my inspiration. I was inspired to become a nun and entered a convent in Surabaya. When I entered the convent, my parents objected. At the time, I returned to take care of some paperwork in Bali and there was one





**Sr. Sesilia is known as a tireless humanitarian fighter. She is one of the nominees of the N-Peace Award 2014.**

*child who kept following me. I met the child on the street and took him back to the rectory. He said his stepmother had beaten him. The Pastor said the child must be brought back to his home. I stopped by my house and met my father. He asked who the child was. The boy then gave us his address, we returned him to his house. It turns out he had quarreled with his older sibling, not his stepmother. It turned out he was a privileged child. After the incident my father asked, what if I did not give you permission to enter the convent? I replied if you do not give me permission, then I would be like that boy. My father finally consented, and together with all the members of my family, he took me to the terminal to go to the convent in Surabaya," said Sr. Sesilia.*

Sr. Sesilia spent ten years studying and teaching at SDK Santa Maria Blitar. During that time, she also devoted herself to the inhabitants of East Java from Blitar, Malang to Surabaya. In 1990, Sr. Sesilia pledged her perpetual vows, and was then assigned to East Timor (officially known as Timor-Leste), and then to Atambua, Belu District, East Nusa Tenggara. "The leaders did

*not think I would last being assigned to Timor Leste and Atambua. It turned out that I have settled here," she said, chuckling. "I've been to the Philippines to learn English, then to Europe for spiritual deepening. I am currently studying Law at the PGRI University Atambua. Learning from the cases I have handled, I feel the need to learn the law to defend and assist the victims." Every day, morning, and night, in the midst of her busy schedule, Sr. Sesilia always finds the time to be silent and to converse and to become closer to her creator.*

**Solving the Problems of Refugees**

Sr. Sesilia is known as a tireless humanitarian fighter. She is one of the nominees of the N-Peace Award 2014. She became more heavily involved in humanitarian issues since September 1999 while assisting refugees after the East Timor referendum. At that time hundreds of thousands of refugees swarmed into Belu District, which is at the border between Indonesia and East Timor. They were scattered in the forest and residential areas, hills, beaches,



football fields, churches, schools, and so forth. Sr. Sesilia was one of the first people to receive them with open arms. Without hesitating, she rolled up her sleeves and worked. *“From September 1999, I welcomed the refugees. In and out of the forest, I distributed emergency tents, food, clothing and medicine. Many came to the lodges from morning until the night. I helped provide basic necessities ranging from mats, tarpaulins, and household appliances. There was a partner convent that had a shop so I just took the goods from the shop, not considering where the money would come from. After that, the UNHCR came with massive donations, such as thousands of tarpaulins and thousands of sacks of rice. Only after that did we resign from providing basic services for the refugees.”*

Although the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) had arrived, Sr. Sesilia did not immediately hand over the matter to them. She continued to counsel the refugees, children and parents who were distraught because they had lost their families. Sr. Sesilia even helped the women give birth in the refugee camp and counseled victims of sexual

abuse. She explained, *“My friends and I received counseling training from Unicef for women and children who were victims of violence at the refugee camp. After that, we were placed in various refugee camps. There we found victims before, during, and after the polls.”* The process of counseling these refugees shed the light on the various violations and injustices against women and children. *“In the refugee camps, women and children become the victims of the most severe human rights violations,”* she said. She approached and talked to the child victims to eliminate their trauma. The schools also set up tents. The schools helped the child refugees not to lose hope. Religious studies, Indonesian, English, and counseling were part of the subjects taught. Women in the refugee camps also received similar counseling services.

On December 1999, a meeting with NGOs, religious leaders, youth, universities and the government was held to establish a West Timor Humanitarian Team (TKTB). Sr. Cecilia was appointed as Coordinator for the district of Belu. This organization conducted investigations of the

**Sr. Sesilia was one of the first people to receive them with open arms. Without hesitating, she rolled up her sleeves and worked.**





**However, the idea of women’s empowerment apparently inspired Sr. Sesilia and she formed the Atambua Women’s Awareness Forum (FPPA) with a group of women who had similar concerns.**

refugee camps and assisted the female victims of injustice. In addition to counseling, there were also economic empowerment programs for women such as: training in sewing, cooking, baking cakes and so on. As time went on and the assistance programs for the refugees were completed, TKTB was then disbanded. However, the idea of women’s empowerment apparently inspired Sr. Sesilia and she formed the Atambua Women’s Awareness Forum (FPPA) with a group of women who had similar concerns.

**Women’s Awareness, Fighting for Justice and Peace**

The Atambua Women’s Awareness Forum (FPPA) was established on August 3, 2000 to promote the interests of women in Belu District. Diverse communities were assisted, ranging from former refugees, women and child victims of human trafficking, widows facing economic challenges, to commercial sex workers (PSK). FPPA’s program included investigations, victim support, empowerment, education, and women’s rights awareness campaigns. Sr. Sesilia was also very concerned with education. She established an early childhood education center teaching reading and writing skills to all widows who were illiterate.

Rosantina Barreto Pirera, a widow who was assisted by Sr. Sesilia, currently has a grocery business. She said, “We are from Bobonaro, we used to live in Timor Leste. Sister has organized many programs. She has been helping us for a long time, educating us, teaching the elderly to read and write, as well as flower-making skills. Sister has also formed a co-operative. I have taken out a loan from the cooperative for my business. I pay in installments every day. The cooperative is for the widows here. I consider this sister a good person, helping me, a widow until I can have my own business.” Another woman, Katarina Temeobam was motivated to continue to pursue her weaving. She said, “I started weaving at the age of 17. I attended a literacy course taught by the sister. After that she gave me the funds to continue weaving. She is a good person. We now have a business. If we are late in making the fabric, she often gets mad but we know she means well because she is disciplined. At first we were a group of ten, but five people did not want to weave the ikat fabric so they left. The sister helps in providing the capital, and helps to sell the woven fabric. In one month, two pieces of fabric can be sold, one large piece of fabric costs 300 thousand which means two costs 600 thousand. I have a farm so I can only weave at night.”





Sr. Sesilia tells us the many cases that have inspired her. She explains, *“Many do not return from Malaysia. I have carried out social research on trafficking. I invited the heads of the RT (neighborhood units) here. There is one head of RT who said there are 5 people from his RT with unclear whereabouts. I compiled the data. I searched, and eventually they returned. We could find them because their departure was official and there was documentation so they were easily found. One of them said, for many years she had not been paid. Then she requested her wages from the employer. Her employer said that if she wants her wages he would poke her eyes out first. It turns he really did try to poke her eye out. I took her to the doctor, but it was too late, there was nothing they could do.”*

Many problems continue to plague the women in Atambua. *“The lives of former refugees, for example, still live as refugees although their refugee statuses have been withdrawn. Access to livelihoods (jobs) is difficult and access to water is also difficult. In the end, many are forced to go, to become migrant workers in Malaysia,”* explained Sr. Cecilia. *“Those who stay here are subjected to violence. There are often victims who come battered and beaten by their husbands. There are many causes for the domestic*

*violence: some are due to economic factors, some are due to drunkenness or because of womanizing. Usually I emphasize mediation for these couples because usually if they enter the legal realm, it becomes difficult for the family to reunite.”*

Sr. Sesilia always emphasizes peace and the integrity of the family in handling domestic violence cases. Based on her experience, usually the perpetrators of domestic violence will be afraid if they are threatened to be placed in jail. This method is usually effective and the offender is asked to make a stamped statement letter containing his commitment to no longer commit any acts of violence. Violence experienced by women is not only physical violence, but also psychological, sexual, and economic violence. For this reason Sr. Sesilia continues to fight, because she feels peace can only be achieved if there is peace in the hearts of every person, in the relationships between partners, in each household between husband and wife, and between parents and their children. What Sr. Sesilia fights for is similar to what Sr. Theresa of Calcutta, India fought for. One of Sr. Theresa’s famous phrases, **“What can you do to promote world peace? Go home and love your family”** is similar to the work being done by Sr. Cecilia. \*\*\*

**Based on her experience, usually the perpetrators of domestic violence will be afraid if they are threatened to be placed in jail.**



# ANNEX





## About Peace Through Development in Disadvantaged Areas

*Creating an enabling environment for civil society and government to engage in peacebuilding and conflict prevention*

**MinDA** *Ministry for Development  
of Disadvantaged Areas*

**MoV** *Ministry of Village, Development  
of Disadvantaged Areas  
and Transmigrations*

### :: Our Vision

Developing disadvantaged areas into more developed areas in order to achieve the equality with other areas in Indonesia.

### :: Our Mission

1. Develop local economy by utilizing local resources (human resources and institutional system) through the participation of existing multi stakeholders;
2. Empower community by increasing public access to educational services, health care, employment, and improving access to capital venture, technology, market, and information;
3. Improve institutional capacity of local governments and communities;
4. Cut-off the isolation of areas by improving supra-structure and infrastructure of communication and transportation in order to gain inter-relatedness with other regions;
5. Develop the border areas as the forefront of the State of Indonesia by developing the center of economic growth based on natural resources and development of leading sectors;
6. Accelerate rehabilitation and recovery of post natural disaster and post-conflict areas, as well as disaster mitigation

### :: Our Goals

The Ministry aims to empower all communities in disadvantaged areas in order for them to fulfil their basic needs so that they can conduct their active role in development that is equal with other communities in Indonesia.

### :: Situation Analysis

There is a notable decline of communal violent conflicts in Indonesia since the 1998-2004 periods. However, remnants of tension remain in areas of Maluku, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and NTT, while the condition of Aceh is still fragile. The country remains one of the most conflict prone countries in the region.

The current pattern of communal conflicts has shifted to a more complex pattern where violent conflicts remain as a latent matter. The possibility of conflict stems from these issues: uneven development, the democratization process (which may lead to local election disputes or conflicts on region proliferation), conflict in natural resources (agrarian/land ownership), the increasing radicalization among youth, diminishing recognition to pluralism, and worsening horizontal inequalities.

The underlying notion regarding the inter-relation between conflict and development is proven by the fact that among 183 disadvantaged areas in Indonesia, a total of 143 areas are conflict-prone areas. Uneven development and horizontal inequalities, both at the macro scale and micro scale, have the potential to spark violent conflict. Thus, specific attention must be given to those disadvantaged areas.

The Government's approach in dealing with violent communal conflict still needs to be properly coordinated, with a clear division of responsibilities among government entities. Peace stabilization and conflict prevention in most cases are linked to security rather than an integral part of socio-economic development.

### **:: Brief Description of PTDDA**

The Peace Through Development in Disadvantaged Areas (PTDDA) Project is designed to pursue the achievement of GOI-UNDP Country Programme Action Plan Outcome. The GOI and civil society are more effective in identifying and managing conflict and the resulting impact on Indonesia's communities.

The PTDDA project builds upon experiences, best practices, and lessons learned from ongoing projects or former projects, such as Peace Through Development (PTD) project, Strengthening Sustainable Peace and Development in Aceh (SSPDA) project, and Local Settle Programme for East Timorese Refugees project in East Nusa Tenggara. These projects have already started developing the capacity of the Government and civil society for conflict prevention and in formulating and implementing conflict sensitive development programmes.

The PTDDA is a 5-year project commencing in 2012 at the national, provincial, and district levels and it will provide technical assistance and grants for developing and mainstreaming conflict sensitivity towards the sustainable development process.

The overall outcome is that the Government of Indonesia and the civil society will become more effective in identifying and managing conflict and their impact on Indonesia's communities. Specifically, the output is three-fold:

1. Policy and regulatory framework for conflict prevention to be established at the national level and in target areas;
2. Institutional system for conflict prevention to be established at the national level and in target areas;
3. Communities to be able to implement conflict prevention and social cohesion initiatives utilizing tools and mechanisms aimed towards building a safe and stable well-being.

The project targeted five of the most conflict prone provinces: Maluku, North Maluku, Central Sulawesi, Aceh and East Nusa Tenggara. PTDDA also continues to support four critical areas of interventions for a solid foundation to conflict management in Indonesia, such as: Conflict Sensitive Planning and Budgeting, Law on Social Conflict Management, Conflict Prevention Framework for Action (CPF), and Community-based Conflict Early Warning and Early Response System (CEWERS). These four areas of interventions are PTDDA's valuable contributions in the field of conflict prevention and peace building.

## :: Distinct Features of PTDDA

PTDDA has several distinct features that differentiate this project from previous initiatives, such as:

1. A resilient community is the ultimate aim of PTDDA's outputs. Therefore community initiatives such as, Sustainable Livelihood for Peace, Community-based Early Warning and Early Response System, Grievance Handling Mechanism, Support to Musrenbang Results, as well as Social Cohesion and Peace Building, are given the largest portion within the project's activities, in which the roles of women in peace and security are given special attention by the project;
2. There is a synergy between conflict prevention and other closely-related thematic issues such as Disaster Risk Reduction, Access to Justice and Poverty Reduction;
3. Localized, specific and custom-made practices according to the particular characteristics and dynamics of conflict in the area, as well as the consideration of ongoing or previous initiatives in each respective area;
4. Based on the inter-linkages among the three outputs of this project, the results of field implementation will be deliberated during the policy formulation process by the established institutional mechanism so that the enacted policies will perfectly fit with community's needs and aspirations;
5. Having a commonly agreed Conflict Prevention Framework among national and local stakeholders ensures an integrated approach to conflict prevention; and
6. Addressing the issues of uneven development in disadvantaged areas as part of the integral efforts of preventing violent conflicts in those disadvantaged areas.

## :: Outputs and Activity Results

### **Output 1: Policy and regulatory framework for conflict prevention established at the national level and in target areas.**

#### **Activity Result**

1. National Conflict Prevention Framework (CPF) developed.
2. National and sub national regulatory framework on social conflict management enacted.
3. Action plans on conflict management developed and mainstreamed into RKPs..

### **Output 2: Institutional system for conflict prevention established at national level and in target areas.**

#### **Activity Result:**

1. Technical Coordination Mechanism on conflict prevention established and functioning.
2. Local multi-stakeholder forums for conflict prevention and early warning established and functioning.

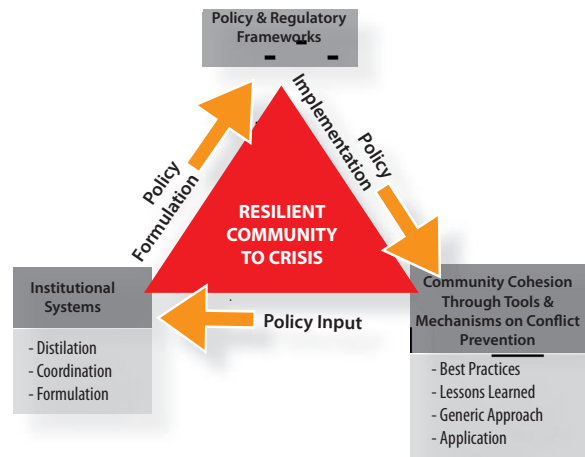




**Output 3: Communities are able to implement conflict prevention and social cohesion initiatives utilizing tools and mechanisms aimed towards building a safe and stable well-being.**

**Activity Result:**

1. Community Initiatives for sustainable peace applied (supported through grants/TA such as: sustainable livelihood for peace, grievance, handling mechanism, support to Musrenbang results and peace building initiatives).
2. Conflict Sensitive Planning (CSP) applied in target areas.
3. Early Warning and Early Response System applied in target areas.
4. Peace promotion through education and public campaign on conflict prevention applied.
5. Peace and Development Analysis (PDA) developed and updated.



Further information please contact us at:

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## N-Peace AT A GLANCE

What is N-Peace? N-Peace is an abbreviation of Engage for Peace, Equality, Access, Community and Empowerment, which was founded in 2010 by female peace activists to commemorate a decade of the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. N-Peace is a multi-regional initiative, which consists of 8 countries (Nepal, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Pakistan and Myanmar). This initiative promotes women's leadership by acknowledging the major role women play in building peace and preventing conflicts as well as creating more stakeholder involvement on issues related to women, peace and security.

An N - PEACE Network has been established and has more than 800 female peace activists to date.

## HOW N-Peace WORKS

N -Peace Network has four important roles, as follows:

- To conduct dialogue among communities, government and other groups on work related to UNSCR 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security" at local, national and regional levels.
- To build the capacity of female peace activists to comprehend the UNSCR 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security" and to expand the network in supporting this agenda.
- To make the peace activists as a liaison to share their knowledge of the policy and best experience in implementing the UNSCR 1325.
- To support women's participation in peace and security through the stories of women's leadership in mobilizing their communities for peace, equality, access and empowerment.

N-Peace Network is facilitated by the United Nations Development Programme, the Asia Pacific Regional Center in cooperation with Search for Common Ground and the Institute for Inclusive Security, with the support of the Australian Government Overseas Aid Program (Australian AID).

To find out more about this network and become a member of N-Peace Network, please visit: [www.n-peace.net](http://www.n-peace.net)



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APBD	The Regional Budget
Australian AID	Australian Government Overseas AID Program
BAP	Investigative Official Report
BKKBN	Population and National Family Planning Body
BKOW	Corporation and Agency of Women's Organizations
BSUIA	Shura Ureung Inong Aceh Association
CEWERS	Community-Based Early Warning and Early Response System
CO	Community Organizer
CPF	Conflict Prevention Framework
DDR	Domet Dhuafa Republika Foundation
DKP	Local Office of Marine Affairs and Fisheries
DOM	Military Operations Areas
DPIA	Acehnese Women's congress
DPRD	Regional Legislative Council
ECD	Early Child Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
FPPA	Atambua Women's Awareness Forum
GAM's	Free Aceh Movement
GMKI	Indonesian Christian Students Movement
GPP	Concerned Women's Movement
HMI	Islamic Students Association
IAIN	Islamic State Institute
IDP	Internally Displaced People
JPIT	The Timur Eastern Indonesian Women's Network
KKR	Justice and Reconciliation
KKTG	Gender Transformation Working Group of Aceh
Kopasus	Special Forces
KPKPST	Central Sulawesi Advocate Group for Women's Equality
KPU	General Elections Commission
LINA	Inong Aceh League
LKDM	Maluku Cultural Institute
LPA	Child Protection Agency
LPPM	Maluku Community Development Participation Organization
MinDA	Ministry for Development of Disadvantaged Areas
MMC	Maluku Media Center
MTR	Midterm Review

NAD	Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam
NPD	National Project Director
NTT	Nusa Tenggara Timur
P2TP2A	Integrated Service Center for Women and Children
PDAM	Regional Water Utilities Company
PDAUD	Early Childhood Peace Education
Permata	Inong Aceh Union and Aceh Farmers Network
PGI	Indonesian Communion of Churches
PMU	Project Management Unit
PRD	People's Democratic Party
PSK	Commercial Sex Workers
PTD	Peace Through Development
PTDDA	Peace Through Development in Disadvantaged Areas
RIK	Relawan Informasi Komunitas
RPuK	Women Volunteers for Humanity
RRI	Radio Republik Indonesia
SBB	West Seram District
SIRA	Aceh Referendum Information Center
SSPDA	Strengthening Sustainable Peace and Development in Aceh
TKTB	West Timor Humanitarian Team
TNI	Indonesian National Armed Forces
TOM	Training on Mobilizers
UKIM	Indonesian Christian University of Maluku
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSCR	UN Security Council Resolution
VAW	Violence Against Women
VCO	Virgin Coconut Oil

