



REPORTAGE

Journal investigative report

CHILD LABOR

around us



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2012



International
Labour
Organization

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REPORTAGE

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Introduction

Children are citizens whose rights are guaranteed and protected by the constitution. Children have the right to education, to play and live in a positive and healthy environment, and so on. But in reality, many children do not enjoy their rights as they should.

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2010), there are 22 million children aged 10-14 years in Indonesia. About 878 thousand of those children are currently working in varying circumstances, from non-hazardous to highly hazardous working conditions.

The ILO also reports a higher number of child workers in Indonesia; 2.3 million children aged 7 to 14 years old are engaged in labour. Most of them live in eastern Indonesia, Java Island and Greater Jakarta have a relatively low number of child workers.

If this situation persists, child labour may prove to be a time bomb that will complicate socioeconomic issues in Indonesia. The government has a limited ability to handle the issue of child labour as it only

has to capacity to repatriate some 20,000 children back to school, or help them work in a better environment.

Journalists play a crucial role in bringing child labour issues to the forefront and attracting people's attention. The more people involved in the fight against child labour, we believe, the faster this issue can be solved.

This e-book contains articles from journalists who received scholarships to report on child labour issues. This program was designed by AJI Jakarta and the ILO to portray various perspectives and facts concerning child labour in Indonesia. In this book, you will find interesting stories as well as individual initiatives that can be used as models for readers to help reduce child labour.

These articles include stories about Indonesian children jailed as adults in Australia, about out-of-school children working as substitute bus drivers to survive, and much more.

Please enjoy.

Umar Idris

AJI Jakarta

Articles compiled in the publication were part of the ILO's media fellowship. The fellowship was part of the campaign conducted by the ILO through its Child Labour and Education Project, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. The Project aims to strengthen the policy level linkages between work on child labour and education, leading to action that will improve the opportunities for those in or vulnerable to child labour to benefit from education. The campaign was part of a series of activities conducted by the ILO and its partners to highlight national efforts against child labour, particularly its worst forms.

Child Labour in Indonesia

At least four million of 58.8 million children aged 5 – 17 years old in Indonesia are in employment and of those, 1,7 million are considered child labourer. In addition, about 50 per cent of working children worked at least 21 hours per week, 25 per cent, at least 12 hours per week and those categorized as child labourers, worked 35.1 hour per week (Indonesia Child Labour Survey (ICLS) by the ILO and BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2009)

Table 1.
Number of Working Children and Child Labour
(5 – 17 years old) – in thousands

Category	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of children aged usia 5 – 17 years old	30.130.3	28.706.9	58.837.2
Working Children	2.391.3	778.2	1.755.3
Child Labour	977.1		

Which aged group is the biggest number of child labour? The biggest number is at aged group of 15 0 17 years old.

Table 2.
Child Labour (5 – 17 years old) – in thousands

Category	Boys	Girls	Total
5 – 12 years old	320.1	354.2	674.3
13 – 14 years old	193.4	127.8	321.2
15 – 17 years old	463.6	296.3	759.8

Which sectors are they working?

Most children are working in the Agriculture sector.

Table 3
Working Children (5 – 17 years old)
based on the sectors – in thousands

Sector	Boys	Girl
Agriculture	66,3	44,6
Manufacture	6,1	16,7
Industry	12,8	26,0
Individual and Social Services	12,8	8,2
Others	3,5	2,6



Table 4
Age group and Type of Work that are not allowed

Aged Group	Type of Work	
	The work that are not dangerous (in places where are not dangerous)	Worst Forms of Child Labour
	Light Work Less than 3 hour per day	General work and less than 40 hours per week
5-12		
13-14		
15-17		

The term 'child labour' used in the survey include all working children aged 5 – 12 years regardless of the number of working hours, working children aged 13 – 14 years who worked more than 15 hours per week, and working children aged 15 – 17 years who worked more than 40 hours per week. The table below shows the category of child labour based on the Policies and Regulations in Indonesia. The red area shows where the children in the certain ages are not allowed to work in the certain working hours and type of work. ■



Little Bus Drivers in Jakarta

**Rizky Amelia,
Ezra Sihite**
Beritasatu.com

"It is easier when we do it," said Andi Ilham, a city bus driver who is not even old enough to have an ID.

The clock showed 22:00 when Andi Ilham, dressed like any other child his age in sneakers, a checkered shirt and jeans, was driving a Metromini bus along the capital city streets.

Ilham, as he is usually called, drives his Metromini No. S75 on the Blok M – Pasar Minggu route, going 60 kms per hour with no hesitation. He even speeds up on quiet streets like Buncit Street in the afternoon.

Only God knows what he is thinking about when he is driving that fast with dozens of passengers on board.

Ilham substitutes for older bus drivers who cannot drive continuously until late at night. He admitted that he doesn't have a driver's license yet.

His uncle started teaching him to drive a similar bus at age 14. At first, he learned the route and helped collect money from passengers, but when he was ready to become a driver, he began his training behind the wheel of a bus. Now, less than two years later, Ilham is a substitute driver.

The owner of Metromini bus is a relative of Ilham; he currently operates 13 buses. Ilham

is confident driving his bus while joking with his conductor and smoking cigarettes.

"It is easier when we do it," said Iam smilingly, when asked how difficult and hazardous his job is, especially for someone his age.

He said he went to school before, and is willing to continue his studies in Pelopor Vocational School in Ciledug later this year or next year.

But for now, Iam enjoys earning his salary of Rp. 60.000 – 170.000 per day as a substitute driver. After paying Rp. 120.000 to the main driver, he shares the balance with his conductor.

He used to dream of becoming a soccer player, but now he is too busy with work and earning a living to pursue that dream. "Next month, I will go back (to school)," said Iam.

On the streets of Jakarta, especially at night, it is easy to find young drivers in medium sized buses like Metromini, Kopaja and other small public transportation providers. These drivers are categorized as children because they are between only 14 and 17 years old.

Based on an observation made by journalists at Berita-satu.com last week, child drivers typically drive minibuses through Jakarta on the Blok M – Pasar Minggu route (bus no. S75), the Blok M – Lebak Bulus route (S72), the Senen – Lebak Bulus route (P20), the Senen – Kalideres route (P12), and the Kebayoran Lama – Ciledug route (small public transportation C01).

One medium bus, like Metromini, has ten to eleven pairs of seats with space for an additional 10 to 15 passengers standing in the aisle. In total, the bus may carry 30 to 37 passengers.

Many passengers put their lives in the hands of these child drivers who do not even have a driver's license. The substitute drivers also risk their own lives and health as they drive continuously from the afternoon till early morning.

Roy, another 17 year old illegal driver, sometimes drives a medium bus along the Blok M – Pasar Minggu or Lebak Bulus routes. Roy has been working as a substitute driver for two years, but says that he only drives during school holiday.

"I have not graduated yet because I'm still on holiday," said Roy, who was indeed on a school holiday when we met him but did not provide the name of his school.

Despite the presence of field officers who are meant to be controlling traffic flows at Blok M bus station, the use of these underage drivers persists.

Tri Unggul, an officer of the Local Transportation Office (Dishub) who is in charge of Blok M bus station, did not say much about child drivers. Nevertheless, he acknowledged their presence and said he considers them street children.

"We should take action (against them) but they keep doing it so what can we do?" he asked.

The police love money

According to a Metromini driver, the police working near the bus station know about the presence of these substitute drivers.

Bajul, 22, who has been driving for Metromini since he was 16 years old, said the traffic police officers are there everyday. "The police just want money. We just give them Rp.5000," said Bajul before driving his bus from Blok M station.

He confirmed that children start as conductors and by learning the route and observing the driver, they are eventually allowed to drive. Real drivers, he said, are afraid to pay damages if the child drivers have an accident. In case of an accident, the adult drivers are held fully responsible to bus owners. Owners do not want to know about their bus being handed over to child drivers.

"Many S75 bus drivers are children who used to work as conductors," he added.

Icha Rastikan, 23, a passenger of the P20 minibus who frequently takes buses driven by young drivers, admitted her concern because the substitute drivers often drive recklessly.

"I am often worried because they are so young, inexperienced and bad tempered," said Icha. Icha typically takes the bus between 21:00 to 21:30.

Although she has never been involved in an accident, she believes one is more likely to occur when child drivers drive at

high speeds. "They like to drive fast," she concluded.

Don't they know?

Child drivers have no driver's license; Article 46, paragraph one of the Regional Regulation No.12 from 2003 concerning Traffic and Streets, Trains, Rivers, Lake and Crossings in Jakarta clearly states that a driver's license is required for every public transportation driver. Paragraph two further specifies that drivers must have

their license with them while driving public transportation.

When asked for his confirmation, a police officer named Sulaiman at Blok M bus station refused to comment on the presence of child drivers.

He suggested that the reporter from Beritasatu.com go directly to the police station in front of Blok M Square. When meeting with the Commander on duty, Marsono, he said that he did not know anything about

child drivers.

"I don't know, but one thing is for sure, they must have a driver's license and for that, they must have ID," said Marsono.

He admitted that he usually stays at the police station and suggested that his colleague, Sulaiman, the first officer we talked to, would know more about it.

"I am not on site, but when there is a child driver action must be taken because it is dangerous," he concluded. ■



He once attended a football school in Senayan, but little Ilham eventually "fell" into the streets and now drives for Metromini.

About ten years ago when Ilham was in a kindergarten, his teacher asked him what he wanted to be when he grew up. At that time, most of his friends said they wanted to be a doctor,

pilot or police officer – even the president.

"Now it's your turn, Ilham," said the teacher, "what do you want to be when you grow up?" Ilham was quiet for a moment. He only knew one type of men's job – his dad's job – as a driver. "I want to be a driver," he answered firmly.

The whole class laughed at him but he didn't know what so funny about his answer. Now that

he is a Metromini driver, he can laugh about it.

"I guess my dream came true. I am a driver now," said Ilham to Beritasatu.com some time ago, laughing.

His fate as a driver is related to his childhood experience with his father. His father often took Ilham when driving his bus along the Blok M – Pasar Minggu route. He sat in the front seat and



enjoyed watching the streets go by. "That is how I know this area very well," he said.

Although his initial experience driving for Metromini came from his father, he never asked him to be a driver. He began driving as a way to avoid school; he dropped out of school last year because he didn't like one of his teachers at Pelopor Vocational School.

After leaving school, he was jobless so he eventually went to the streets. He hung out at bus stations and met some drivers, and eventually and joined them as a conductor.

Despite his young age, it was not difficult for him to become a substitute driver. At first, Ilham was only playing around as a conductor, but then slowly he learned how to drive a bus and earned the trust of official drivers, and eventually became a driver – without a license or even an ID.

Usually, substitute drivers work at night when official drivers need rests, and Metromini must

continue to operate to reach their target income in order to pay the bus owner. Ilham, however, doesn't only work nights. Since he is out of school, he also drives the bus in the morning from 10am to 3pm. "When I'm not too tired, I will drive again from 7pm to midnight," he said.

As a substitute driver, Ilham can make up to Rp. 240.000 a day but he will not enjoy all of it. Half must be paid to the official driver while the other half is for him to share with his conductor. He usually spends his money on small things and cigarettes, and sets some aside to pay for repairs to his broken motorcycle.

Ilham admitted that his parents do not know about his job. One time, his father, now a taxi driver, caught him driving the bus and was furious. "Dad doesn't want me to risk my life on the streets. My parents want me to go back to school and become a successful person."

When he was in the 4th grade, Ilham joined a football

school in Senayan where for two years he trained to be a future national football player. He was among the best players of his school – the senior players were often jealous of his football skills.

Unfortunately, his potential ended when he started smoking and become short of breath while playing; Ilham can no longer play a long game. "If I didn't start smoking, I could be like Andik (a national football player)," he chuckles. Unlike Andik, who plays on the football field, Ilham has to "play" on the streets.

However, Ilham doesn't want to be substitute driver all his life. He asserted his willingness to return to school. He wants to prove to his parents that he is still able to participate in school after taking one year off. "Next year, I want to go back to school," he stated.

Asked what comes next, Ilham went silent. It took him several minutes to answer that question. While driving and smoking, he answered, "I don't know what I am going to be." ■



Child 'Substitute Drivers'

Rizky Amelia, Ezra Sihite

Beritasatu.com

Child drivers? "I don't know about that," said the Minister. "At night, children should study or rest at home."

Child drivers? "I'm just hearing about it now," said the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Linda Amalia Sari, when asked about the large number of child drivers on the streets of Jakarta. They carry dozens of passengers on public buses without a license or ID, as they are still underage.

The Minister seemed surprised but, like other high ranking government officials, Linda promised to do something about it through coordination with local government and related ministries. In terms of child protection, she said, her ministry made an agreement with local governments that the latter is responsible for protecting children in their own region.

Linda regretted the presence of so many child drivers.

"These children should go to school and study or rest at night – not work on busy and dangerous streets in Jakarta. Not only are they too young, but the job is very risky for both drivers and passengers."

"I hope these children are not given high risk jobs," she said, when we met her at the House of Representatives (DPR) building in Senayan.

Linda and her accompanying staff admitted that they have no data on the incidence of child drivers. According to Understanding Children's Works, a joint agency established by the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNICEF and World Bank in 2007, children under 13 years old are not allowed to work, and children 13 to 15 years old are allowed to work, but only light work which will not harm their physical and mental development. All children up to 17 years old are not allowed to perform hazardous tasks at work,

and driving is considered a hazardous and high risk type of work.

Contacted separately, Chairman of the National Commission for Child Protection (KPA), Seto Mulyadi, said child labour is a complicated issue that cannot be resolved instantly because the main cause is the economy. Seto asserted that letting children work as substitute drivers is a violation of their rights. Unfortunately stakeholders, especially police officers, often tolerate it for economic reasons.

"It is a violation of children's rights and of traffic regulation," he said when we contacted him.

Seto is of the opinion that the local transportation office (Dishub) and the police should take firm actions against it because driving is a very risky job for children, as well as their passengers. These firm actions can be a short-term solution for the child driver issue. In a longer run, the government should empower people through the economy. ■

Learning Spirit from the Hill of Trash

Hamludin, *Koran TEMPO*

The sun has yet to rise when Tika Lindawati is ready to go to work with a big basket on her back. Slowly, the 10 year old girl climbs a mountain of trash in front of her hut.

One thing she is afraid of is slipping off. Accidents in the trash disposal area is what child scavengers fear the most in Sumur Batu trash disposal area, Bantargebang, Bekasi, West Java. They risk slipping off and being buried in trash because of one wrong step. Sometime ago, a middle-aged man slipped off and was buried in trash and in less than an hour, his whole body was burned by the methane gas coming from the trash.

A scrapper car (Becho) moves around to pile trash up to a height that even an adult cannot reach so Tika must move fast to collect bottles, gallon caps and used cans that have been recently unloaded from trash trucks. Once the basket on her back weighs about five kilograms, she walks down to pile her "harvest" in front of her hut. After taking a short break, she returns to the trash hill.

"When the Becho is here, I move away. I'm scared of being crushed. The Becho is very noisy," she told the interviewer some time ago.

When the sun is right above her head, Tika takes off her basket and prepares herself for school. She goes back to her hut, takes a shower, has lunch, and runs quickly to Tunas Mulia Nature School, some 200 meters away. School starts at 13:00 and ends at 16:00. She is now in the 4th grade.





From her school, she can see adult scavengers busy collecting recyclables. Some of the children shared their experiences that day before school got started.

Tika told her friends that she was not lucky that day. She could not reach the fresh trash from the trucks and as a result, adult scavengers got the “good” trash. “I received leftovers because I was afraid of the Becho,” she told her school mates.

Unlike ordinary schools, Nature School has no walls, tiles, roof, or strong building structure. It is made up of eight local stage houses with pillars as high as an adult’s back, wooden floors, bamboo fences and sago palm leaf roofs. The size of each building is 8x10 meters. Students

attending elementary, junior and senior high schools learn in groups depending on their grade. Today, 230 child scavengers attend this school.

Tika, who has been studying at Nature School since she was seven, has never attended a formal school. Her parents, Kawi, 58 years old, and Mimin Mintarsih, 39 years old, wanted to take her to a formal school in their home town in Karawang, West Java. However, due to financial difficulties, they had to take Tika to live in the scavengers’ huts.

Nature School is the only place for Tika to get an education. It may not be an ideal school but she is at least able to gain some knowledge. “The important thing is that she can read and write,”

explained Mimin. She will leave it to Tika to decide her own future.

For Mimin, Tika, the third of her four children, is very helpful. By collecting trash, she can make some money for the family, although it is not that much. In one day, Tika typically earns Rp.10.000 to Rp.15.000 from selling scraps. She gives all her money to Mimin for their daily needs.

Similarly, other scavengers like Ujang, Engkos and Imron Sulaeman, aged 12 to 13 years old, wake up early in the morning to climb trash mountain. They carry baskets to collect scraps and sell them to collectors. They earn Rp.300.000 per month but they give it all to their parents. “The money will be used to build

a house in our hometown, in Karawang, West Java,” explained Imron.

Imron attended Tambaksari 2 Elementary School in Karawang but only up to the third grade. After his parents’ divorce, Imron followed his stepfather, Imam, to the Sumur Batu disposal area in Bantargebang, Bekasi. There, he became a scavenger.

Before attending Tunas Mulia Nature School, Imron worked from 07:00 to 17:00. He was eight years old at the time. When he was on top of trash mountain, there was no time for a break; he didn’t even have time for lunch. “Only breakfast and dinner,” he said.

Imron has been working as a scavenger since 2003 to help his parents. Now, they have a modest stone house in his village.

Imron is in the 7th grade at Tunas Mulia Nature School.

He has achieved good results so far, and is ranked second best in his class. Since studying in the Nature School, his working hours have reduced; he works in the morning until noon and goes to school after that.

Feel no pain

One time, Imron was very sick. He was vomiting a lot and his body was weak, so he remained in his hut located near the disposal area. He was 13 years old and didn’t know what to do. He hoped he could close his eyes, rest, and be cured when he opened his eyes in the following morning.

His condition, however, persisted for days. Without any help from adults, Imron didn’t understand that he was sick and Imam also didn’t know what to do about his step son.

Imam thought it was

because Imron used to play under a big tree before dark, and not because of exposure to methane gas from the trash in Sumur Batu. “My father said I played under a haunted tree,” said Imron.

Imron still does not understand the risk of getting sick from exposure to trash. He does not know about the gas that produces carbon dioxide emissions. He cannot imagine it at all. “My father once told me that trash is dangerous, but I never wear anything to protect my nose or mouth,” he said.

Scavengers never use masks, they only use shirts to protect their heads from the sun. While skimming through trash piles as high as 10-15 meters, Imron sometimes injures his foot by stepping on nails or a piece of glass or bottle. He treats these accidents lightly; after stepping on glass once, he just went down



to his hut, applied some iodine and covered it with cloth before returning to work. "When I'm injured, I only apply some betadin," he said when asked what type of medicine he usually uses.

In general, scavengers don't care how many times they vomit in a month, or if they had diarrhea or respiration problems. Kawi, 58 years old, only considers himself sick when he coughs blood. Even then, he would refuse to go to a hospital; he only takes generic medication from Bantar Gebang clinic (Puskesmas). "If I am still strong enough to collect trash, then I'm not sick," he said.

Kawi is Tika Lindawati's father. Kawi also considers it normal for his daughter to have a sore throat or cough. "It's normal for her to have a headache. So far, Tika has never gotten sick," he said.

Tika is very skinny and pale, but her parents consider it normal because she collects trash every day from morning until noon, before going to school. "Her body looks weak, but she is strong enough to carry trash," said Mimin Mintarsih, Tika's mother.

For Ujang, Engkos and Imron, Nature School is the only place to gain knowledge for a better future. Through this school, they hope to continue their studies to a higher level.

Founder of the Nature School, Nadam Dwi Subekti, said the presence of his foundation is to facilitate child scavengers access to formal education. To earn recognition for their teaching

methods, the school applies two standard teaching modules set by the Ministry of National Education.

First, they take part in the Package A standardized exam for elementary school students and Package B for junior high school students, with legitimate certification. Second, a small number of students with good performance receive scholarships to attend a formal school in Bantargebang sub-district. So far, 10 students have received scholarships to study at Almuttaqin Vocational School in Bantargebang, majoring in accounting.

The Nature School is committed to developing teaching methods and an educational format that enables students to adapt to formal schools. "I hope these child scavengers can compete with other students from formal school in terms of knowledge," Nadam explained.

Tika, Ujang, Engkos and Imron now enjoy the benefits of the Tunas Mulia Nature School. Before it opened, they could not count well but now they are good with numbers and multiplication. They can also now read and write well.

For Tika, Nature School is everything. The school treats child scavengers well and understands their difficult lives.

When she grows up, Tika wishes to repay her teachers' kindness by further developing the Nature School. "I want to be a teacher and teach in Nature School," she said enthusiastically. ■



Hamludin

Koran TEMPO

Tunas Mulia Nature School was established because of the founder's concern for child scavengers in Sumur Batu and Bantargebang disposal area (TPA) in Bekasi, West Java. Hundreds of child scavengers who live in temporary huts in that area have dropped out of school.



THE HUMBLE ROOTS OF THE NATURE SCHOOL

The founder of the Nature School, Nadam Dwi Subekti, 44 years old, found it difficult in the beginning to teach child scavengers or make their parents understand the importance of school. When he opened the school on October 13, 2006, no one attended. "It seemed like they were not convinced," he said.

Every day, Nadam traveled around visiting their huts,

knocking on their doors and inviting their children to be students in the Nature School. However, the community was not interested in sending their children to school. The parents preferred them to keep collecting trash to earn money.

Nadam didn't lose hope. He came up with an idea of giving away basic commodities such as rice, cooking oil and instant noodles valued Rp. 50,000 to

parents who were willing to let their children attend the Nature School. "The parents considered this incentive as compensation for their child's half day absence from work," he said.

As a result, 50 child scavengers registered for his first class, aged between 7 and 15 years old. Nadam provided them with school supplies such as books, pens, pencils, and school bags to boost their spirit to study.



Since the school didn't have a permanent building, the classes were moved from one hut to another. At first, they weren't taught standard subjects like Indonesian language or math, but instead they were taught how to live a clean and healthy life including the importance of washing hands using soap, changing clothes after contact with trash, and taking showers using soap.

At first, he said, nearly all the students came to school without shoes. They were sweaty, smelly and brought in flies. Some even came without shirts on, and only wore shorts. "In the beginning, I taught them how to clean themselves from the simplest step: how to wash their hands."

Nadam has a simple rule for the students. They may come to school only if they have taken a shower and wear clothes, although there is no school uniform. He is flexible on slippers

and shoes.

Unfortunately, this rule was still difficult for child scavengers to follow. It was challenging to change their habits because they deal with trash everyday, and it was difficult for them to remove smells from their clothing and bodies. "It took nearly a year to change their hygiene habits."

From there, he and his wife, Widiyanti, 43 years old, slowly developed the Nature School for child scavengers. He participated in a course on Nature School education held in Bojongkulur, Vila Nusa Indah II, Bekasi, to get more information on how to manage a Nature School for child scavengers.

After a month-long course, Nadam started to prepare a Nature School concept while consulting with practitioners. After the concept was ready, he looked for permanent donors to establish a school for child

scavengers. Several foundations donated funds to establish the school; one of them is Portal Infaq Foundation who gives some Rp.4.6 million per month.

Two years after the establishment of the school, Nadam constructed a semi-permanent building on rented land. By the time more students enrolled and more donors joined, the Nature School moved to a 4,200 square meter piece of land at Jalan Pangkalan 2, RT 02/RW 04, Sumurbatu village. In this new area, Nadam built eight classrooms, bathrooms, an office, a small mosque, and a mini garden and rabbit farm as an additional skill-building opportunity for child scavengers.

Children are grouped by age for their respective grade. For example, 7 to 8 year old children are 1st graders, and so on. When there are children above 10 years old who cannot read and write,

they must enter elementary level grades first. To maintain high standards, the Nature School uses package A and package B national education programs so that the local education office in Bekasi recognizes the graduates.

Today, the school has 15 teachers. Their salaries are varied, ranging between Rp. 200,000 to Rp. 450,000 per month. This small income does not provide a great incentive for teachers to come share their knowledge with child scavengers, but some enjoy the work anyway. Ms. Ita, for example, said that she really enjoys being around the children. "In terms of salary, it is certainly not enough to fulfill my needs, but here at least I can share with others," she explained.

Recently, the school received visitors from Jakarta State University (previously IKIP) and Jaya Raya University, also

in Jakarta. They volunteered to come teach basic English to the children. The school facilities now provide enough space to accommodate the 230 students enrolled.

The Head of the Data and Planning Division of the local education office in Bekasi explained that the Nature School is categorized into a non-formal school because the final exams are not the same as that of formal schools.

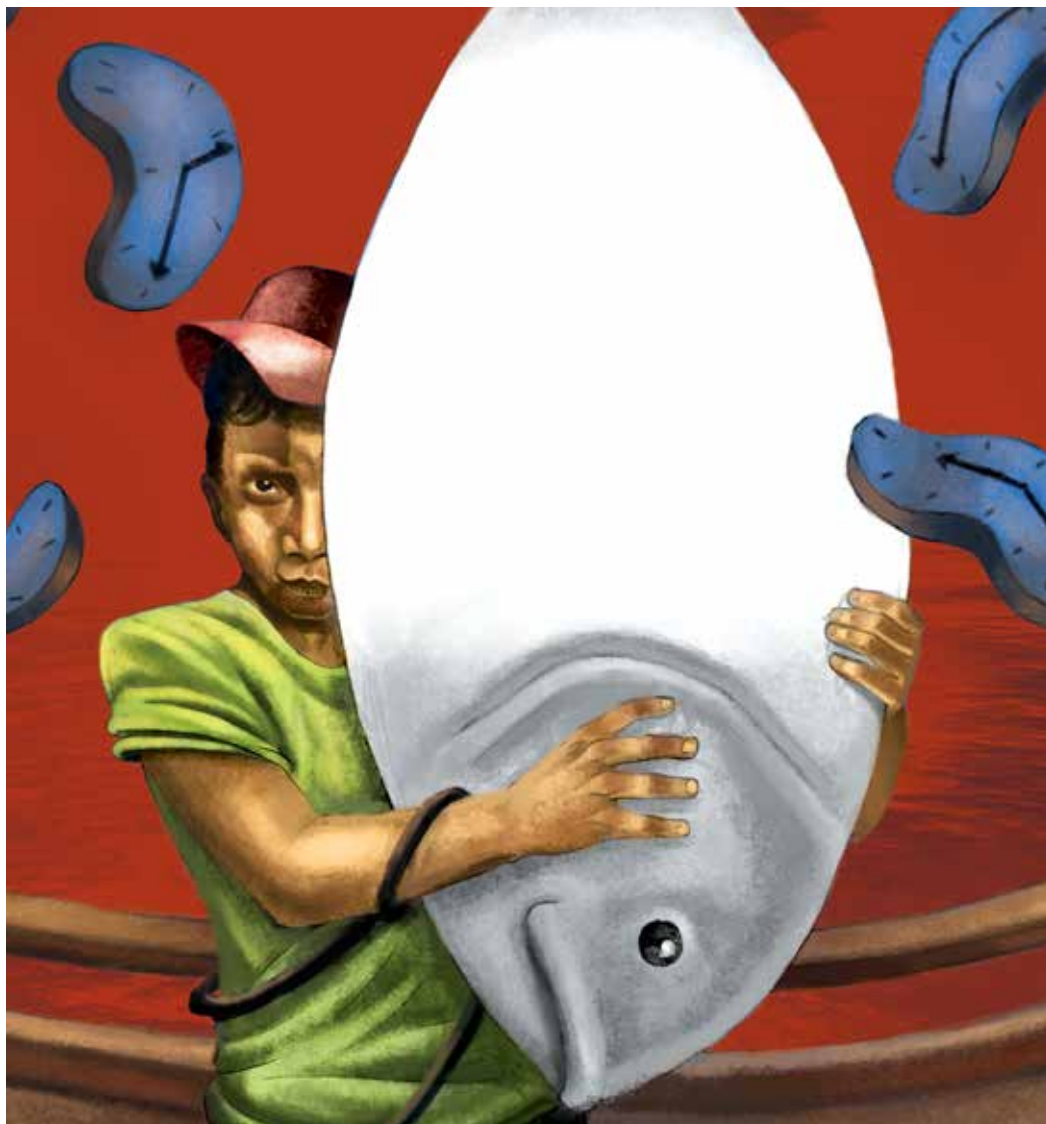
For non-formal schools, the education office provides a budget of Rp. 50.000 to Rp. 100.000 per month per teacher/tutor. In addition, the local government is expected to provide training for head tutors at Nature Schools to improve teacher quality. Not all tutors in Nature Schools have teaching backgrounds, most of them come from different professions but have the same desire to help

child scavengers.

Training for tutors is based on Government Regulation No.19 of 2005 concerning Standard Teachers or Educators, which requires teachers to have a bachelor degree or Certificate 4. "If they don't, then the local government of Bekasi should improve teacher quality through trainings and workshops," said Agus when asked for a confirmation over the phone.

Agus suggested that Tunas Mulia Nature School apply for a school administration permit so that they can receive funds from the government, such as the School Operational Fund (BOS). The education office, explained Agus, also provides access to improved school quality by conducting package exams for elementary school, package B for junior high school and package C for senior high school students. ■





He Wouldn't Hesitate to Kill

Evi Tresnawati
Aryo Bhawono
detik E-PAPER

"I always keep a machete under the bag I use as a pillow. If they really want to kill me, I won't hesitate in killing them first."

Darkness, silence and anger made for a frightening night that night. The sound of the boat's engine suddenly stopped. The 18 people on board panicked.

It was silent, not a single word was said. Passengers from the Middle East looked at each other and worried quietly. Meanwhile, the two Indonesians on board, the captain and crew member, were busy working.

The tuna fishing boat oscillated in the Indian Ocean. It was October 12, 2010, and the boat left the southern part of Java Island three days earlier to reach its destination, Christmas Island, Australia.

Night had just begun, but the situation in the middle of the ocean quickly turned dark. The boat engine suddenly stopped. Andri, the crew member, walked down to the engine room.

There were two engines in front of him, the main and back-up engines. The back-up engine stopped after running for about 20 hours. The main engine had already stopped one day earlier. Andri's effort to turn on the engine was unsuccessful.

He was surprised when he returned to the deck; a group of passengers had gathered in front of the navigation room. One of them swung a wooden stick and threatened him with his limited English. "Where are we? We're going to kill you both!" he threatened while swinging his stick.

Andri was very scared – it could be end of his life, or he could end someone else's life instead. What crossed his mind was how to survive.

"I always keep a machete under the bag I use as a pillow. If they really want to kill me, I wouldn't hesitate to kill them first," Andri admitted.

In this moment of terror, spotlights suddenly pointed at their boat from every direction. Orders to remain silence and to put their hands in the air were called out.

It turned out that they were Australian border patrol boats. They seized Andri's boat that

carried illegal immigrants from the Middle East. Andri was relieved but also scared.

Himself, the captain and 16 passengers from the Middle East were saved before the boat sank. However, they also got caught which meant that the Sukabumi born boy would still face major problems.

At that time, Andri was underage. Despite the serious charge of human smuggling, he was still a minor at 15 years old. He was born in 1995 and caught in October 2010.

The Australian government, however, didn't consider him a minor. By using hand x-rays, Andri was considered old enough to be arrested as an adult.

Indra (not his real name) experienced the same treatment as Andri. He was a crew member on a similar type of boat caught carrying eight illegal immigrants from the Middle East.

Indra was caught by the Australian border patrol on December 15th, 2010. His seven day journey was longer than Andri's. It was the end of the year, the peak of the western monsoon season, and there a lot of storms. Fortunately, Indra's boat survived the fierce storms when approaching Christmas Island.

At about 09:00 local time, two patrol boats approached them. They tried to flee but big waves made them unable to maneuver their medium sized tuna boat. The patrol boats were far more sophisticated.

"We were stuck, one (patrol) boat at the front was covered by big waves," stated Indra.

The stories about Andri and Indra are only a couple of the many unpleasant stories about children being abused to smuggle humans. Many other children have been caught by Australian authorities in similar cases. The Indonesian Foreign Ministry records 23 Indonesian children arrested in Australia. The government is trying to gain their release. ■

Two Indonesian Boys in an Australian Prison

**Evi Tresnawati
and Aryo Bhawono**
detik E-PAPER

*Indonesian boys
were jailed with
adult prisoners in an
Australian prison.
It has been months
since they were
arrested as criminals
in the country. Their
road to freedom is
complicated.*

“I was placed in the same cell as a foreigner (Australian citizen). He was a big man; he used drugs like marijuana. I knew what it was from its look,” said Andri (not his real name).

For Andri, sharing a cell in Silverwater Prison in Sydney, Australia with a criminal was scary.

At that time, Andri was 16 years old. He was put behind bars in Australia after being caught smuggling immigrants from the Middle East to Christmas Island in October of 2010. He was jailed in a temporary prison on the island.

He was under 16 then, and had a difficult journey ahead. He was interviewed by the

Australian immigration officers several times on Christmas Island, and eventually in an immigration detention house in Darwin, Australia. He was held for three months in Darwin after he confessed to being under the age of 18.

The Australian officials had a different way of determining his age – in Darwin, Andri had the palms of his hands and bottoms of his feet x-rayed to confirm his age. The result showed that he was an adult.

In March 2011, he was transferred to Silverwater Prison in Sydney. The prison holds Australian criminals and illegal immigrants, as well as adult boat crews from Indonesia.

Trials to determine his age were conducted through a video link during his time there.

Upon arrival, Andri had to stay in a dark room alone for ten days. After that, he was placed in Block 11, Port 8 with other Indonesians.

Unfortunately, there was a constant threat of being transferred from Block 11, Port 8, to Block 14. All the while, Andri was being treated as an adult and both blocks were designated to hold adults.

When he was eventually moved to Block 14, he met his Australian cellmate. "He offered me cigarettes, I took them. But when it was drugs, I refused," he admitted.

Andri was he was offered a job sewing blankets in the prison and was paid five Australian dollars, a good income in prison. The job didn't make his life easier though; he had to be searched several times by prison officers. The searches required him to remove all of his clothing and officers frequently mocked him for having small genitalia. He had no choice but to take it.

In July of 2011, the court confirmed that Andri was indeed underage. It was his ticket to freedom. Following the verdict, he was moved to an immigration prison in Villawood, Sydney in December of 2011, before he returned to Indonesia.

Indra's experience was similar. He was the same age as Andri when he was arrested by Australian border patrols in

December of 2010 for smuggling eight illegal immigrants. X-ray scans showed Indra's age was 18 to 19 years old.

He was transferred to Silverwater where was placed in a closed block for criminal prisoners, Darsi 1 and later Darsi 10. He spoke limited English which he used to communicate with fellow prisoners, including several Pakistani prisoners he met there. Speaking in a foreign language is what Indra remembers most, including the harsh words commonly used by Australian prisoners; "many swore 'fuck-fuck'."

Indra and the Pakistanis were able to join an English class, but Indra did not end up joining the class in favour of using other facilities available at the prison, including the library. He was unable to read much though, because all of the books were in English.

During his time at the immigration prison in Darwin, he was able to use a number of facilities including the library, sport facilities, arts and more. "I made an airbrushed shirt which I keep as a souvenir. For sports, they had a golf course, bowling, and more. It had complete facilities," he said.

His freedom was granted after the charges against him were withdrawn in December 2011 because Indra was underage. He was brought back to Indonesia through Bali, alongside Andri.

Indra remembers other underage boys from Indonesia

who are still being detained in Australia. He said that he was transferred to Darwin from Christmas Island together with three other underage children. "They called them 3 babies. It means there are Indonesian boys there," he explained.

Indra and Andri's lawyer, Lisa Hiariej, said there are still 36 children in prison in Australia. She is worried that these children are being detained as adults for an extended period.

Her concern encourages her to keep looking for information. She has actively protested the use of x-ray scans to determine age because that system has been frequently inaccurate.

"Andri and Indra were eventually released, although x-ray scans showed that they were adults. I pity them," she said.

The Indonesian Foreign Ministry didn't deny the presence of Indonesian children behind bars in Australia. Their records show a number of Indonesian children have been arrested in Australia. The government is currently making efforts to free them.

The Ministry confirmed that the Australian government also used boat crew documents to determine their ages. These documents include birth and school certificates.

"I can assure you that these documents are recognized. They tend to categorize those in gray ages such as 18 or 19 as children," said the Ministry's spokesperson, Michael Tene. ■



Children Fight Against Time

**Evi Tresnawati
and Aryo Bhawono**

Detik E-PAPER

**There are still childrent
forced to work hard.
They missed their
chance to study and are
paid little.**

Indra walked fast past slippery puddles at Muara Angke port, Jakarta. He carried a barrel full of fish and ice in his arms.

In 2006, he started to work as a crew member on 'pelele' boat; a small fishing boat. At that time, he wasn't yet 15 years old but he was already a registered member of the boat crew. The boat can carry four to five passengers, including the captain. Indra wasn't the only child at that time; he had a friend working on a boat who was about 13 years old.

His boat is different than the regular boats. It is a moderate size at 17 meters long, and its maximum cargo capacity is 15 tones.

The boat carries fish from Sumatra to Jakarta. "My job is to carry fish barrels with ice, and to put the fish into crates and move them manually," he said.

His presence is illegal because as crew, he has a heavy job which children are not allowed to perform.. He carried dozens of kilos manually onto the boat.

The shipping industry, in fact, often uses underage workers, as well as the fishing industry.

Indra could get past the application of labour law No.13 of 2003 as there are special conditions to hire children, but he violates the provision on the worst forms of child labour (WFCL) which

governs, among others, slavery, child prostitution and abuse of children in illegal activities.

Detik magazine's investigation reveals that child labour in the shipping industry is often overlooked because it is committed by small shipping companies.

A boat crew based in Muara Angke, Sahroni, said it is easy to become a crew member. Boat owners usually don't pay attention to age and only require swimming skills.

The salary is low, around Rp.500.000 per trip, and the journey takes 3 to 4 days. Children are often in this role.

"They work as porters while I usually work on the engines," he explained.

There are dozens of similar boats in Muara Angke. Child workers receive the same salary and workload as adults.

The use of children by fishing boat owners is to fill jobs that don't require specific skills, but they are usually required to learn how to drive the boat.

The National Commission for Child Protection (Komnas PA) found that the use of child workers in shipping is not limited to Jakarta-based cargo companies. Fishermen's children in Rote Island in East Nusa Tenggara are also being used as child workers.

Such abuse, however, is not as bad as in Muara Angke. Chairman of the Commission, Arist Merdeka Sirait, commented on data on fishermen's children working in cargo kitchens. Kitchen work is not heavy but

children need time to study.

"We received this data from a pastor there. It is usually seasonal. When there are fewer fish, fishermen don't go to sea," he explained.

Confessions about the presence of child workers in the shipping industry indicate the existence of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL). However, the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s data shows a decrease in the number of child workers in Indonesia in 2010.



Their survey shows Indonesia had approximately 1.5 million child workers in 2010, while in 2009, there were 1.8 million child workers between 10 and 17 years old. This represents a 4.3 per cent decrease.

In 2012, the Ministry of Manpower managed to enroll 10,750 child workers into school. The Ministry of Transportation confirmed that boat operators have a strict requirement for their crews and they must have a safety

certificate, so the recruitment of children would be difficult.

However, monitoring fish boats is a challenge. Pelele boats are small and the Ministry of Transportation considers them to fall under the supervision of The Ministry of Maritime and Fisheries (KKP). Pelele boats are fishing boats.

"KKP monitors these small boats. They come and go through the fishery port," he explained. KKP stated that the Ministry of Transportation should conduct

a more intensive monitoring of labour standards on the boats. KKP focuses on monitoring the contents of the boats, i.e., fish. The Head of KKP's communication center, Indra Sakti, said crew documents have been checked but so far, no child crews have been found.

"There are multiple documents to check, and the Ministry of Transportation should also monitor this issue," he explained. ■



Heart Breaking Stories of Child Workers in Domestic Roles

Adhitya Himawan

Media Pembaruan Magazine

A simple house located at Jalan Sagu Gang Gajen no. 52, Jagakarsa, South Jakarta, is full of the jokes and laughter of the girls living there. They are child domestic workers (CDWs) who are busy in the kitchen. When Media Pembaruan arrived at the house with the LPK Mitra Utama signboard out front, a cozy atmosphere with birds chirping in cages greeted us. LPK Mitra Utama is a recruitment agency, training provider and distributor of babysitters and domestic workers.

"Please, come in," said a long-haired man, inviting a Media Pembaruan representative to have a seat. Soon after, Mashudi, Chairman of the All-Indonesian Association for Training and Placement of Domestic Workers (APPSI), came in with soft drinks. Over a cold beverage, Media Pembaruan had a relaxed conversation with Siti Lestari (17), a CDW.

Siti told us of her sadness and her happiness. "I stay here because I don't want to go back to my boss's house in Ancol. Last Lebaran holiday, I asked permission to go back to my hometown but my boss said if I went home, I could not go again next year. I don't want to work there anymore," she said sadly. Siti went on to tell us that when she was working those six months in Ancol, North Jakarta, she had almost no freedom. "They never allowed me to go out for a walk, even for a little while. My boss said they were worried that I would be hypnotized. I couldn't even chat with the neighbour's domestic workers," said the girl, originally from Lampung, Sumatra.

Similar to other CDWs, her reason for working is poverty. "I want to help my parents. They are farmers. They work other people's farmland. During harvest time,

they share the profit," explained Siti, when asked about her family background and her reason to work as a CDW.

Unfortunately, with only a Rp. 700.000 salary per month, she cannot give much to her parents. Her monthly salary was not even paid in full every month. "I only received Rp. 300.000 for the first month. The Mitra Amanda foundation took the remaining Rp. 400.000. They said the cost for of the agency was Rp.200.000 for the mediator and Rp. 100.000 for the person who picked me up, and I don't know about the remaining Rp.100.000. They only asked me to sign. The following months, I only received Rp.400.000 and my boss kept the rest. When asked about it, they gave me only Rp. 200.000. Only when I wanted to back to my hometown did they give me Rp. 400.000," Siti explained.

Khusnul Khotimah, 17, a CDW from Purworerojo, Central Java has a different story. Ima, as she is usually called, worked for her mother's distant cousin. Ima was luckier than Siti, she received a one million rupiah salary per month. "My salary was good. I received monthly pay and daily allowance. Every month, I received Rp. 400.000, and every day I received Rp. 20.000 in allowance," she told Media Pemberuan in Kranji, Bekasi.

Similar to Siti, however, Ima seldom received her salary in full every month. "I wish I could have gotten more, but that's what I received. I didn't receive my Rp.

400.000 monthly salary. My boss said I would get it when I needed it. He only gave me Rp. 20.000 per day," said Ima.

She could only take her monthly salary when she wanted to send some money to her parents, but she could not do it every month. Ima could only send money when her employer's relatives came to visit them from their village – Ima and her employer come from the same village in Purworejo.

Like Siti, Ima became a CDW for economic reasons. Poverty forced her to forget about her dreams. "Actually, I wanted to become an elementary school teacher but when I graduated from my junior high school, we didn't have money. My parents are farmers and they don't earn much. So I thought, it's better for me to work and earn money."

Fortunately, Ima did not give up easily. Despite her current job, she is also completing her Package C in the Communal Learning Center (PKBM) in Bekasi. The high cost of university keeps her from continuing her studies past the Communal Learning Center and becoming a teacher, and she tells us, "Actually, I like going to college but it costs money. My earnings do not support further studies so I decided not to think about it," said Ima sadly.

When a sewing training center opened for CDWs near her employer's house, Ima asked permission from her employer to join the course. Her employer supported it so that someday she could start her own business. "My

boss said it's better for me to start a business than to be a teacher. If I have some money, I'd rather open a business. Then I found out that there was an ILO training, so I joined the course here. Someday, I would like to open my own boutique," she said shyly. The sewing course she joined was a collaboration between the instructor, Mrs. Napsiah, the Mitra ImaDei Foundation, and the ILO.

Mashudi, Chairman of APPSI, said poverty, which is still a serious issue in Indonesia, will lead to more CDWs like Siti and Ima in the future. He told Media Pemberuan that the 15-18 year old domestic worker phenomena will be difficult to eliminate. According to Mashudi, recruitment of CDWs still has high economic potential. "The economic potential of CDWs is 30 per cent, which is high," he said.

In addition, he added, poverty is a major problem that forces many girls to work as CDWs instead of continuing their studies into senior high school. "If they are asked to go back to school, who would pay for that? We know it is categorized as a WFCL. That's why we place them with recognized service users, as we know what kind of job they will do. Children 15 to 18 years old should not be allowed to babysit or cook. They should only clean the house and wash clothes. We explain the job criteria to users," he said, resting back in his chair.

Furthermore, he said, we have ambiguous laws. "It is difficult for us to refer to the law.

Are domestic workers governed in Labour Law no. 13 of 2003? If so, then we should refer to it, but agencies (labour suppliers) follow articles of the law selectively. For example, they follow the article on age, but do not use other articles as references to better understand what is allowed. The ILO Convention No.138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Work, which has been ratified into Law No.20 of 1999, clearly states that the minimum age for work is 15 years old. The law is very clear. Labour Law No.13 of 2003 states that 15 to 18 year old children are allowed to work, but Law No.23 of 2002 on Child Protection says children are those who are under 18 years old. So the laws are overlapping," he said in confusion.

As a solution, Mashudi and other suppliers of DWs under APPSI issued a special policy concerning CDWs. "First, we usually place them in households known to us. Second, they must have a clear job description. Children of 15 to 18 years old are not allowed to babysit or cook, so they only clean the house and wash clothes. We explain the criteria to users. Our reason is because babysitting is very risky; they are still young so we don't want to take the risk. In terms of cooking, they are not good at it yet anyway so users would not get any advantage out of them."

The time has come for the government and the House of Representatives to pass laws on domestic workers to provide legal protection for DWs and CDWs. ■



Realizing CDW's Dreams through Sewing Class

Adhitya Himawan
Media Pembaruan Magazine

The atmosphere in "Sanggar Belajar Masa Depan Pekerja Rumah Tangga Anak (PRTA) or Learning Studio for the Future of Child Domestic Workers (CDWs) in Kranji" at Jalan Banteng no. 18, RT/RW 01/11 Kranji, West Bekasi was full of laughter. Several mothers and girls were sitting and chatting. There were round and rectangle trays on a desk in front of them; they were apparently CDWs who learned how to make brooches.

"In this studio, they learn to sew, make beads, brooches, etc... We started this program in 2009

and now we are collaborating with the ILO. At first, (we held this activity) in Harapan Mulia, but since we could reach the target number of CDWs, we moved to Kranji," Inke Maris Purba, an activist from the Mitra ImaDei NGO, told Media Pembaruan.

Inke said the reason Mitra ImaDei chose a sewing course is because the program provides better prospects for CDWs. "Most CDWs choose sewing because they can open their own sewing business in the future. It does not require much capital and it is easier for them. We can't



force them to go back to school because they are no longer interested.”

After moving to Kranji in 2011, Mitra ImaDei had to finance the sewing course. Fortunately, they managed to borrow Mrs. Napsiah’s space to conduct the program.

“Come on girls. Take out your books. Write your own body measurement in the book so you can wear what you make when you’re done,” said Mrs. Napsiah to the CDWs. While teaching, Napsiah explained the course to Media Pembaruan. “At first, they

learn to sew. Making brooches is a variation so that they don’t get bored. Sometimes they make beads and bows,” said Mrs. Napsiah while monitoring the work of the students. Mrs. Napsiah believes her sewing studio could fulfill the future needs of CDW’s. “Sewing is something that you can do even when you are old. Money will always come to you.”

Mrs. Napsiah allocates time on Sundays to teach sewing skills to CDWs. On weekdays, she and her five staff members run the sewing business as usual.

Mrs. Napsiah told us that she received an invitation to collaborate with Mitra ImaDei and the ILO. “At that time, an official from the sub-district secretariat visited me and we developed a contract with the ILO, funded by Mitra ImaDei. I tried very hard to reach a target of 50 CDWs. I went to villages to spread the word about it,” she said. So far, 17 CDWs have participated in the program. Based on Media Pembaruan’s observation, the learning process was rather slow because some of them were taking the course for the first time.

It seems that all CDWs are eager to learn. They understand that the sewing course could be a way out of poverty. Khusnul Khotimah (17) of Purworejo, Central Java expressed this to Media Pembaruan. She hopes that she won’t be a domestic worker forever. “My dream is to become a teacher but I need money to continue my studies. Besides, my employer said it is better to open a business than

to be a teacher. That’s why I joined the sewing course,” said the girl who goes by Ima.

Similar efforts were also made by Jala PRT, an advocacy network at the national level established in July of 2004. Jala PRT consists of 26 NGOs and several individuals who care about DW’s protection. It established the Rumpun Alternative School for DWs in Yogyakarta. “The program’s development took place from July 2003 to February 2006. So far, we have 8 programs. The total number of participants in the programs is 267 people, with an average number of 15 to 30 people per program. Most of them are junior high school graduates, so some are still children,” explained Lita Anggraini, Coordinator of Jala PRT, to Media Pembaruan.

DWs and CDWs can learn many things at the Rumpun Alternative School. Lessons given include general skills like driving, English, computers, basic health care, and domestic management. In addition, they also have minor subjects such as theater, music and sports. There are also vocational subjects like domesticity, home-based nursing and babysitting.

What sets it apart is that in addition to teaching practical skills, Rumpun Alternative School also raises awareness for domestic workers; that like other human beings, they also have the right to protection and recognition. Subjects include gender equality: domestic workers as women, citizen workers, and citizens of the world. In addition, there are

also subjects on children's rights and healthy reproduction, and subjects on litigation and non-litigation advocacy, policy advocacy and organizing campaigns.

Lita said that she is satisfied with achievements of the Rumpun Alternative School. "The Local Manpower Office in Yogyakarta and the provincial government of Yogyakarta consider our work contracts and standard protection requirements as models in establishing good working relations between employers and domestic workers in order to create better working conditions for women domestic workers, particularly in Yogyakarta," she said.

Looking at what Sanggar Jahit PRTA and Rumpun School have already achieved in the area of CDWs, we should be hopeful because there are parties out there who care about the future of CDWs. Poverty should not continue to impede CDWs efforts to have a better life. Perhaps the time has come for the government to pay attention and help small enterprises like Mrs. Napsiah's business or alternative schools in order to develop CDWs potential.

Employer's Slight Hope for CDWs

Issues pertaining to children domestic workers (CDWs) are rarely made public. It is different than factory workers who are frequently highlighted by mass media when they have public demonstrations. Reports on CDWs are rare, almost nonexistent.

In Indonesia, girls usually start working as CDWs at 12 years old. The minimum age required to work, however, is 15 years old. They are recruited by future employers,

He said lately, the demand has shifted to experienced DWs. "People used to look for cheap DWs. But now, the salaries for CDWs and experienced DWs are



friends, relatives or labour suppliers from remote or poor regions to work in big cities. The users prefer to hire children because they are cheaper than the adults, and easier to control. They rely on their employers and cannot escape.

Mashudi, Chairman of the Indonesian Association for Training and Placement of Domestic Workers (APPSI), confirmed this to be true. "The reason for the selection of children is because these CDWs hardly know Jakarta, so they are easier to control. Their salaries are lower than an adult salary although not by much, perhaps by only Rp. 100.000 to Rp. 200.000. There used to be a big difference, but now the demand for CDWs is not as high as before," Mashudi told Media Pembaruan in LPK Mitra Utama's office.

almost the same. The salary of a CDW is now up to Rp. 800.000, while that of an experienced DW is Rp. 900.000 to one million. We increased it to encourage people to hire adult DWs," he added.

Maria Yohanista Djou, the Head of the Mitra ImaDei secretariat, has a different opinion. Maria believes that girls have a tendency to prefer work in factories than as CDWs. "I doubt if we have more CDWs now that we used to. We went to a location where we were told there were many CDWs, but it was difficult to find one. We have to evaluate our data. We visited many areas, but the workers we met were all at least 18 years old. Many young girls refused to work as DWs, preferring instead to work in factories. Sometimes they will

work as CDWs temporarily, as a stepping stone. Once they have a chance to work in a factory, they will move," Maria told Media Pamburuan in Jakarta.

If Mashudi and Maria's opinions are true, this would represent a positive step as DWs in Indonesia have historically not been considered workers. As a result, they are not protected by national labour laws which guarantee workers' basic rights to a minimum wage, overtime money, permissible maximum working hours and social security, among other benefits. Therefore, DWs are in a very weak position. According to ILO data, there are 2,6 million DWs in Indonesia and at least 688.132 of them are girls under 18, or CDWs.

Fortunately, some employers are willing to help develop the skills of their CDWs. Media Pamburuan met some of them in the Sanggar Belajar Masa Depan PRTA in Kranji on a Sunday in September. Some employers even brought their CDWs to the sewing courses themselves. One of them is Lina Marlina, 38; she works for a shirt printing factory in Bekasi and takes her domestic worker, Rosita, 18, to the studio to learn how to sew.

"I brought Rosita here yesterday because I only found out about this recently," Lina told Media Pamburuan shyly. She hopes that by joining this course, Rosita can someday start her own business. "I don't want her to be DW forever. That's why I encourage her to move forward.

If I didn't bring her, she wouldn't have known about this opportunity. She has only graduated from elementary school so hopefully someday, when her sewing business is up and running, she can use her money to pay for more studies," she said.

Lina admitted that her concern for Rosita is likely because they are related. "We are related. She is my cousin's daughter. She has lived with me since 2001 because her family's house is in a remote area in Tangerang," she explained.

Siti Wahyono, 68, expressed similar hopes. The retired civil servant from the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration took her CDW to the course so that she could develop skills and move forward. "I found out about it when I was applying for an early childhood education (PAUD) in the village office. Mrs. Napsiah approached me and gave me a brochure on sewing training for child domestic workers. I thought it sounded like a good program so I took my CDW, Hayati, and Suheti, my neighbour's CDW to participate. I told my neighbour that these children shouldn't work as DWs forever. They will get married someday and they should have something else to do for a living. After all, the course is free," she said enthusiastically.

Due to weak protection from the state for CDWs, their employers' care and attention is crucial. CDWs tend to have a low self-esteem, therefore their employers' motivation will help them to gain the confidence they

need to learn and develop. "There is a strong impression that these children have a low self-esteem. During the first meeting, it is often very difficult to ask them questions, or encourage them to follow the process. They are quiet, shy and lack confidence, even among their friends. They can not express their feelings because they are used to being quiet, and told what to do. They always put themselves below other children," said Maria.

However, we cannot depend on employers' kindness to resolve the CDW issues. There needs to be a strong legal framework protecting domestic workers, including CDWs. This is why a law on domestic workers is very important. Maria recounted the details of a meeting on this topic that she attended with Commission XI of the House of Representatives to discuss and draft a law on domestic workers. She suggested a regulation implementing a five year transition period to stop the recruitment of CDWs. "If they are already working, then so be it because if we return them to their families, their families wouldn't support them. In the discussion, there was a suggestion to prolong the transition period to 20 years, and to delay implementation. That is unreasonable. There has to be a transition period starting instantly. But with that, there is still a possibility that new children will be recruited. After the transition period elapses, there should not be any recruitment of CDWs."

So what are you waiting for, Representatives? Please pass the DW bill! ■



The True Sole of Indonesia's Child Laborers

Grace Susetyo

Jakarta GLOBE

Fans of the classic Brothers Grimm fairy tales may remember the story of "The Elves and the Shoemaker."

It was the tale of a humble shoemaker and his wife who struggled with business until mysterious elves came to help in the middle of the night. The elves made fancy shoes and the couple became the richest shoemakers in the country.



And while the story is more than 200 years old, it still rings true, especially when looking at today's fashion industry.

Flip through a magazine, watch a fashion show or stroll through a mall and you will probably see the latest collection of fancy shoes, venerated as objects of envy, even status symbols. Some fashionistas say, "there's no such thing as too many shoes."

While most of us have at least a few pairs of shoes in our closets, how often do we actually think about who made them? Renowned brands and famed designers come to mind, and we assume there's big money for everyone in the business. To many people, it seems shoes simply appear in

shops for us to purchase and take home — they might as well be made by elves.

In the not-so-faraway land of West Java is a backyard of Southeast Asia's fashion industry where elves are indeed at work. Only they're not the fairy-dusted kind that disappear with the moonbeams at daybreak. They're called child laborers. And their lives are definitely no fairy tale.

Learning the family trade

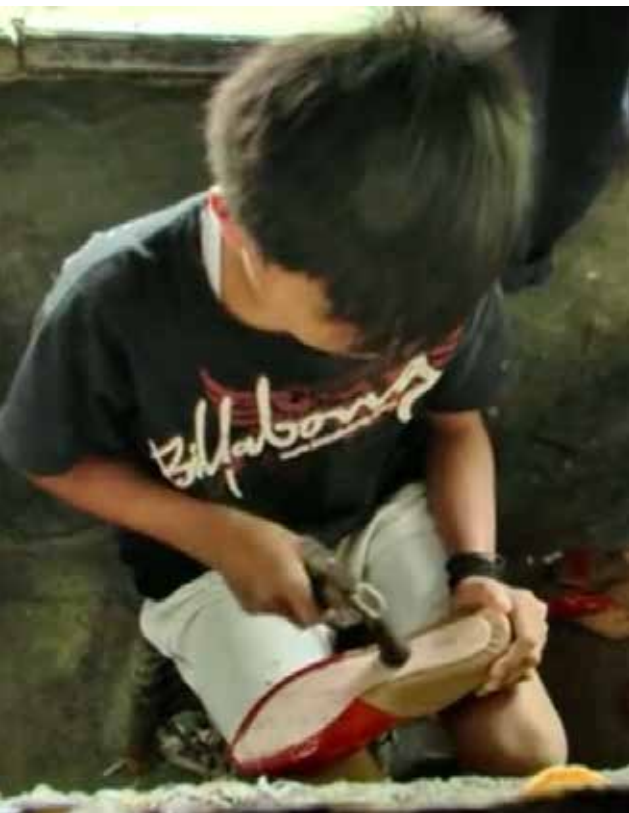
In a beautiful village in the outskirts of Bogor lives Demung, a 14-year-old shoemaker who has been in the trade for three years. Demung dropped out of 4th grade five years ago for "economic reasons." In a barely furnished, unplastered two-bedroom house with no running water, Demung lives with his parents, grandparents, 20-year-old uncle, two teenage aunts and 11-year-old sister. Demung's father, grandfather and uncle are shoemakers, too. His mother and grandmother are domestic helpers, and his 17-year-old aunt is a factory laborer.

Demung's sister, Erna, is in 5th grade. Most children in their community drop out around this age, but Demung hopes that Erna will finish high school. The teenager initially said he had no desire to go back to school, but later admitted, "I would have loved to continue my studies if my family could afford it. But since it's been too long, I'd better do my job well so that I can someday help put my sister through school."

At 8 a.m. on any Monday morning, Demung and his father make their kilometer-long walk to their boss's workshop. It would be the start to a six-day work week of 54 to 100 hours. The father-son team make 10 to 20 pairs of shoes per day.

A hazardous environment

Entering the workshop, the atmosphere is actually friendly. Yuli, the owner, inherited the workshop from his father and has worked as a shoemaker since childhood before making his way to become a trusted supplier for a well known Southeast Asian fashion brand and a famous



Indonesian designer. Yuli and his employees seem to get along well. His wife was serving the employees coffee.

Despite the likable human dynamics, the strong scents of glue, gasoline and other chemicals are hard to ignore — and this workshop ranks among the better-ventilated ones. Still, it's hard to imagine how anyone could spend every day inhaling these chemicals to make a living.

"I used to get headaches when I entered a workshop," said Demung, recalling his first days as a shoemaker at age 11. "Masks should be worn in a workshop, but they're hardly available here. Even then, I'd have to buy them with my own money."

The spinning sewing machine is the workshop's constant soundtrack. The sharp tools of shoemaking — hammers, nails and sculpting

knives — are definitely not suitable for children to use.

"I once got injured while sculpting the sole of a shoe. I cut myself. I was treated with iodine. It took a week to heal, and I kept working in the meantime," Demung said.

Footwear workshops are usually the busiest around Ramadan, because many people want new shoes for Idul Fitri. During this time, Demung often works until 10 p.m. and sometimes until 2 a.m. In August, Demung spent the holidays sick in bed from being overworked.

A neglected cause

Child labor exists because communities don't think it's a serious problem and there is demand in the market.

"Consumers don't think about whether their shoes are made by children," Demung said. "All they care about is that the shoes are of good quality and affordable. Whether the minors who make them can go to school or have to give that up for work, that's the government's problem."

Some consumers are even amused when posed with the idea that their shoes might be made by children.

"What a clever child! Now I want to learn how to make my own shoes," laughed Dhea, a mall shopper. "But maybe it's just the way it is. Those who can't afford to go to school can get into the shoemaking business. Isn't it good for them, to become independent at an early age?"

The International Labour Organization differentiates the "child laborer" from the "working child." In developed countries, many high school students earn pocket money by working part time in supermarkets or restaurants. The child laborer, in contrast, is a minor who spends more than four hours a day at work — or any time at all doing hazardous work — and has to give up education, rest and recreation.

Most village officials in Ciomas admit that they have teenagers at school who "help their parents" run a footwear workshop, but balk when asked to be introduced to an individual. None of the

villages surveyed have data on child labor in their famous footwear industry because shoemaking is considered informal work.

Even the ILO's latest data is from 2006, the year it finished a child labor eradication project in Ciomas. The ILO concluded that there was a "negligible" number of minors working in the footwear industry.

The truth is, while child laborers only make up a minority of shoemakers in Ciomas, they are still common among financially struggling families.

Asked why he employs a child laborer, Yuli said: "Not a child, but a teenager. Most start by observing shoemaking friends. One friend attends school, the other works. The teenager compares and becomes interested in shoemaking."

At the end of the week, Demung and his father, Odi, take home a joint wage of Rp 150,000 (\$15). If Rp 150,000 is the price of one pair of shoes, and Demung and Odi make 60 pairs a week, then they only take home less than 2 percent of the money made in the supply chain — a conservative estimate.

Odi said that he's proud to have his hard-working son follow in his footsteps. Demung's

mother Susi, though, had something else to say. "I look at other children his age and think, he should be in school. I'm sorry to see him work with his father, leaving early in the morning, coming home at 10 p.m. or 2 a.m.," she said, choking back tears. "Someday, Demung wants to build a house. He wants to provide for his sister's, and later, his future children's education."

Happily ever after?

Most people assume that education is the solution to child labor. After all, school children from affluent families don't become child laborers like Demung.

However, many neighbors in the community complained that even if school tuition fees were free, surprise expenses such as books and uniforms are still troublesome. Demung and his parents' total monthly wages amount to Rp 900,000 per month, most of which they spend on rice. Even protein and vegetables are luxuries on such an income, let alone an education.

"If the government made school compulsory for kids my age, I think that would make my family suffer. Who would help us make ends meet if I didn't



work? And would it be possible for this 14-year-old to go back to elementary school?" Demung said.

Achmad Marzuki, executive director of the Network of Indonesian Child Labor NGOs (Jarak), said the reasons why children in Ciomas drop out of school has little to do with tuition fees. Rather, it was because the national education system accommodated neither the needs of working children, nor the more immediate financial needs of the family.

In order to break the vicious cycle of poverty and exploitation that traps child laborers, schools in Ciomas need to prepare the youth for the local job market, but in a way that they could someday work their way out of manual labor into white collar jobs, such as footwear design, marketing and entrepreneurship.

"Government-run vocational training centers in Ciomas provide sewing, embroidery and welding programs. It makes no sense to the local situation, and the government should know better," Marzuki said.

Marzuki added that in order for school attendance to increase among working children,

schools should offer flexible hours, be easily accessible from children's homes and provide practical skills to solve day-to-day problems such as money management, labor rights and health care.

Having the government implement policies to eradicate child labor is one way to begin solving the problem. Another part of the equation is sparking a consumer push for fair trade footwear. This includes fair pay, the exclusion of children from hazardous work, safety precautions for adults doing hazardous work and providing the children of employees with proper education. Another way is the refusal to buy products from companies that treat their workers otherwise, and speaking up about the footwear industry's injustices.

Will Demung have his happily ever after? A house built from his hard-earned cash, attending Erna's graduation?

The moonbeams dissolve with the Tuesday dawn, and the shoemaker's elf prepares for another laborious day in the workshop. The shoemaker boss and his wife are yet to be rich and famous, and it looks like their elf has to wait even longer. ■

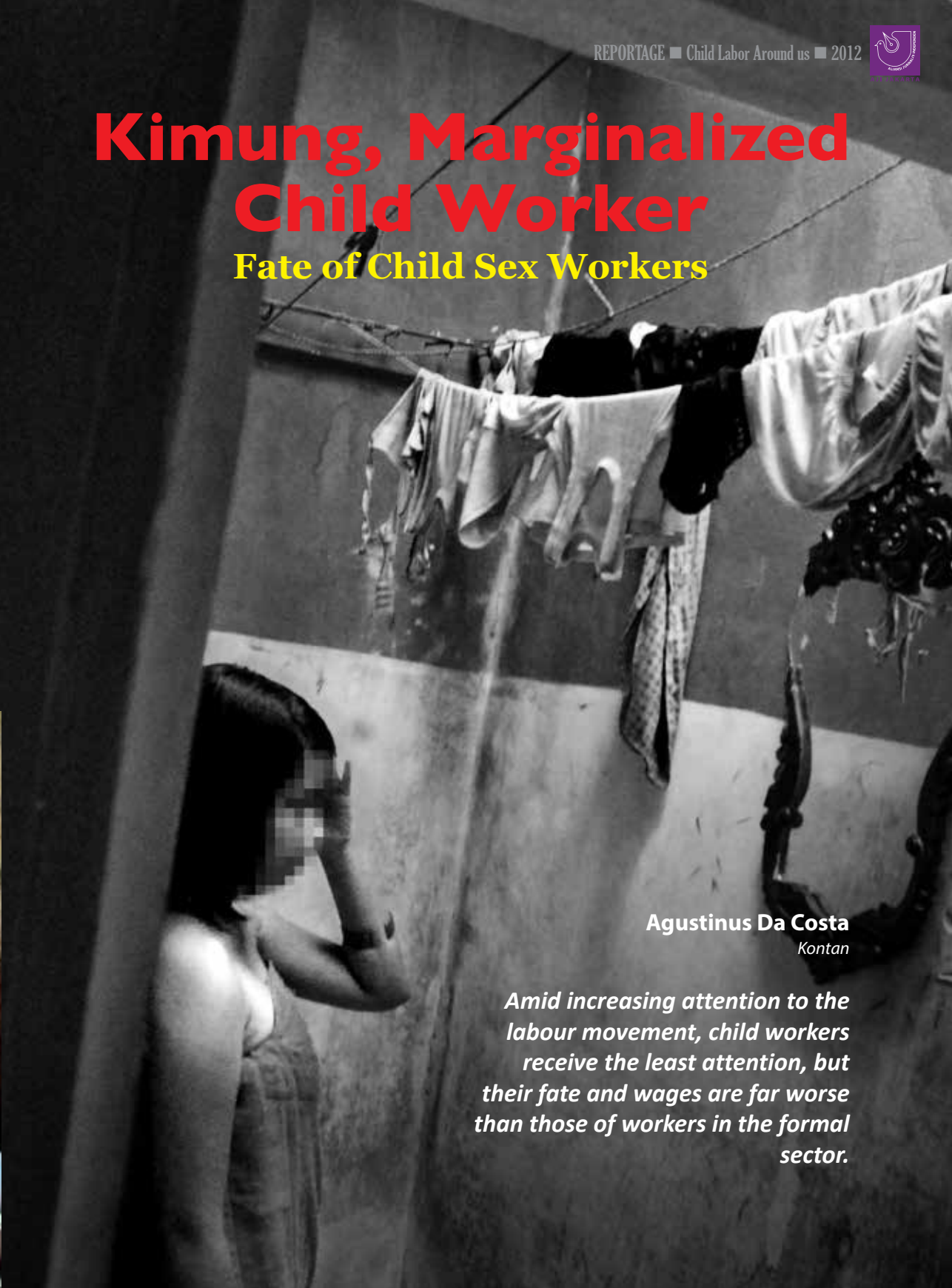


Kimung, Marginalized Child Worker

Fate of Child Sex Workers

Agustinus Da Costa
Kontan

Amid increasing attention to the labour movement, child workers receive the least attention, but their fate and wages are far worse than those of workers in the formal sector.





It was nearly 1am, near cafes along Cilincing beach in North Jakarta. People call this place Kojem, or under the bridge. This location is near a fishermen's village, Cilincing, Tanjung Priok.

A 15 year old girl, Kimung (not her real name) was still awake. She spent the night listening to loud music beside dozens of men smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol. "I should have been at home studying for school tomorrow, and not selling myself there," she said.

Kimung works at Primadona Café, situated by the seaside in Kojem. Her father is originally from Makassar and works as a fisherman. Her mother is housewife originally from Brebes. Kimung has a younger brother who is 12 and doesn't go to school anymore.

From her job, Kimung gets Rp.200.000 per month. She also receives additional income from guests' tips and 'bottle money'. Usually, guests give her Rp.100.000 to Rp.200.000 as a tip, while bottle money is a bonus based on the number of bottles her

guests drink. Kimung receives Rp1.000 per bottle.

Kimung often accompanies her guests to a hotel room near the café. She usually serves two to three guests per night. "Work here is tiring," she said.

Kimung has been working in the café for a year. She leaves for work at 18:00 and returns home at 03:00am everyday. She wanted to quit working but poverty and her family's debt to Mami Ijah, the café owner, keep her from doing so. Each month, her family must pay Rp.350.000 in rent for their house.

After work, she doesn't go straight to bed but instead helps her mother cook and wash dishes. She can only sleep when morning comes.

None of her friends or former teachers from her previous junior high school knows that Kimung works at a nightclub. When her friends and teachers asked her about dropping out of school, she told them that she's not studying anymore to stay home and help out.

Kimung is one of thousands of child workers in Indonesia. Her fate and rights are neglected amid the massive labour movement demanding better wages and the abolition of outsourcing practices.

The Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration's data in 2012 shows there are 1,7 million child workers. The ILO's data in 2008, however, shows more than 4 million children age 5-17 years old doing hazardous types of works.

Some of them are sex workers. It is estimated that children represent upwards of 30% of all sex workers in Indonesia (180,000 sex workers).

Azizah, Director of the Children and Women Foundation, said girls who work as prostitutes and in nightclubs are forced to work due to family poverty. In many cases, children have been sold to pimps. She confirmed that nearly 80 per cent of girls working in nightclubs in North Jakarta provide sex services.

Ivon da Gomez of the Icodesa Institute, who once advocated on behalf of child sex workers in the Rawa Malang area, added that there is a culture in certain areas which considers sex work to be a normal profession, as it increases the buying power of those who benefit. For this reason, children are allowed to work as prostitutes. "They are used to having a lot of money and living a high-consumption lifestyle," said Ivon.

The other reason is education. Executive Director of Sekolah Tanpa Batas, Bambang P. Wisudo, claimed that Indonesia's national education policy doesn't support poor people. "Our education system discriminates against poor children, and only supports bright and wealthy children."

Unfortunately, labour movements do not advocate for child labour issues. Chairman of the Workers and Labourers Council, Said Abdulah, admitted that so far the labour movement and trade unions have done little to ensure the protection of workers in informal sectors.

He said it is because organization around, and understanding of, informal workers' rights is not strong. "Understanding and recognizing what they should have is still uncommon, particularly when it

comes to policy."

In addition, problems in the informal sector are far more complicated. In the future, he hopes labour movements and labour unions will pay attention to informal workers, and advocate on their behalf.

The government claims that they have not been idle on this issue. The Head of the Supervision Sub-Unit of Child Labour Norms under the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, Hendra Rahman, says that his unit works to remove children from their workplaces and return them to school. After they are initially taken out of the workplace, they are provided with a home and basic training in shelters run by partner NGOs.

These children are then handed over to their local government to be accommodated in long term shelters. In collaboration with the Local Education and Culture Office, they are then returned to formal and informal schools, and receive skills education.

The government has also developed economic empowerment programs for their parents and families through the Keluarga Harapan program, with the goal that their caretakers will become self-sufficient and not force their children to work.

In 2013, the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration developed a program to eliminate underage workers. The program includes monitoring, social aids, training and socialization.

Hendra asserted that children must be in school, and now there are many free education options available to them. "So we need to raise awareness for prevention and law enforcement," he said.

Ivon da Gomez is looking forward to a better approach to raising awareness about children trapped in prostitution. She believes that awareness raising is often more effective than repatriating the children to school.

She hopes there will not be anymore girls trapped in Kimung's situation. "If I can get back to school, I want to become a stewardess," said Kimung. ■

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