

Chapter 7

Alam Endah: Rural Camelot in West Java—A Case Study of Empowerment and Integrated Rural Development



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Abstract The chapter highlights the way in which a West Javan village succeeds in creating job opportunities in line with the recent policy initiative of President Jokowi which states that each village should develop an enterprise. The business council in the village, largely patriarchal, and the success of the enterprise are underwritten by the voluntary work of women and young people organized through the local *pesantren* (A *pesantren* is a secondary-level Islamic boarding school). The village acts as an example for the region which faces many challenges. The chapter details power dynamics and the important enabling role of the *pesantren* in the survival strategies of the local community. The disadvantage generated by the local patriarchal and hierarchical social structure is also explored. The chapter analyses the findings from research conducted in West Java as part of transformative research led by the following: Centre for Decentralization and Participatory Development Research, Universitas Padjadjaran (UnPad) led by Widianingsih located in Bandung, West Java, in collaboration with Flinders University (Resilience Institute, Humanities and Social Sciences, Business Government and Law) located in South Australia. The universities in turn collaborate with the Indonesian Diaspora. The Diaspora network is closely supported by Pak Rudolf Wirawan of Wirasoft (Who has been working at IBM full-time for more than 10 years). We use transformative mixed methods praxis to address the problem of land loss, urbanization and vulnerability.

Keywords Rural development · Gender · Empowerment · Vocational training · Integrated development · One village one enterprise

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Introduction

The aim of the research outlined in this chapter and the next is to explore the life chances of rural people living in the Cibodas, Cianjur and Ciwidey region of West Java. This case study is an extension of research undertaken as part of a project called: ‘Living Virtuously and Well’ which comprised a pilot study based on focus groups in the region.¹

This chapter focuses on a case study of one village within this wider region and demonstrates how not to get ‘lost in the city’. It identifies opportunities for sustainable living within the region. But it also underscores the fact that the success of the ventures in this study is supported by strong community networks and perhaps most importantly the voluntary work of both the young people and the women living in the community. The focus on wicked problems addresses themes raised by the Mixed Methods International Research Association task force report as reported by Mertens et al. (2016). The paper explores examples of how research can support communities to address the risks associated with human trafficking in an ecologically rich region. Social, economic and environmental resilience strategies around commercial plantations, communal and household gardens are explored in the next chapter. Examples of productive and reproductive labour, double and triple workload, decision-making, value chain challenges and responses through gender mainstreaming and community empowerment are discussed. We use qualitative focus groups with key stakeholders, in-depth interviews, ethnographic insights of the leader of Indonesian Women’s Empowerment (PKK) and the analysis of publically available statistical data. This informs improved policy development as well as offering suggestions for moving towards the enhancement of governance opportunities for women including greater social inclusion in key decision-making roles.

The meaning of Alam Endah, the name of the village, is ‘natural beauty,’ and most of the participants in the focus group and interviews stressed how much the village, nestled on the side of the mountains, meant to the residents. Nearby there are tourist attractions which provide a commercial outlet for the enterprise endeavours of the village community. First, there is the volcano named *Kawah Putih* (White Crater) and is regarded with awe by the locals because when birds flew over, they dropped from the sky because of the sulphur fumes. Nevertheless, the White Crater has not erupted in 200 years and is a very popular location to visit for local eco-tourists, while the volcanic soil has made the entire region a productive food basket. Second is the deer sanctuary which is visited regularly by busloads of tourists from Bandung, thanks to the new road built by the Jokowi government now making the area a popular weekend retreat. The mountain on which the park rests is called *Patuha* Mountain or ‘Grandfather Mountain’ and is regarded as an important spiritual presence protecting the area (Figs. 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3).

¹The research, entitled ‘Living Virtuously and Well’, has ethics approval from the Human Ethics Committee at Flinders University. Ethics approval number 7213.



Fig. 7.1 Raising awareness to conserve and protect the forest



Fig. 7.2 Feeding deer provides a tourism attraction and ensures the sustainability of the deer



Fig. 7.3 Visiting the crater and viewing the landscape raises people's awareness of the importance of the natural environment and the vulnerability of human beings

Important within this socio-geographic scenario is an identifiable potential for increased weekend trade through eco-tourism which has led to a concomitant rise in commercial economic returns and property values in the region. This is an example of how sustainable rural urban linkages can be achieved through the development of local infrastructure (such as road construction to connect rural and regional city hubs) can create marketable opportunities in which agribusiness and tourism create a sustainable commercial future for the entire population. In the case of Alam Endah, the majority of the population have no desire to leave because it is one of the most prosperous communities in the area. It is also a very beautiful place with a strong sense of community.

Area of Concern: Prospering of Value Chain Through Social Capital

The entrepreneurial endeavours of Alam Endah arose out of the 2014 presidential decree which required all villages to establish local government sponsored economic activities owned and run by the local authority for the benefit of the community. This presented a challenge to all villages but most especially those with limited natural resources. This was not a problem for the village of Alam Endah which rose to the challenge establishing many local enterprises and developed community

infrastructure through successful fundraising. In line with the Presidential Decree 140/KEP 10 DESA, the head of the village council appointed a management committee to oversee the enterprise. Fundraising within the village over a few months helped to fund the building of a new road and a large local mosque which cost 500 million rupiah. Alam Endah is based in Rancabali Subdistrict, Bandung District, West Java Province.² It is one of the most resource-rich agricultural areas due to its volcanic soil and provides us with a case study of successful rural development. Administratively, the village is divided into 112 neighbourhood groups and 30 villages consisting of 6887 households of 22,000 people in an area which covers 505.6 hectares. Alam Endah relies on agriculture with 95% of the inhabitants working as farmers. Apart from the agriculture sector, eco-tourism can be supported further through visiting places of interests such as the tea and coffee plantations, the waterfalls, hot springs and strawberry farms. This case study demonstrates that it is possible to develop local agricultural industry not centred on rice production such as the production of berries, a range of vegetables, coffee, tea and bamboo.³ While in the past there was an emphasis on bamboo production, the head of the village informed us that the bamboo gardens also included the production of coffee to provide biodiversity. Moreover, the expansion of local enterprise has led to a heavy dependence on active productive inputs and organization of women increasing earning potential and self-employment in an environment within which women's agricultural labour on the family farm goes unrecognized and unpaid. This has held female labour within the rural community in situations such as land loss and declining economic opportunities has, elsewhere drive young women especially into the cities to seek paid employment and placed them in circumstances vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation.

The potential for bamboo to be used as a source of income for farmers (along with providing a renewable energy source) is detailed in a submission to the South African government⁴ and discussed in terms of the role that the One Village, many enterprise could provide opportunities in an extension of markets and possible solutions to the energy crisis in South Africa.

²Many people still regard the village as part of Ciwidey despite the fact that it was already considered a separate community in 1979 and by 2001 in view of a sizeable population increase it definitively split from Ciwidey.

³In 2013 in Indonesia, there are 72 million 944 thousand villages, and there are 32000 villages in the eastern part of Indonesia. Of these 43% of the poor villages are in eastern Indonesia have limited support. This is one of the reasons for introducing the Ministry for Village and less developed regions. In 2013, 63% of the poorest of the poor are farmers, and they make up 28.6 million farmers. Another point raised by Ida is that food insecurity in many parts of Indonesia is linked with the inability to grow rice.

⁴Submission on Climate Change Bill Food, energy and water security – mapping the production and consumption cycle - https://archive.org/details/WirasoftAndFlindersClimateChangeInSouthAfricaV4.0_201808.

Research Approach

The fieldwork was possible because it was facilitated by Dr. IW, a PhD graduate of Flinders University, who also runs her own Participatory Engagement Institute as part of Padjadjaran University. The role of Dr. IW as facilitator enabled entry to the village as she speaks Sundanese and her grandfather built the local mosque. She has continued to serve her community. She is the only one from the village who went to university and now serves her community through extending networks of solidarity to help the local people. Her personal connection to the region began when she founded a Green Belt Movement as a young woman to support environmental preservation. Despite moving away from the region, Dr. IW has sustained her commitment to the area and its agricultural development by continuing to farm in the Cianjur region.

The rapid fieldwork appraisal, on which this article is based, was built on qualitative focus groups, observation, interviews and the analysis of secondary quantitative data. The field visit conducted on 17 Dec 2018 is an extension of a series of visits linked with the UnPad centre for decentralization and participatory development research for a project called 'Living Virtuously and Well': mitigation and adaptation to climate change detailed in the next chapter. It also extends the pilot detailed in McIntyre-Mills (2017).

As a facilitator, Dr. IW was able to ask the village secretary and village leader to host the meetings in the local community hall linked with the clinic. The focus group was attended by men and women including local farmers and business representatives. The participants included the following stakeholders: head of the village, secretary of the village, woman council member, women activists, head of neighbourhood, farmer representatives, health volunteers, youth group representatives and marketing manager.

The focus group discussion was divided into four groups spanning women and women activists, farmers and young people, business and a separate interview with the one and only female leader.

The research team was led by Ida Widianingsih (IW) who with the help of her students enabled the team to interview the village and help with the translations from Bahasa, the language in which most of the interviews were conducted. Donna Mertens (DM) interviewed the farmers and some of the young people. Janet McIntyre (JM) interviewed the women, while Yvonne Corcoran Nantes (YCN) interviewed the one and only elected woman leader. Pak Rudolf Wirawan (RW) interviewed the men.

The focus group discussions were preceded by a welcome from the head of the village, who gave an overview of their activities and development initiatives for our benefit. The proceedings were carefully translated for those not fluent in Bahasa. The business strategy for Alam Endah is communal. It has one co-operative linked with the pesantren. The community is required to develop one cash crop per village. To this end, they have planted three million seeds of coffee. From the point of view of the village marketing leader, there are three main sources of empowerment,

namely, business management, clean water and waste management. Previously, they burned the waste or threw it out into the river. But this has changed since the introduction of a new recycling project detailed below. The Cibodas River and Cigadog River are used for farm irrigation, and they also dig wells for household consumption. Springs provide another source of free water managed by the Ministry of Forests.

Electricity is provided to each home by the government, and it costs on average 100–200,000 rupiah for the average home.

Urbanization, Rural-Urban Linkage, Loss of Land and Displacement

Representation and Accountability to Young People and Women in Co-operatives

The role of women in the community is clearly traditional. Early marriages at 14 and 15 are less common today according to women in JM's focus group. Women were asked whether the girls continued education from primary to secondary level or whether they dropped out at a particular level. [Up to 2016, it was 9 years compulsory schooling; now it is 12 years] They said that girls could continue their education but they would still need to carry out all their other household activities. The role of women in the village was described as 'carrying a double or triple burden'. For example, the marketing manager of the village-owned enterprise earns about 40 dollars a month, but he is also farmer and has a shop. The fulfilment of the three roles is achieved through the support of his wife who serves in the shop and works in the fields and in the home garden. This involves productive albeit unpaid work. The village manager also has extra responsibility to address the water service, waste management and community empowerment kiosk. Much of the work to support these roles is supported by his wife and the volunteer labour of women. Thus, JM discovered that male leadership positions in politics and commerce were underwritten by women's unpaid labour without which men would be bereft of the necessary support to occupy leadership positions or undertake more than one commercial venture.

Who Decides What Is the Issue and What Is It Represented to Be (WPRB)?

Bacchi's *WPRB approach* (2009, 2010) was applied to an analysis of the qualitative data. The lack of representation of women was evident, and when analysed using Kabeer and Subrahmanian's (1996, cited in March et al. 1999; Kabeer, 2012; Moser,

1993) institutional analysis of the relationships across domestic households, community neighbourhoods, the local government council and market opportunities, it is clear that:

- Women do the majority of unpaid productive work within the household frequently assisted by their, usually, female children.
- Women are happy to work collectively as they can see the advantage of knowing what is happening in the neighbourhood.
- Only one woman has been elected to the 11-member village council, while women are the principal fundraisers; they are not involved in the decision-making processes with respect to the allocation of resources and funding.
- Business and marketing is controlled by the council where women have only one representative and apparently little or no input.

While women clearly had little participation in decision-making in the village, the tasks of the women's group involved campaigns and active direct community engagement with the women of the village. The head of the group emphasized that they were principally concerned with women's and children's health but most especially the question of reproductive health. This involves auditing the local clinic facilities and delivery of services, checking kindergartens, they also visit pregnant women in their homes to see how they are and what they might need. Members of the women's group emphasized that the primary health concern was water and sanitation-related disease. This required active prevention through regular auditing of good hygiene practices and the provision of better infrastructure. The second concern was the inappropriate use of indigenous Sundanese approaches for addressing infertility and women's reproductive health. They conceded that some indigenous Sundanese cures are successful but that ethnic infertility treatments needed to be avoided. The women's group argued that auditing facilities and services both inside the clinic and the outside community was fundamentally important to adequately addressing infant health and wellbeing through the clinic. In this way, the group was able to ensure the careful regulation of local health services and the attendance of women and their children at the clinic.

Moreover, since the clinic was so central to community life, it was the ideal location for the rollout of the waste management and recycling scheme established by the village. The clinic provides regular immunization of infants and children as well as undertaking the regular checkups on the village children to ensure that they reach the appropriate clinical bench marks. Consequently, because it was mostly women who would take their children to the community centre, it was they who formed the majority of the membership of the 'Cadre Posyandu' (integrated service force). As such, they managed a system of integrated preventative health care which includes waste management. Access to the clinic was enabled through a points system linked to the management of recycling. Whereby handing over household waste for recycling awarded points to the women on a visible chart on display in the clinic. The clinic provides a free service to all women who bring recycled waste to the clinic. In this system, they would also get green, yellow or red dots on their clinic card to show how well they integrate public health into their service delivery. The individual and public health commitment is thus very well

represented in this example and offered clear incentives to all members of the community. Ironically although the members of the committee stressed the importance and success of recycling, the observable overflow of rubbish in the clinic kitchen did not go unnoticed behind the scenes. Clearly, the processing of recyclable materials was still presenting challenges, even in the clinic kitchen.

The participants in the focus group discussions [FGD] emphasized that they valued tradition and the strong community links with Alam Endah and that they ‘love the area and the beautiful land’. They stressed that although some families had sold their land, the guaranteed high prices had enabled them to buy much larger plots of land, albeit in less strategic places, to expand agricultural production and be more productive farmers. Overall, they stressed that they were happy with the management by the enterprise committee. It was unlikely that they would offer an alternative opinion given the manager of the village committee was part of the FGD.

They stressed that they liked getting higher prices for their goods as a result of the organization, but they did not like not having the control of all their activities without having much of a say or ‘influence’ over decisions. They stressed that their main concern was that outsiders with bigger business interests were coming into the area.

Education and Vocational Training

The *pesantren* provides training for all the children of the village free of charge. Primary and secondary education is free for the first 9 years. After that, they are required to pay for higher education.

The potential for building vocational educational training as an extension of the *pesantren* is clearly a possibility with the support of the Minister of Education through UIN. Young people in the community are fully engaged in helping the family businesses as well as community projects, and as such, they are responsible for sorting rubbish and helping with the packaging of farm produce. They spend much of their time engaged in community activities associated with the mosque, and training is at present undertaken by the *pesantren* which provides free education. Young people undertake the design of the packaging and labels for local products and produce which they also make.

Clearly, the potential exists to remunerate work within the co-operatives which is presently undertaken by volunteers the majority of whom are women and children. This would acknowledge and reward their contribution financially or through a points system for their work in the community. Moreover, this would facilitate monitoring from below with respect to social, economic and environmental accounting and accountability.

At the moment, the social capital contribution of young people is very high, but if they move, they lose it. They need to be able to have some share that recognizes the volunteering. In 2015, the Bandung District introduced a new program called ‘Reduce, Reuse and Recycle Project’. By 2020, all the waste will have a value added as energy or another form.

Local government training is provided to manage waste and not to pollute the river. The village government has land, and the young people are asked to help the company for free every Friday—they are given a small contribution of about 2 cents to take the rubbish to a temporary waste processing centre. The youth group collects the rubbish. They employ six people to sort the rubbish into organic and inorganic waste for compost. They collect 12–17 tons of waste every week, and every 3 months, they make 3 tons of organic fertilizer. But it does not last long because of the high demand of farmers.

Gender, Fundraising and Decision-Making

The downside of the model is the high dependency on unpaid productive female labour in the home, on the farms and in the community whereby women at times work 24/7 even in the opinion of the men in their households. They plant the crops, remove the weeds and spend time selling in the kiosks or shops, they then return home to work in their home gardens, and they follow these tasks by doing most of the household chores. Women are virtually solely responsible for fundraising. Examples of superlative fundraising capacity were given to Ida whereby the community of a nearby village raised money for a new mosque in a matter of weeks demonstrating the strong social capital within the village communities.

In Alam Endah, the leader of the women's group, Haretarti, confirmed that women do all the fundraising. When asked what the men do and whether they have specific projects (given the clear gender division of labour within the village), at first, she stated that: 'Men believed they did enough work'. On further exploring this issue, Haretarti was a little more reticent and chose to justify men's less than full participation. Men, she argued, were the principal farmers and did things that women 'did not do'; as such it was left to women to undertake the project work. But when we asked about the work women contribute as farmers, producing and processing food for the family and looking after children, she conceded that women did such work but it was not 'paid' work as such. Both male and female participants in the FGD were much less reticent in confirming that women worked alongside men on the farms and confirmed there were women who also undertook paid work outside of the home when farming activities brought in 'insufficient income for the family to survive on'. However, it was clear that in the village, remunerated work acquired higher status than that from which income was not derived. Women's productive unpaid work on the farm, the production of subsistence crops for family consumption, represented a significant input to family wellbeing. In terms of the various explanations with respect to the existing division of labour financial input was given higher status and women who were not paid for their input on the farm and in the home (despite the pivotal nature of their contribution) remained acknowledged but unrewarded.

In considering the formal division of labour within the village, women as pivotal unpaid productive workers became the leading volunteers and 'entrepreneurs' in the

community. Moreover, women's central involvement in community-based projects such as the waste management and recycling led to an unbroken nexus of gender-specific community engagement which found women 'naturally' leading fundraising efforts in and for the community. Thus, women are the ones involved in producing goods for sale to raise funds for the village. They were split into different skill groups, one group responsible for baking sweets, cakes and biscuits—baked goods in general—and another making dolls and soft toys. The latter group, for example, make deer-related soft toys and goods, e.g. small plush deer, deer hoods, etc. These were produced for the local tourist market at the deer park. Each project group has a leader based on their recognized skills or willingness to lead. For example, Haretarti heads up the baked goods with a female businesswoman, Ms Nur, who heads up the dolls and soft toy group. Together, they sell at the local regular markets and set up kiosks in tourist spots and so on. Involvement and the nature of the task performed by each group member are dependent on their skills—some may be good with money or selling so they take on those tasks. All of the women we spoke to enjoyed being involved in the fundraising because it's sociable and it builds community. However, when asked how much money they raised, Haretarti stated they had no idea—they just knew that it went to the village. Thus, women had no control or say with respect to the decision-making concerning the money earned by their contributed labour. Men did not have that problem with respect to income-generating activities they engaged in outside of their core work commitments. When we asked women's leader Haretarti about the 'men's projects,' she spoke of men growing strawberries and other berries and selling them at tourist spots. These activities were not intended to raise money for the village but for the individual men themselves.

In all practical respects, the women of the village have the knowledge required to identify things such as needs, difficulties and measures for cooperation and division of labour especially among women. This gives a 'ghosted' influential position which serves as a pathway to empowerment within a highly patriarchal traditional set of gender relations demarcated and manifested within village politics. The women's group leader, and sole female member of the village council, also found ways to exercise authority. While she argued her duties are determined by and involved with the legal strictures of the village constitution, she always made sure they are sufficiently flexible to facilitate her work with the women's group overseeing the general conditions in the village. This she stated provided a means to exert influence (albeit within the existing patriarchal structures). For Haretarti, it was women's empowerment that was important in the links between the project and community work and empowerment. She stated that she is working towards enabling more women to be formally elected to the council in order to facilitate real empowerment in decision-making. Previously, women had not been given the opportunity to be involved, but now the women were currently working strategically towards having a greater voice in public decision-making and more control over the way funds are allocated and spent. Women's predominance in fundraising activities seemed to be a strategic development enabling women to have a greater voice in public decision-making in the long term as well as greater control over the way village funds are allocated and spent. Furthermore, women may not have control over land; they remain committed

to their ascribed roles in the community principally knowledge with respect to the health and wellbeing of all members of the community through their data collection on health, water management and refuse management.

Risks and Opportunities of the Co-op System

Once people are part of a co-op, they are at the mercy of the leadership. If they are wise and fair, then everyone prospers. If not, then they risk being exploited. As farmers, they need to be able to control and own their personal source of income, namely, land. The diversification of agricultural activities, and the stabilization of the environment and landscape was important to this end. The farmers in the FGD that were interviewed emphasized that they planted bamboo and coffee as well as berries to generate income. En route we saw landslides near the road where bamboo had been cleared away. Thus, planting bamboo was also important to stabilize the land and to protect villages and crops. Moreover, the products manufactured from bamboo include the following: furniture, building material and antibacterial clothing, such as socks and underwear that provide a market for bamboo cultivation. According to the FGD participants, strawberry production also needed further development which included appropriate packaging and marketing. At the present time, it is young students at the *pesantren* which assisted in strawberry packaging. A co-operative system was still in the early stage of development in the community, and as yet there was no proper accountability structure in place. Clearly, there was adequate opportunity to extend all of these activities as part of a formal agricultural business training opportunity.

A further concern is that the current village marketing and business committee are not sufficiently transparent with respect to its activities, and as such this limits accountability. This was evident in our discussions with both women and men farmers. One of our teams was able to consult the village documentation from meetings which reported that the funds were allocated as follows: water management received 7–10 million IDR per month, business development received 2 million IDR per month, maintenance received 30 million IDR, village government receives 30 million IDR, neighbourhood co-ordinators receive 30 million IDR, and management receives 10 million IDR. Bearing in mind that the funds to undertake projects within the village enterprise are primarily raised by the women's group, in the long term, there will likely be considerable pressure for open accountability giving them full knowledge about how much money they raise and how it is applied.

The village enterprise is called 'BUMDes Alenda' or Badan Usaha Milik Desa meaning village-owned enterprises (established by Village Regulation no 4 of 2013). Water service management has top priority as fundamental to the wellbeing of the community, and up to now 1000 homes have been linked to the water system which constitutes just under one sixth of the village. This leaves 6887 homes still to be plumbed into the system. The cost of water is 10,100 IDR per cubic metre which compared to water sullied in urban areas is inexpensive, for example, every family

uses about 14 m³ of water which would cost 15,000 IDR. Compared to the cost of water in urban areas, this is very cheap; according to an Indonesian member of the team, in Bandung Municipality, the cost could be as much as 200,000 IDR for the same level of consumption. Sanitation management is undertaken by each household whereby each family usually builds a septic tank and the majority of households have their own toilet.

Conversations with the community after the FGD focused on discovering ways to add value to agribusiness by working with the *pesantren* and extending vocational educational training by building an institution to support the community. Alam Endah certainly seems a model village with respect to retaining if not growing its population rather than losing it to urbanization and income-generating opportunities in the city.

Potential Pitfalls: Land Loss and Corruption

Risk of Losing Land: Government Land Such as Tea Plantations Being Bought by Private Sector

The risk of being bought out by big business and then losing land is a major concern. This occurred in a nearby area whereby the local government-owned tea plantation was taken over by a Chinese-owned business. The tea pickers who had worked for many generations on the plantation were then rendered both unemployed and landless. The tea pickers and their families lost access to their place of work along with their personal plots that needed to be accessed via the tea plantation. Previous generations had worked for the same tea plantation their entire working life and on retirement received a grant that enabled them to buy a plot of land.

Moreover, these families also lost access to the lake nearby and the source of income they generated by rowing boats for tourists to access the beauty spots. The local waterfall was also declared to be on private property, whereas previously, it was accessible by way of the government-owned tea plantation.

The political decision to sell the land was clearly made at a senior level without informing people of their rights. All landless people in Indonesia are entitled to land under a scheme announced by President Jokowi, but the tea pickers were unaware of their rights. The new neo-liberal economics of short-term contracts in a 'for-profit' private business was however imposed with the full knowledge of someone senior in West Java government.

An Indonesian academic, who is part of our team and indigenous to the region, had at that time tried to find members of the dispossessed families in order to inform them of their rights, but by then, many had already moved to the city in search of employment. Ida Widianingsih notes that:

This is a very 'political dance'. An Indonesian state company ran the company and it was possibly going bankrupt. They decided to sell land to the investor.....This is unusual to sell

a state owned enterprise to a private owner. They turned it into a tourism spot and the pickers were the victims of the decision. In the past retirees received 80 million as a pension so that the pickers could buy their own farm and survive. These pickers left with nothing and the new owners imposed new contracts on the people who work there. The pickers and their families had lived there since the eighteenth century. The new business was imposed on the locals who had voted for the Golkar and the tea company. And now the present generation suffers. They had worked as pickers for many generations and all their skills and devotion had been to the tea plantation and now they are destitute as a result of the transition. How did they manage to go bankrupt? It is an excellent business. People suffer and no longer can afford to retire in the area. The pickers earned 50c per kilo per day. This is about 3–5 Australian dollars per day. They did not pay for housing or for schooling. When they reached the pension age they used to receive a payout. Normally they used to stay on the land or nearby.

Displacement and loss could be averted if more emphasis was placed on educating rural and urban residents of their rights in terms of the Indonesian constitution and current policy. This will also help to address the concerns raised in the next chapter where young people are at risk of trafficking when they face land loss and destitution and the process of proletarianization renders them vulnerable to predatory ‘job offers’ in factories or as domestic workers where the conditions of employment are not closely governed and can be a front for trafficking in some instances. Land loss does not need to be inevitable if people are made aware of their rights to land as per the Presidential decree. As the case study in this chapter demonstrates, it is possible to develop a successful village enterprise system whereby communities have the potential to be self-supporting and potentially profitable. This opens up economic prospects for the next generation of farming families to remain on the land and part of a broader rural project to retain if not expand its resident population.

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