



musawah

For Equality in the Muslim Family

Musawah Global Life Stories Project

INDONESIA COUNTRY REPORT

**Documenting Women's Life Stories
Relating to *Qiwamah* and *Wilayah***

In Cooperation with Alimat



2014

**This report, which was submitted to the Musawah Secretariat by the country team,
has been lightly edited by the Secretariat for format and style.**

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Strategies to achieve goals.....	1
Team members.....	2
Stages of documenting women's life stories	3
Documentation ethics.....	3
Legal Mapping	5
Marriage and its relation with <i>qiwamah</i> and <i>wilayah</i>	5
Polygamy as a form of discrimination.....	6
Equality before the Law	6
Violence against women	7
Social context of economic culture and politics in Indonesia and its impact on women.....	8
Political participation of women	8
Female heads of families	9
Women domestic workers, child domestic labor, and migrant workers.....	10
Women's reproductive health.....	13
Female genital mutilation	14
Increasing number of people infected with HIV/AIDS	14
Problems encountered in family planning	15
Life Story #1: Shafira – “The sparkling star from the old land”	17
Childhood.....	18
After the death of her father.....	19
The days of tension.....	20
The sadness continues	21
Shafira's marriage.....	21
The exhausting divorce	22
Becoming a divorced woman	23
Meeting her future husband	24
Analysis of <i>qiwamah</i> and <i>wilayah</i> in Shafira's story	25
Reflections on Shafira's story	29
Life story #2: Nawa – I and my baby got infected HIV/AIDS from my late husband.....	32
My family.....	32
My boyfriend.....	33
Married life	35
My baby girl was born	36
HIV-Positive.....	36
Revive	38
Helping people	39
My recent condition	40

Analysis of Nawa’s story	41
Reflection of Nawa’s story	45
Life Story #3: Amalia – Sinking in hot water	48
The joyful childhood	48
My teenage years	48
Boiled in hot water	49
The disaster struck.....	52
Under dad’s protection.....	53
Being a divorced woman.....	53
Amalia’s analysis	54
Reflection of Amalia’s story	57
Life Story #4: Nadira – “Between love, violence, and victory”	59
An amazing childhood.....	59
The dependent husband	60
A miserable marriage.....	60
The struggle has never ended.....	61
Analysis of Nadira’s story	62
Reflection of Nadira’s story.....	64
Commonalities in the Four Life Stories	66
Guiding questions.....	66
Overall analysis	66
Commonalities between resource persons	67
Divergences and economic roles of women and duties of women in family	67
Marital sex and sexual relations with husbands	68
Spousal violence.....	68
Access to divorce.....	69
How do women solve problems in their marriages?	70
Trajectory of change and women’s ways of knowing	71
Lessons learned	71
Final Reflection on Process and Outcome	73

Introduction

This paper is a report on research initiatives to build knowledge through documenting the life stories of women for equality in the Muslim family in Indonesia. The study was conducted in cooperation between Musawah and Alimat. For Alimat, this is a continuation or second stage of the whole process. In the previous stage, Alimat has completed the pilot tested of five life stories of women equipped with Musawah's research instruments. The focus of research is on the concepts of the Qur'an on *qiwamah* and *wilayah* (authority, protection, and custody) that has been interpreted and constructed on the basis of Islamic law, to justify institutionalized and continuous models in the context of the patriarchal in Muslim families. This documentation is trying to see the relationship between the reality of life for women with the views of experts from a group of scholars and activists, as well as the legal and socio-cultural contexts, to generate a new perspective to the principles of Islam with egalitarian universal of human rights, and constitutional guarantees.

The purpose of the study consisted of two levels, related with the goals of Alimat and Musawah. For Musawah, *qiwamah* and *wilayah* research purposes are:

- 1) To establish a framework to develop a basic conceptual Musawah reinterpretation and redefinition of *qiwamah* and *wilayah*, in line with contemporary ideas of justice and equality, as well as the reality of Muslim family life;
- 2) To put the groundwork of discussions and consensus about these concepts among women, activists, scholars, legal practitioners, policy makers, and other parties.

For Alimat (Indonesia), the purpose of the second phase of research initiative to build knowledge through documenting the life stories of these women are:

- 1) To continue documenting the life stories of women as a resource person associated with *qiwamah* and *wilayah* practices in Indonesia, and
- 2) To describe and analyze the life stories of women as resource persons generated through in-depth interviews.

Strategies to achieve goals

Documenting the life stories was planned to be carried out in the second phase of the proposal prepared by the Indonesian team. But for one reason or another, the team had to adjust many changes based on the development of thoughts within the member of team. There were; 1) Main theme of the documenting process to be "marginalized women", 2) Time frame, and 3) Member of team involved was extended to other network such as CEDAW Working Group of Indonesia and JALA network (<http://www.jalaindonesia.org/?q=en>) (National Advocacy of Domestic Workers Protection)

The team has agreed to choose "minority women" as the main theme of this documentation because their voices are hardly ever heard and they are often ignored in the development process. They are 1) Female Domestic Workers; 2) Ahmadiya women; 3) Women living with HIV/AIDS; 4) Women with the same sexual orientation (homosexual); 5) Women who marry different citizen men; 6) Women as State violence victim; and 7) Women who marry inter-faith couples and 8) Male feminist.

Regarding the timeframe, documentation process was planned to start after Bali Methodology Workshop, in 2012., the process began in February 2013 – December 2013. The team members involved in the process were 10 researchers, consisted of 3 previous documenting process researchers, and another 7 new researchers. Their backgrounds are feminists, and academics.

In path of documentation, some resource persons were reluctant to tell their life stories in detail because they were traumatized and afraid to open their stories to public, but some of them were enthusiastic to work with researchers on their stories. The stories that have successfully been documented are; Shafira's, Amalia's, Nawa's, and Nadira's stories.

Changes in women's life stories, from minority to marginalized women, are partly because of the difficulties to find sources that are willing to volunteer as resource persons. For instance, the themes of minority religion group "Ahmadiyah", women with the same sexual orientation, women who are married to different citizens, Women who marry couples of different religions, and women victims of political violence by the state are considered as "sensitive issues".

Researchers have difficulties in documenting the story of women in that category, because these women were not willing to expose their personal life story in depth to the researcher. Some of the resource persons were willing to talk about their life stories, such as women victims of state's violence. She would only tell the story of her life associated with political violence experienced by the country and her struggle to overcome them. The other case was women with the same sexual orientation (homosexual), she would only tell the story of her life as feminist.

Meanwhile, for women members of Ahmadiyah, women who married different citizens, and different-religion persons, in path of the process of documentation, they did not want to continue to work with researcher, and were unwilling to tell their life story deeper, and eventually reluctant to be a resource person. In the context of *qiwamah* and *wilayah*, researchers found that resource persons did not want to be interviewed further about their personal lives, this matter is important for researchers to know and acquire the required component in this documentation process. Although the interviews and documentation process have been running, researchers could not force their resource persons to continue their stories. Finally, some life stories of respective categories are cancelled due to their rejection.

All the ten members of researchers as the core team were involved in this documentation process, but only two researchers have successfully documented the complete life stories. The other eight researchers could only interview their resource persons several times, but at the end the process has stopped due to their reluctance to be interviewed further.

Team members

- The team consisted of Aida Milasari (coordinator of the Indonesian team of researchers), Nur Rofiah, Athiyatul Ulya, Dini Anitasari Sabaniah, Iffatul Umniati, Lita Anggraini, Maria Johanista, Ratu Dian Hatifah, Tati Krisnawati, and Zaitun Abdullah. They successfully completed the process of documenting the life stories of four women. They did not complete the life stories of six resource persons.¹

¹ One research team member spent six months documenting a female victim of state violence. She met her resource person six times, conducting interviews four times, but the documentation process could not be continued due to the woman's reluctance to tell her life story further. A second research team member met her resource person two times and had two interviews with her. The core team decided not to put her life story because she didn't have any issue with *qiwamah* and *wilayah*. A third research team member interviewed a domestic worker who is also a victim of domestic violence. She didn't continue the documentation process because the resource person was reluctant to be interviewed about her private stories much further. A fourth research team member met with a resource person several times and interviewed her quite intensively. She is women with the same sexual orientation. In the path of the documentation process she became reluctant to share her story with the public.

Therefore, there are four life stories reported in this documentation process: an indigenous woman from Kalimantan, a domestic worker, a HIV positive woman, and a housewife. They have strong issues of *qiwamah* and *wilayah*. They are also subjected to multilayered violence and discrimination from their husbands, family members, friends, and community's stigmatization.

Stages of documenting women's life stories

The documentation process has been done in several stages:

- 1) To determine the theme and criteria of resource persons.
- 2) To learn and discuss the issue of *qiwamah* and *wilayah*.
- 3) To discuss and formulate the research instruments.
- 4) To organize focus group discussions in East Kalimantan with Indigenous women about CEDAW and *qiwamah* and *wilayah*.
- 5) To select resource persons for in-depth interviews.
- 6) To conduct in-depth interviews with resource persons preferred with the core team.
- 7) To write down the stories and discuss the stories for process analysis amongst the core team
- 8) To analyze the stories based on Musawah's guidance individually, and discuss the result of the analysis amongst the core team member.
- 9) To discuss the stories and analyze them with Coordinator team of Musawah, Mulki Al Sharmani.
- 10) To write the commonalities between the stories and do the whole analysis based on Musawah's guidelines.
- 11) To submit the final report to Musawah's Global Life Stories Project.

The theme chosen by the Indonesia team in the second stage of the Global Life Stories Project is marginalized women whose voices and aspirations are hardly ever heard by families, communities and states. As a result, violence and discrimination often afflict these women. For the second stage, the Indonesian team has chosen the stories of Amalia, Nawa, Nadira, and Shafira.

The issues of *qiwamah* and *wilayah* and research instruments are learnt by the Indonesia core team at this second stage. Nur Rofiah, the research coordinator of Indonesia Pilot Project (stage 1) acted as resource person and facilitating the briefing workshop with research team members. The next step was conducting focus group discussion in East Kalimantan with indigenous women and in parallel, other research team members did some approaches and interviewed with resource persons. In-depth interviews were conducted from June 2012 (two months after Bali Methodology Workshop), to December 2012 (upcoming the Malaysia Mid Term Review) in January 2013. After Malaysia's review, and the Indonesia team continue to interview resource persons, conducting consultation with Musawah Global Life Stories Coordinator, and participated in several discussions series with Coordinator of Musawah and other researchers in some countries. These processes were done until June 2013. Some researchers began to write since September 2012, revise and analyze the stories until February 2014.

The core team member has met several times to share the stories, analyze and discuss the final report to be submitted to Musawah. Since February 2014, Nur Rofiah and Aida Milasari began to write the final report.

Documentation ethics

The ethics used throughout the documentation process, amongst others, include:

- 1) **Approval.**

Based on the approval (consent) of resource persons, among which are included in the ethics approval; that the information submitted by the researcher has to be clear and complete. Resource persons also have the right to resign at any time and to refuse to continue the interview if she did not feel secure with the process of interview.

2) ***Confidentiality.***

Resource person has rights to reject her name to be written in the report, or to disguise her identity. Moreover, empirically all information delivered by resource persons should not be publicly disseminated, unless the resource persons give their consent and approval.

3) ***Accountability.***

Researcher and resource person are liable to responsibility in the whole documentation process. Honestly is one of any values which must be agreed upon between the researcher and resource persons. Researcher must respect resource person's integrity, be sensitive to her vulnerability, avoid posture and mention of any statement which leads to judgment or blame of the resource person (trying to re-victimize the resource person).

Legal Mapping

Marriage and its relation with *qiwamah* and *wilayah*

Regulations about rights and responsibilities of husband and wife in marriage are still inequitable and discriminatory against women. Basic Regulation regarding marriage in Indonesia is stipulated in Law No. 1 of 1974 on "Marriage Law". In Article 31, paragraph 3, there are differentiated roles between husband and wife that stereotypically determine husband as head of the family, and wife as a housewife. Gender roles are stereotyped by wife's obligation to manage the domestic chores, and husband's obligation to protect his wife and provide his household within his capabilities (Article 34 paragraph 2).

Gender roles between woman and man in marriage have set the limitation for wife to have the same rights with her husband. As an example of legal consequences of the gender roles, if the wife does not "fulfill" her obligation in managing household chores to work to provide for her family, she would be accused of denying her responsibility as a good housewife as stipulated in respective Law. The impact of gender roles ordains the husband as head of the family, who dominates the decision-making on behalf of the family. In family ownership (e.g. the right of property, such as houses, land, cars and other valuables properties), properties are registered in the name of husband, even though the properties (goods) obtained by both of husband and wife during their marriage. Discriminatory regulation is still present in many articles which regulate the right to enter the marriage, child marriage and the establishment of a minimum age of marriage (16 years for woman and, 18 years for man), and the role of stereotypes in regulating the rights and responsibilities during marriage and at the dissolution of marriage, including polygamy.

Based on the data of divorce cases, contested divorce, and other matters of issues handled by the *Shari'ah* Court Jurisdiction Province / High Religious Court in all of provinces in Indonesia (2010), obtained that there are 284,379 cases of divorce. Of these cases as much as 94,099 (29,33%) were cases of divorce (divorce is done at the initiative of the husband), and 190,280 (59,32%) are contested divorce cases (divorce is done at the initiative of the wife). For women, divorce is often their last resort when they are facing a crisis of marriage. Although women have to bear the risk of loss of financial support after the divorce, due to different legal consequences for cases of divorce and contested divorce, they still send their petition of marriage to Court. In Divorce case, jurists are still using the classical interpretation of Islamic law which tends to be discriminatory against women.

Reasons for the divorce were also very diverse. These include: polygamy (1,389 cases), forced marriages (2,185 cases), economical neglect by husband (67 891 cases), no liability (78.407 cases), child marriage (550 cases), domestic violence / physical harm (2,191 cases), mental harm (560 cases). Various reasons for this divorce have a very strong dimension in the context of domestic violence (domestic violence). Dimension of domestic violence and divorce cases will be higher when we include some other reasons that are not explicitly noted; such third-party interference (20,199 cases) and there is no compassion and tranquility in marriage (91, 841 cases).

Based on the Government Regulation No.45/1990, regarding Permission of Marriage and Divorce for Civil Servant" (*Izin Perkawinan dan Perceraian Bagi Pegawai Negeri Sipil*), on article 3, (1) "Civil Servant whose intent is to get the divorce, must ask for permission of his/her Superior in office." (2) The reason to get divorce must be described in a written letter comprehensively". This made the process of getting the divorce for civil servants complicated, where the approval of his/her Superior is needed. Access to

divorce is limited and subjective due to chief's approval as the main requirement for civil servant who intend to get divorced.

Polygamy as a form of discrimination

Religious understanding and customary practices were instrumental in the tradition of polygamy in Indonesia. The practice of polygamy has been occurring long before Islam was spread in Indonesia. Anthropological research showed that the practice of polygamy in Java has been implemented since pre-Islamic tradition, where the Balinese Hindu-Bali already practiced polygamy in their tradition. Polygamy on the island of Bali is also legitimized by understanding the teachings of Hinduism. Furthermore, the practice of polygamy tradition was reinforced by the introduction of Islam in Indonesia and its spread in the early 13th century.

One of the contributing factors to high practicing of polygamy is also associated with the "bias interpretation" of the teachings of Islam, by using the interpretation of the Qur'an in *Surah An-Nisa* (4) on paragraph 3. Polygamy tradition is further legitimized by the State through the Law No 1/1974 until now.

In Article 4, paragraph 2 of Law No. 1 of 1974 on Marriage regulated on grounds of polygamy that man can marry more than one woman by using one of the 3 reasons caused by the condition of his wife, namely:

- 1) Wife cannot fulfill her obligations as a wife;
- 2) Wife got a disability or disease that cannot be cured;
- 3) Wife cannot bear children as infertile (barren wife).
- 4) An application for polygamous husbands may be submitted to the court with the consent of his wife, and that the husband will guarantee justice to wives and children.

The settings are clearly not providing protection, to women as wives who have physical conditions as mentioned above, from discrimination. It is precisely the physical conditions of women that can be used as an excuse to legitimize discrimination against women, thus reducing the enjoyment of human rights of women in marriage relationships.

Equality before the Law

The principle of equality before the law has been set aside in the CEDAW Convention on Article 15, and this principle is also stipulated in 1945 Constitution and other rules, laws and legislations, such as; The fourth Amendment of the 1945 Constitution, Article 27 paragraph (1), Law No. 39 of 1999 regarding Human Rights on Article 3 paragraph (2), Law No. 12 of 2005 on the Ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights on Article 1 and article 26.

In another context, the realization of the principle of equality before the law for women is implemented through the establishment of Units for Women and Children (UPPA) / Special Service (RPK) in Police quarters as a form of special treatment for women in the structure of the police since the year 2007. It is based on the Regulation of the Indonesian National Police No. 10 /2007 on the Organization and Work Unit for Women and Children within the Indonesian National Police on the organizational structure / office units at Police Headquarters level, provincials and cities levels. Personnel composition of the Unit are in Police Headquarters level, provincial and cities levels.

The government has issued Government Regulation (PP) as the supplementing instrument for the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act (Law No.23/2004) on Restoration and Rehabilitation.

In the judicial sector, Constitution Court (*Mahkamah Konstitusi*) contributes an important role in upholding the principle of equality before the law, especially for women, but some problems still occur. The fact that the case has shown that equality before the law for women as victims is still facing many obstacles and serious barriers that hinder them to getting equal justice. These happened because women still lack access to information, and public services, behaviors and attitudes of law enforcement officers who are still gender biased, and many national laws and local policies that discriminate against women.

Currently, Indonesia has had an Act of Legal Compilation of Marital Affairs in Religious Court as a reference for Marriage Law, in particular for Muslims family. Provisions that set in this Act is the obligation to register the marriage, gender roles between husband and wife, the minimum age of marriage in accordance with the protection of children's rights, in order to guarantee the same rights and responsibilities during marriage, and at the dissolution of marriage. In this compilation of Islamic laws, they still regulate "*nushuz*". The article of *nushuz* is sometimes used as a tool to deny the rights of wives when they send petition of divorce (the rights to get *nafaqah*, *hadhanah*, *mut'ah* and *mahar* / dowry). *Nushuz* has been widely interpreted as the disobedience of the wife, and it denies her the rights of post-divorce *nafaqah*; but, *nushuz* is a violation of the commitment of marriage that has been made between wife and husband. This made the discrimination against women still occur in Laws and Regulations in Indonesia.

Violence against women

Injustice and gender inequality is also reflected in the increasing number of violence against women, particularly the domestic violence figures. National Commission on Anti Violation against Women (2013) also noted the women victims of violence increase from year to year. Here is the number of cases of violence against women that was compiled during the year 2001 to the year 2012:

Table: Number of Cases of VAW (Year 2001-2012)

(Sources: National Commission for Women, 2013)

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number	3,169	5,163	7,787	14,020	20,391	22,512	25,522	54,425	143,586	105,103	119,107	216,156

Some of the causes of violence against women at the top of such structural problems that are systemic, as well as the pattern of asymmetric relations are based on gender, and sexual division of labor. The high rate of violence against women suggests that gender inequality between men and women still occurs.

In the aspect of the empowerment of women, especially women's involvement in public policy decision-making process, women are relatively disadvantaged compared to men. The drafting team of "Ten Political Agenda on Women (2014)" initiated by Puskapol (Political Research Centre), University of Indonesia noted that the opportunities of women candidates for parliament are getting less than men's opportunity. This is caused by strong cultures which shape people's thought and attitude toward women, that women are not recognized as political leaders and government official leaders. Similar to what happens in the domestic space in the family; men are considered the only ones capable of being the head and leader of the family.

Social context of economic culture and politics in Indonesia and its impact on women

The situation of women social, economic, culture and political contexts in Indonesia can be seen in the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (2012) reported that in general, until 2011, Indonesia is considered to have been able to achieve what was potentially targeted in MDGs in 2015. In poverty reduction efforts, for instance, Indonesia is considered to have been able to demonstrate significant progress by the decreasing of proportion of people living in the national poverty line from 15.10 % (1990), to 12.49 % (in 2011). Similarly, the efforts to achieve basic education and literacy rates have also shown significant progress. Nine-year basic education attainment deemed consistent with development goals. Female literacy rate has reached 98.75 percent, where the ratio of literate women to men has reached to 99.95 percent.

Meanwhile, in promoting the program of gender equality and women's empowerment, the ratio of basic participation between women and men in education levels (such as basic education/elementary) is 100%, secondary levels are above 100%, high school and higher education levels are below 100%, namely 95.9% and 97.82%.

This has shown that although the level of primary and secondary education has been a balanced ratio between women and men, at a higher level of education, but equality in higher education is still on the wane. This has an impact on the opportunities, women are lower than men to engage in public as professionals working in the executive, judicial and other private institutions, i.e. not more than 45.75 percent of the entire workforce professionals.

Political participation of women

In judiciary sector, the percentage of women representation in Local House of Representatives at Provincial level are lower than the overall percentage of women's representation in National House of Representatives. Data which has been collected from 33 provinces of Indonesia, has shown that only 13.53% of women are represented in the provincial legislature. Once again, there is a large variation in terms of women's representation among the provinces. From the sample data, the highest number of women representatives in the province of West Java is only 26% and the lowest was from the province of Southeast Sulawesi as to 4.44%, and Nangroe Aceh Darussalam is 5.80%.

The representation of women in policy formulation and decision-making institutions in the government is still very low. Data up to the year 2010 shows of 33 Governors, and only 1 (one) woman governor in the province of Banten, and only 1 (one) woman elected as Deputy Governor of the province of Central Java. Of the 530 districts / cities in Indonesia, there are only 10 Regent / Mayor (1.88%) and 12 (or 2.26%) Vice regent / mayor women.

Nevertheless, there still is struggle of women to be able to sit in strategic positions both at the level of policy makers, legislative, executive, judicial. The public sector is not directly proportional to the current democratization, as well as changes in the party system and the Election system in Indonesia, at least in range 2004 to 2009, and 2009-2014.

Temporary special measures to encourage the spirit of women's representations are realized by requiring a quota of 30%. Until the 2009 election, that provision has not been substantively and explicitly included in policies made by the State.

However, civil society advocacy initiatives, and especially the women's movements to include a quota of 30% as an absolute provision for political parties, have been fighting from year to year. Thus, the Law No.

10 Year 2008 on “Political Parties” has set a quota of 30% starting from the management, the establishment and the party establishment, decision-making, political education, and political recruitment. However, the provision of 30% of women in the management of a new political party held by the political parties, especially the newly established political parties after the Law No. 10 Year 2008, was passed to establish the terms of 30% representation of women. But, the majority of politicians did not apply this provision, so that the women's movement continues to struggle with lobbying for a political party. This struggle was to be able to amend the party's internal regulations, such as their visions and missions to be able to include the requirement of the 30% quota for women political representation. In general, women cadres of political parties are having difficulty or a very tight competition to sit in the board of political party. This is caused by:

- 1) Men cadres have big ambitions to occupy the board and executive body positions, associated with the opportunity to get the direct access to programs and funds of the party.
- 2) There is a belief that women do not get enough support to sit in political party leadership. In general, women who occupy positions in board, and executive body of party, and qualify as a member of the House of Representatives, are those who have a “blood relationship”, kinship or marriage ties with the political party leaders or officials. This situation shows that the struggle for increasing the representation of women in political parties carried out by the group / organization of women, have not been successful to open the widest access for all women in political party cadres to fill the board and executive positions.

Table: Women Representation in National Parliament²

Period	Women	Men
1950 - 1955	9 (3,8%)	236 (96,2%)
1955 – 1960	17 (6,3%)	272 (93,7%)
1956 - 1959	25 (5,1%)	488 (94,9%)
1971 – 1977	36 (7,8%)	460 (92,2%)
1977 – 1982	29 (6,3%)	460 (93,7%)
1982 – 1987	39 (8,5%)	460 (91,5%)
1987 – 1992	65 (13%)	435 (87%)
1992 – 1997	62 (12,5%)	438 (87,5%)
1997 – 1999	54 (10,8%)	446 (89,2%)
1999 – 2004	46 (9%)	454 (91%)
2004 – 2009	65 (11,6%)	435 (87%)
2009 - 2014	100 (18%)	459 (82%)

Female heads of families

Centre of Statistical Bureau (2010) released the data regarding the Labor Force in Indonesia, to be as many as 117 million, which is 35% of whom work in the formal sector, and out of 50% are female labor. Looking at the other data sources, it turns out that gender-based human development which was mentioned above, does not correspond to the reality. The situation of women is still far from expected. In 2011, PEKKA (Women Head of Household Association) conducted a survey to formulate the welfare of the community-based monitoring system (SPKBK-Pekka) in 17 provinces and 100 Villages in Indonesia.

² Data Source; Periode 2004-2009, “Buku Panduan Kerja Anggota Legislatif, “Kerja Untuk Rakyat” PUSKAPOL FISIP UI, 2009.

Results of data collection has recorded that 34% of women in Indonesia are women heads of households, where more than half of them fall into the category of poor and low levels of well-being, and illiterate with low education levels (mostly just graduated from elementary school).

Female heads of the family are difficult to make a living to support their families. The results of this survey also found that more than 10 percent of Indonesian women are the main breadwinner for their family and work to meet the needs of families, while their husband stay and home and act as the head of the family.

In the context of the women as the breadwinner, their role cannot be ignored even though most of them sit on management positions in their offices, but they are not involved in the decision-making process and managerial policies. The Central Bureau of Statistics (2012) recorded that a total population of 112 million (the number of workers in Indonesia) there are 43 million working women. They are the backbone / the main breadwinner or contribute to the household subsistence. Of the 43 million women workers, there are about 2.1 million women working as civil servants (PNS). This number has been increasing over the past three years, women civil servants in 2007 amounted to 43.6 per cent, 44.7 per cent in 2008, and the in 2009 amounted to 45.2 percent. Nevertheless, an increasing number of female civil servants is not accompanied with the role of women in the decision-making process at the structural level, that is, the number of female civil servants who occupy important positions in the bureaucracy as echelon I and II, Secretary (Regional Secretary), Assistant Secretary, and Head of Department / Agency / Office, is still very few in number (KBN, 2010, in LOGICA, 2011).

Women domestic workers, child domestic labor, and migrant workers

Looking at it from a very large number (10,774,887), domestic workers is a segment of workers in the informal sector who are urgently needed by millions of households, and which allows household members to run various types of public activity and in all sectors. Their employers' careers, professionalism, expertise in various fields is worth because there is the role of "leader behind the scenes", that is domestic workers. There is a chain of elements contributing to the employment of hundreds of thousands and millions of people in all sectors of State's administration, such as: education, science and technology development, business, industrial goods, services, and entertainment. This is possible due to the contribution of domestic workers.

However, in reality, these domestic workers are very vulnerable to violence from a variety of physical, psychological, economic, and social harms. Domestic workers are in situation of modern slavery and selfdom. Domestic workers suffer from various violations, such as: low wages (below average), not being paid; deduction of salary, delayed payment; work from dawn till dusk, long working hours (an average of 12-16 hours of work) with high risk to health, and their destiny depends on the goodness of their employer. There is no weekly day off; minimal access to socialization – isolated behind closed doors (in private homes), vulnerable to exploitation, being victims of trafficking, no social security, and no employment protection. Domestic workers are not recognized as workers, because housework is not regarded as real work and experiencing discrimination against them as women, workers and children is prevalent (child domestic labor).

The absence of Law governing the relationship between domestic workers and employers has implied some violations and abuses facing domestic workers. The existing Law on Anti Domestic Violence governs domestic workers as part of the protected party, but it does not cover all problems faced by domestic workers. In fact, the law enforcement officers do not refer to the respective law to precede the cases of abuse and violations against domestic workers. Based on JALA PRT documentation (2007-2011),

there are 726 domestic workers who suffer physical, psychological and social violence, 536 cases of unpaid wages, and 617 who had excessive work load.

On the other hand, there is less protection of women as domestic workers in local and national levels. This condition is increasingly caused the systematic violations against domestic workers. So, a protection system to protect domestic workers against any violation is fundamental and urgent. According to Amnesty International's research (2010), domestic workers and child domestic labor usually dropped out from school at a very young age, so they only have limited access to some information about their rights.

Child domestic labor

25% of the total domestic workers in Indonesia are Child Domestic Workers (CDWs). They come from villages and spread to work in many big cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya, Medan, Bandung and South Sulawesi. Child domestic workers are losing the opportunity to go to school, play with their mates and get protection from their parents. They are very vulnerable to many kinds of abuse and discrimination, such as physical, psychological and sexual violations. Indonesia has Law No. 23 Year 2002 on Child Protection and has ratified ILO Convention No. 182 on The Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Form of Child Labor through the Law No. 1 Year 2000

(http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C182).

Women Migrant Workers

Although Indonesia has enacted the Law No.39 of 2004 on the Protection and Placement the Workers Abroad (PPTKILN), this rule has not answered the question of migrant workers, especially in the protection of their rights in any process of working. Law no. 39 of 2004 further regulates aspects of the placement of migrant workers (“in trade system”), rather than regulate the protection of their rights. Consequently, the placement of migrant workers currently does not ensure the protection of the rights of migrant workers and their families, or protect vulnerable women (migrant workers) against exploitation, trafficking, violence, discrimination, marginalization, and stereotyping. This situation has weakened guarantees of the fulfillment of human rights of women migrant workers, including negligence breach of the right to decent wages, overtime wages, getting a day off, getting health insurance, worship, freedom of association, freedom of expression, communication, and the right to hold their own passport. This law also ignores the rights of women to get reproductive health rights. For instance, women do not have menstruation leave, may be forbidden to work because of the pregnancy, may be terminated from the job or deported because of the pregnancy). There may also be violations of labor rights for migrant workers infected with HIV / AIDS (such as a mandatory test for prospective migrant workers and subsequent deportation if he/she indicates HIV / AIDS). Migrant workers also may not be afforded a right to obtain legal aid for related to legal issues in the receiving countries.

In some of the receiving countries, women migrant workers are vulnerable to criminalization and the threat of death sentences. They are vulnerable to charges of murder (among other things by means of using magic) under death sentence. They often become victims of alleged adultery, when in reality they are victims of rape. The response of the Indonesian government is very slow. Migrant workers hardly ever get access to justice. The increasing number of the death sentence cases against migrant workers has obliged the government of Indonesia to form an “anti-death penalty” task force for migrant workers in 2011. The Data from Task Force revealed that the threat of death sentence punishment against

migrant workers (November 2011), has reached 45 cases in Saudi Arabia, 148 cases in Malaysia, and 28 cases in China³.

Indonesian migrant workers experienced bad situations since they departed to reach work place overseas, and when they return back home. Prior to departure, they experienced fraud, falsification of documents, debt bondage, sexual violence, lack of information, employment without payment, confinement / isolation, undergoing the mandatory HIV testing, and violation of work contract.

In the workplace, Indonesian migrant workers (IMWs) are vulnerable to various acts of violence (physical or sexual), illegal wage deductions, termination of the contract unilaterally, restrictions to stay in the recipient countries, exploitation, passports held by the employer, the prohibition to communicate, no days off, doing double jobs or more, and deportation. Female migrant domestic workers are also vulnerable to sexual abuse, rape, wages are not paid, or under payment, verbal and physical violence, among others. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during 2010 there were 4,532 cases of violence against Indonesian migrant workers, most of them occurred in Malaysia. The cases of sexual violence against women migrant workers during the period 1998-2010 were recorded at 6,266 cases. (National Commission on Anti Violence against Women, 2010).

Migrant domestic workers have to work for 16 to 18 hours a day, without weekly days off, and have to be on call all the time. Women migrant domestic workers generally do not have a wage standard, enjoy the right to safety, given a day off, or have a chance to join the Union. Indonesian migrant domestic workers' wages are lower than female migrant workers from other countries with the same kind of work. Their salaries are often withheld until the end of work contract period, or their wages are transferred to an account that cannot be accessed. Undocumented migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse that exacerbate the risk of isolation and exploitation. They are often exploited as forced labor or slavery. They are also vulnerable to harassment by police officers in receiving countries. If caught, they are charged with violations of immigration laws and put into a jail, where they are vulnerable to sexual abuses and will then be deported⁴.

In their return, they often experience exploitation, abuse and illegal levies on Special Terminal Arrival of Migrant Workers (Terminal "Selapajang IV") until they return to home village.

The insurance for migrant workers was set out in Ministry Regulation No. 7 Year 2010. Specific conditions and needs of women such as reproductive health, pregnancy and delivery cost are not accommodated.

Some violations experienced by female migrant workers prior to departure are, among others; 1) Physical, psychological and sexual violence by recruitment agencies and shelters; 2) illegal recruitment; 3) The lack of information and training provision in shelter; 4) Confinement, abduction and extortion by recruitment agencies and private owned companies of migrant workers recruitment and placement.⁵

Violations of the rights of Indonesian migrant workers in destination countries can be categorized into eight categories, namely: 1) Violation of contract labor (unpaid wages, work more than agreed contract);

³ http://www.voanews.com/indonesian/news/Satgas-TKI-221-Warga-Indonesia-Terancam-Hukuman-Mati-di-Luar/The_threat_of_death_sentence_against_migrant_workers_of_Indonesia_-133394303.html, accessed on Monday, 07 November 2011.

⁴ Cited from 'Jakarta Recommendation on Engendering of ASEAN Framework on the Promotion and the Protection of the rights of Migrant Workers' (2010).

⁵ Finding of Migrant workers cases by Women Solidarity in 2005-2009.

2) Violation of the right to health and safety (for example: lack of access to health information and services; 3) Physical, psychological, and sexual abuse; 4) discrimination on the basis of sex, or country of origin; 5) Violence related to family issues ; 6) Violations of the right of mobility, communication and socialization; 7) The difficulty to obtain legal rights, and 8) Arrest and arbitrary punishment. In addition, migrant workers often face difficulties to access health insurance. Women who face violations of the rights of women (migrant workers) when returning back home, have been: forcibly deported, forced to pay the cost of deportation, forced to pay for his/her own return, arrested by recruitment agencies, forced to pay to be able to go home, and withholding of insurance.

Migrant workers, especially female migrant workers are vulnerable to HIV infection prior to depart (pre-departure), in the country of destination (post-arrival), and also the process of returning to home village (reintegration). This corresponds to the weak position of migrant workers during the migration process, the limited access to health information (particularly HIV / AIDS) and health care. Final briefing on departure, the Shelter, or training centres was not effective and did not give adequate benefits in disseminating information and increasing understanding about the health of prospective migrant workers. The data from the Association of State Labor Inspection stated that in 2010 there were 0.11% of migrant workers who underwent medical examination prior to departure were HIV positive.

This figure has increased from 2005 to the prevalence of HIV positive at 0.087%. Meanwhile, in 2010 the Forum of Migrant Care has handled 50 Migrant Workers who are infected with HIV. One of them is still alive, while 49 others are dying, since they found it difficult to access to health services for people living with HIV. Negative stigma and discrimination are experienced by HIV-infected migrant workers. Moreover, the practice of mandatory HIV testing against migrant workers is still continuing by recruitment and placement agencies, although it violates the principle of confidentiality, without informed consent and adequate counseling for the workers. Nonetheless, the Government does not have the authority to prohibit the practice.

Women's reproductive health

The Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) remains high as shown in the data of indonesia Basic Health Survey on 2010 as to 228/100.000 live birth. Some of the factors are:

- 1) The inadequate number of medical staff, midwives or doctors and anesthesists. For instance, based on the research result in South Sulawesi, the number of midwives working in public health centers and in villages are as many as 2.596, where 1143 (44.03%) work in public health center, 1.453 (55.97%) work in village. Referring to the total number of villages, there are still 1.232 vilalges in South Sulawesi which do not have midwives.
- 2) Health services for delivery and postpartum are mostly handled by health workers, especially in the big cities. The disparity of health services is still varying. Jakarta Capital is the highest figure, which reached 98.1% for health relief, in contrary Maluku region has only reached 42.5%. (Central Statistical Bureau 2009).
- 3) The utility of "shelter and public health centre" are not maximized. High risk pregnant women living in remote areas are hardly ever helped in cases of birth complication.
- 4) Referring system between General Hospital, and Public Health Centre is convoluted. Pregnant women face difficulties in accessing comprehensive obstetric and neonatal services at the General Hospital, due to lack of blood supply and Obstetrics Physicians;
- 5) Skilled midwives to assist deliveries are still inadequate due to old curriculum at the college. This leads to incompetence in handling pregnancy and childbirth;

- 6) There are many teen pregnancies because the early marriage culture is still perpetuated. This phenomenon contributes to Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR).⁶

Female genital mutilation

The practice of female genital circumcision (slicing and /or cutting and destroying the genital and its surrounding) has been banned by the Ministry of Health through a Circular Letter on Prohibition of Female Circumcision for Health Personnel, number HK.00.07.1.3 .1047 a. of 2006. The pressures from MUI (Indonesian Ulama Council), through their *Fatwa*, require female genital circumcision as male circumcision and urge the Minister of Health to repeal the policy. The ministry responded to the pressure by publishing new Ministry Regulation No. 1636/Menkes/Per/XI 2010 regarding female genital circumcision, which contradicts the previous policy. This is a setback for women's human rights' enforcement. In a Ministry Regulation, in principle, this regulation allows medical workers to implement circumcision, such as doctors, midwives and nurses. These include female circumcision procedure to "Perform a scratch on the skin that covers the front of the clitoris (the clitoris frenulum), using the tip of a disposable sterile needles sized 20G-22G from the mucosa to the skin, without injuring the clitoris" (Article 4, paragraph 2 (letter g). This is against the CEDAW Committee Recommendation on the prohibition of female genital circumcision (2007).

Increasing number of people infected with HIV/AIDS

The number of people with HIV/AIDS increase from time to time, year-to year. Unfortunately, the segregated data between men and women is not available. The following table contains the development AIDS data, and victims who died as per June 2011, in ten provinces in Indonesia.

Table: The Number of AIDS Cases in Indonesia (Until June 2011)

No.	Province	AIDS	AIDS/IDU	Deaths
1.	DKI Jakarta	3,997	2,802	577
2.	Papua	3,938	1	602
3.	West Java	3,809	2,750	678
4.	East Java	3,775	1,046	779
5.	Bali	1,747	269	311
6.	Central Java	1,336	195	370
7.	West Kalimantan	1,125	197	138
8.	South Sulawesi	995	478	167
9.	DI Yogyakarta	673	177	134
10.	North Sulawesi	557	81	125

Source: General Directorate of Disease, Ministry of Health 2011

Contrary to the above, there are still untapped provinces of HIV/AIDS, which is the area of West Sulawesi. A report from the member of CWGI in South Kalimantan mentioned that the spread of AIDS is quite high since 2007 of the cumulative number of 27 (in 2008), to 109 people in 2009. The total cases as per January 1st to September 2010 are 2.753 cases. It was reported that there are the increasing number of sex workers who are infected with HIV. Some NGOs began to be established in the region to prevent the spread, and provide services and care for people living with HIV/AIDS.

⁶ Penelitian World Bank, 2009.

Similarly, according to CWGI in Makassar, there are 125 women and 403 men living with HIV/AIDS (2008). In 2009, the number of women living with HIV/AIDS has increased to 176 women. Based on data of health profile in district/city of South Sulawesi (2009), there were 554 cases of HIV/AIDS.

Table: Cumulative Cases of AIDS as Per June 2011 based on gender

Gender	AIDS	Get transmitted of the disease (IDU)
Man	19,139	8,819
Woman	7,255	685
Unknown	89	93
Total	26,483	9,597

Source: General Directorate of Disease, Ministry of Health, 2011

There are still many obstacles to provide Antiretroviral Drugs (ARV) for the victims, as described below;

- 1) Antiretroviral drug is still difficult to access. The availability of ARV is limited to people living with HIV/AIDS in town, and they have to pay for the drugs.
- 2) Migrant workers deported from Malaysia are infected with HIV/AIDS and many of them died after returning to their home villages. Women and children are also infected with the disease.
- 3) The high rates of HIV/AIDS in Papua is the case of the genocide against people of Papua, because the government let the disease spread along the communities.
- 4) The rehabilitation of People Living with HIV/AIDS is still limited.

Unequal gender relations often let women feel insecure and highly vulnerable to the risk of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and AIDS.

Problems encountered in family planning

The big issue in family planning is the increasing unmet need. The current data showed that there is increasing unmet need in Indonesia, related with the absence of family planning program of the district to the village levels. This led to the limitation of reproductive health's information. The data in 2002/3 indicates that (IDHS) has decreased to 8.6%, in contrary it has risen to 9.1% in 2007, which means more and more women who need family planning do not get contraceptive devices. The total demand for family planning in Indonesia is very large because of the big population. Women are still the object of family planning, where they do not have the right to determine what kind of pills, or services in accordance with the conditions of their bodies. People assume that family planning is just for women. This led to situation where women still have problems in determining their reproductive health rights.

References:

1. Herbert, Jeff. (2011). "Study of Women's Leadership in Local Government Bureaucracy". LOGICA (Local Governance Innovations for Communities in Aceh).
2. International Labor Organization (ILO). (2012). Journalists Briefing Paper: End of Year notes on the issue of Migrant Workers' Protection", ILO Jakarta.

3. Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection. (2012). Gender-Based Human Development 2012. Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection in cooperation with National Bureau of Statistics, 2012.
4. National Commission of Anti Violence against Women. (2013). Victim Fighting and People Supporting: "Breaking against Stagnation in Legal System. Annual Report on Violence against Women in 2012.

Life Story #1: Shafira – “The sparkling star from the old land”

The drizzling rain fell over La Lizza, the hotel where I stayed in the Old Land of Kutai Kertanegara. La Lizza is an old hotel, built in the 1970s with the architectural ornament of Dayak ethnic, dominated with Ulin wood (*Eusderoxilon zwageri*) as *plasma nuftah* of the tropical rainforest of Kalimantan. According to the stories of people here, Ulin wood is the number one wood in the world, because the more wood is exposed to water the more powerful the wood is and it is more able to support the building for decades. I admire the subtlety of the patches of wood wrapped with slick that is integrated with “Sulir” hand carvings of ethnic Dayak.

This is my fifth visit to this old and interesting city. The city, which is surrounded by Mahakam River, lies between the city of Tenggarong and Samarinda, and is the provincial capital of East Kalimantan. I flicked the *Drosophila melanogaster*, fruit flies over my face. I think they are interested in the smell of *Anona muricata* (sour sop) and *Hylocereus undatus* (dragon fruit) left from dinner on the sidelines of my cheek. I glanced at the clock on my left wrist, "19:45 o'clock". Fifteen minutes ago, she was supposed to come here to see me as promised. “Where is she?” I muttered.

Cool air began to lunge that night. I folded both legs to my chest and held both the left and right hands simultaneously to dispel the chill, while tightening my scarf around the neck. Crickets (*Grillus assimillis*) and frogs (*Fejervarya cancrivora*) accompanied me that night like an open-air orchestra. The smell of sand, grass and Pandanwangi leaves (*Pandanus amaryfolius*) filled my nose. From a distance, I saw a shadow of a person coming towards me. It was the person whom I have been waiting for. I smiled as she came closer. She opened her arms and hugged me and said, "So sorry, I had to pray *Isha* first, so we could chat longer". I nodded, "It's okay, Shafira⁷". I invited her into the room, and served her drinks, fresh grapes (*Vitis vinifera*), and ripe orange fruit (*Citrus medica*).

My room was quite dark. The hotel wanted to save electricity because the electricity supply in Kalimantan is very limited, and they have to accept the rules of black out at certain times. This is tragic because it is the second richest after Papua province and has the highest income from forestry, coal, fuel oil, and natural gas of Indonesia. Yet the people in the town have to queue for hours at the gas station to get fuel for their vehicles, and are willing to live by candle light due to power outages. Rather than prosper, the people just have to share resources with others coming from outside the island that work in many national and multinational companies, and get better salaries than the local people. Three hours from this city, Shafira lives and works as an elementary school teacher in a village called Ketipung Kayu, Kutai Regency, *Gerbang Raja*⁸ (The King's Gate).

I began the conversation by asking her about her personal information while we sat propped up in the "rose of the bed", or what people often call the "spring bed". This is the only comfortable place to chat. The rattan chair provided (*Calamus rotang*) in this space, is already rickety and a little hollow. I think the old wicker chair has many rotten ticks (*Limex totundatus*) and they like to sneak, bite the skin, and cause itching and rancid smell.

Shafira asked me how to start telling her story. I asked her to share whatever she wants to, and I will ask some follow up questions. She is welcome to say whatever she wants, even her secret feelings and thoughts. We talked for 4 hours and she said, “*Pucuk dicinta Ulam tiba*”, meaning that she had really

⁷ For the purpose of confidentiality, all names and identities have been changed.

⁸⁸ Local people called this district as “Gerbang Raja” (*The King's Gate*) because the district of Kutai is the first Hinduism Kingdom in Indonesia.

been waiting for this moment, because she was able to reduce the distress she felt during this time by sharing her story. Our conversation was filled with laughter, compassion, and cries of anguish. I was deeply touched, emotionally drained and very impressed with the story. She believed that all problems she faced were still in her capacity to bear and that she had the ability to overcome them. As said in *AL-BAQARAH*, 286.

La yukallifu Allahu nafsan illa wusAAaha laha ma kasabat waAAalayha ma iktasabat rabbana la tuakhithna in naseena aw akhtana rabbana wala tahmil AAalayna isran kama hamaltahu AAala allatheena min qablina rabbana wala tuhammilna ma la taqata lana bihi waoAAafu AAanna waighfir lana wairhamna anta mawlana faonsurna AAala alqawmi alkafireena

God does not burden/impose a self except its endurance/capability, for it what it earned/acquired and on it what it earned/acquired. Our Lord does not punish/blame us if we forgot or mistook/wronged. Our Lord and do not burden/load on us a weight/crime, as you burdened/loaded it on those from before us. Our Lord and do not burden/load us what (there is) no power/ability/energy for us with it, and forgive/pardon on us, and forgive for us, and have mercy upon us, you are our guardian, so give us victory on/over the nation, the disbelievers.

Let's get back to Shafira's story. Physically, she is a beautiful, smart and attractive woman. She likes to smile and reveal a row of white teeth arranged like marble and a charming dimple on her cheeks. Her eyes were sparkling when I mentioned that I'm a year older than her and her origin – *Banjar Melayu*, is the same as mine. I told her she could speak *Banjarese* if she wanted to express something that is difficult to say in Bahasa Indonesia. Again, she smiled sheepishly while rubbing her black curls and nodded her head.

Childhood

This woman was born in 1971 in the district of Tanjung, South Kalimantan. Shafira is the sixth child of all seven. Her father was the head of the State's Construction Office at the District, a position that promised economic and social prosperity. Her mother was a housewife, and she conducted her duty very well. But disaster struck. When her mother gave birth to a seventh child (son), her father took a second wife. The mother did not know about this, because her father kept the second marriage secret. After a while, some family relatives told her mother that her husband had a new wife and lived in the city of *Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan*. Her mother was very shocked to hear this news. She was traumatized because she thought that her husband was a loyal husband and cared for his family. But in fact, he had lied to her and their children. Her mother could not accept this situation, so she got depressed and ill. Moreover, she was not getting enough *nafaqah* (maintenance), and her husband abandoned her. Economically their lives dropped dramatically because her father cut down on their monthly expenses.

Her little brother suffered from malnutrition. His growth was very slow and he suffered lack of affection from his parents. The three oldest kids dropped out of school, and the remaining three including Shafira had to adjust to the tight budget, while the smallest kid could not enroll in school. This made her mother become more depressed. Her illness got worse and she endured for almost three years. Then she died.

Her mother died when Shafira was 6 years old. After her mother's death, Shafira was raised by her older sister in Tanjung, while her 3 years- old brother was in the custody of her mother's sister. Three other brothers were raised by an uncle in East Kalimantan. Shafira said that this was the turning point of her life, because she had to face the death of her mother at a very early age, her father took a second wife and her siblings were scattered in all directions. She no longer felt the warmth of her mother's affection, and she even forgot her mother's face.

After the death of mother, her father began to look after the children. He often visited and inquired about their needs. Shafira felt delightful and she was happy with his presence amongst them. Months afterwards, the father lived with his kids permanently. Shafira did not realize that her father was estranged from his wife in *Banjarmasin*. He often quarreled with his wife after the mother's death. He felt sorry for the mother and that he had abandoned his children over the years. Eventually the father divorced the second wife and lived with his children until death snatched him.

With tears in her eyes, Shafira spoke of the death of her father. On Thursday morning in 1983, she and her sister went to school as usual. She saw the father sleeping tightly. She did not have the slightest suspicion because usually her father slept again after the dawn's prayer. When she came home from school at noon, she saw her father was still sleeping. She had a bad feeling. Then, she asked her sister, "*Kakak*⁹, *why Abah*¹⁰ is not up yet?" Her sister replied, "*Let him sleep, do not disturb. He will wake up soon!*" Then her sister went off to play with her friends. Her sister never paid attention to their father because she thought their late mother had been hurt during her lifetime because of him.

After praying at the mosque, Shafira found that her father was still not awake. Shafira increasingly got suspicious. She opened the nets of bed and woke her father. But he did not move. His *sarong* had parted and his hands folded on his chest. Getting scared, Shafira ran to call Pak Daliman, her neighbor. She told him about her father and the two rushed to the house. After a while, Pak Daliman said that her father had died. Shafira was shocked and screamed loudly. Her screams were heard by her neighbors, and they rushed to her house. That night Shafira had become an orphan.

After the death of her father

At the age of 13, she had lost her mother and father. One of her older sisters suggested to Shafira to live with their Uncle called *Marina* (younger brother of the father) in Samarinda, East Kalimantan. With a sad heart, she left Tanjung, South Kalimantan, her hometown and moved to the provincial capital of East Kalimantan. She was accompanied by her sister, who also left to continue her education in high school. At that time Shafira was enrolled in the Junior High School. With few clothes and uniforms in her bag, she set her heart to live with a family she has not known before. Her uncle had a wife, called *Acil* (aunty) and they had five small children.

Her first episode began as an orphan with scorn and discrimination from *Acil* and their children. She had to get up early in the mornings (5:00) to wash dishes, cook rice, sweep, mop and prepare breakfast. When she was done with the housework, she prepared for school. She was never given pocket money to school even though *Paman* (Uncle) deposited a sum of money for Shafira just like he did for his daughter who was the same age as she was. Her cousin felt jealous because she thought that her father paid more attention to Shafira.

With food brought from home, she could survive and study hard until noon. When she got home from school, she had to clean the house, wash the dishes and take care of her younger cousins aged 3 and 5 years. She often went shopping and had to cook for all family members. Although she was given the freedom to play with her neighbors, she still had to take care of her younger siblings.

During the 3 years living with *Paman and Acil*, she had never got any school uniform or books. She only got some uniforms and textbooks from her class mates. She did not need to pay for tuition fee, because

⁹ Kakak (Older sister).

¹⁰ Abah (Daddy).

she was an orphan. Sometimes friends asked her to go to school cafeteria and let her choose her favorite menu. This was mesmerizing because she never felt the warmth, tenderness and care of the people who should have loved her.

During the *Eid Mubarak (Eidul Fitri)*, all her cousins got new clothes, bags and shoes. Shafira was disappointed and said to herself, "Why did Uncle not buy me new clothes and shoes for Eid?" All children in the *kampung* where she lived wore clothes, bags, shoes and new accessories. They even got extra money as an *Eid* gift, while Shafira just received Rp 5,000 (US\$ 0,5) gift from her Uncle and wore blouse and skirt from her late father, that were dull. At that time, she wished, "*If only Father was still alive*".

The days of tension

After graduating from high school, she enrolled in Senior High School in Samarinda. In order to change her life situation, she moved to her oldest sister's house. Her sister was married and had 3 children. Her husband was a rubber tapper at the plantation on the edge of the city of Samarinda. Her eldest sister was very abusive, treated her badly and saw her as sexual burden. Some male friends of Shafira who liked to play with her would come to the house. But Shafira's sister would get upset because she was worried Shafira would get involved with one of them and get pregnant. That is the sister was overprotective and limited Shafira's freedom because she saw her as a woman, i.e. a potential problem. Shafira said, "*My sister often thought badly of me*". Her sadness never ended. Her sister forbade her to go out except to school.

However, Shafira sometimes went out without her sister's permission. As a result, her sister often got furious with Shafira. The situation became worse, but her spirit of learning never faded away. She was anxious to finish the school, find proper job and leave the house. Fortunately, one of her sisters visited her and bought some books, stationeries, and clothes and gave some money. Sometimes she took Shafira out for a walk and treated her for dinner. Actually, Shafira wanted to stay with her, but the elder sister was very powerful and forbade her to leave. So, she continued living at her eldest sister's house, feeling powerless and fearful until she graduated from Senior High School. Initially, she wanted to work in a company but the certificate of high school was not adequate because companies were hiring graduates of vocational schools.

She continued to look for a way to get out from the house. Apparently, God heard her prayer. One day, there was a man called Dan who wanted to marry her after they had been seeing each other for a few months. She did not really love him but she thought marrying him would give her the opportunity to move out of her sister's place. In 1990, in the month of *Ramadhan*, Dan and his family came to her sister and asked for Shafira's hand in marriage. They brought *Penalian (gift as the present for engagement)*, a copy of the Qur'an, clothing, shoes, bags, bedding, and so forth. At that time Dan also brought a ring for Shafira to mark their engagement, and it was agreed that they would get married after the *Eid*.

A week after the *Eid*, Dan's family celebrated *Eid Ketupat* as *Shawwal* Fasting closure. Shafira was invited to the Dan's family's place and was picked up by his cousin. Her sister allowed her to go on the condition she must go back home early. Unfortunately, she forgot to go home early, because she was so happy enjoying the company of Dan's charming family. At 9.00 PM, Shafira was brought home by Dan's cousin, because Dan had to work from the morning until night. When she got home, she was trembling because her sister was waiting for her at the doorway holding a piece of timber. The sister was very angry and beat Shafira's legs because she did not keep the promise to come home early. Shafira ran to the kitchen when her sister threatened to burn her diploma certificate in the stove. She threatened to burn the

diploma if she dared to fight against her. Shafira screaming hysterically tried to seize the high school diploma earned with sacrifice and tears. But her sister could not be defeated. The day after, before leaving the house, she said to Shafira, "Look, do not ever try to escape from the house!"

The frightened screams of Shafira were heard by Dan's cousin at that night. He recounted the events that he heard to his cousin. In the morning, Dan came and comforted her. But she was depressed and took out her frustration at Dan while throwing the gifts given by his family. Shafira was very upset. She did not want to continue this marriage.

When Dan got home, he told the incident to his mother. Then they decided to take the gift given to her and to call off the marriage. In the afternoon, delegates from Dan's family came to convey the message to Shafira's family. Before they left, she heard Dan's uncle say, "Sorry, our children may not do anything embarrassing. Please, do not hold any grudges against Dan and Shafira ". At that moment, Shafira felt that although what had happened was not her fault, still things ended with a grief between her and Dan. She sighed sadly and said, *"My misery was complete. There was no hope to get out of this house! I must live my dark days alone. My sister was too cruel and treated me badly."* Her tears were falling while she was recounting her story.

The sadness continues

One afternoon, a man visited their home. He was friend of Shafira's a brother-in-law. Apparently, this man, called "Ali," fell in love with Shafira and expressed his intention to propose to her through her sister. Her sister agreed that he marry Shafira. Shafira said he was not the truly lover of her, but she was forced to accept the proposal because she wanted to move out of her sister's place by any means.

On a Saturday evening, Ali and Shafira went to the movies. They had already gotten permission from her sister to go. But Shafira had to take along her three cousins. The day before, Ali bought clothes and shoes for Shafira to wear to the movies. When the sister saw Shafira in new clothes and shoes, she became suspicious. She was angry because she thought Shafira had asked Ali for clothes and shoes. Shafira sighed and said, *"Why my sadness has never ended?"*

At that night, she made an escape plan because she could not put up with the pressure she felt over the years. The next morning after her sister and husband left to rubber plantation, Shafira escaped and hid in the house of Ali's brother who lived 2 miles from her home. In hiding, she felt awkward because if she returned to the sister's house, she would get angry. Then she spoke to Ali and told him that they should get married immediately. Shafira and Ali got married without her sister's consent. In the years to come, when Ali and she quarreled, he would bring up her eloping and marrying him as a way of insulting her.

Shafira's marriage

During 20 years of marriage, Shafira and Ali were blessed with 3 children. They had two girls and one boy. Her first daughter, Dima (19 years), was attending the State University majoring in economics. Her second son, Asif (17 years) dropped out from school for he ever did his homework and rarely went to school. The third daughter, Sana (15 years) - was in junior high school in the same town with Dima in Samarinda.

Throughout her marriage, Shafira often heard humiliating words from her husband. For instance, he would say *"If I had not made efforts to get you a job as a teacher, you would not have had the job by now. If you had not married me, you would have been now living under a bridge!"* When he got angry, he was abusive and insulting. He screamed like crazy and often the neighbors heard his angry fits, which

embarrassed her. His words were very rude and inappropriate. He would insult her with words such as "Pig, Satan, motherfucker, and so forth." Shafira repeatedly advised him to behave politely. But Ali's behavior did not change, in fact, it got worse. Shafira felt that her marriage was in danger (*di ujung tanduk*).

The exhausting divorce

During her marriage, she never got spousal maintenance (*nafaqah*) from her husband. She was not trusted to manage the family finances, because her husband accused her of spending money on her male friends for fun. Her husband managed their income by himself. She never knew how much he earned as a civil servant. Shafira was a kindergarten teacher with a salary of around Rp 300,000 (US\$ 35) per month. She spent her salary on the children and herself. Often, her husband forced her to shoulder many of the children's expenses although she did not earn much. This triggered fights between them.

To cope with her unhappy marriage, Shafira turned her attention to social activities. She diligently followed the activities of a woman's organization and youth organization (KNPI) at District level and met many people, both men and women. Shafira, supple and beautiful, attracted the attention of men. Although she never took any interest in them, some of them were desperate to send a text message (SMS) to her mobile phone. One night, her husband searching her mobile phone found this text, "Shafira, how are you? Sleep well, baby." Seeing this text message her husband became very mad and started cursing her and calling her whore. Shafira did not say anything because she felt guilty because she has betrayed her husband.

Secretly, the phone number was tracked by her husband and he found that the owner of this number was a Junior High School principal in the sub District. He was very jealous and threatened to divorce his wife. Shafira tried to explain that she did not have any relations with other men, and certainly not with this school principal since he already had a wife. But her husband did not believe her and always brought up the issue. This happened in early 2007. One year later, Shafira decided to abandon her husband's bed.

The decision to stop having sexual relations with her husband was not known to their children. They thought everything was normal. A month later, her husband moved to Samarinda City to accompany his eldest daughter to go to college, and he moved to work in that same city. Shafira with her two other children lived in Ketipung Kayu. In this uncertain situation, she again felt depressed. Her marital status was not clear and she lived in uncertainty. She was afraid that she was being a disobedient wife by staying married, and yet not having any marital relations with her husband.

One night in 2011, after 3 years of bed separation, Shafira ventured to ask her husband for divorce. She apologized and asked her husband to agree to release her. She wanted her husband not to expect that she would return to him, because she did not love him anymore. She felt her husband did not love her either because his behavior towards her was hurtful. That night she felt relieved even though her husband did not agree then to divorce her.

Three days later Ali came to see her in . While she was cleaning the fishes, he asked, "Are you still insistent on your decision?" And she answered, "Yes, I am still sticking to my decision. . . I want to find the best way! "Then Ali said," If that's what you want, I want to find companion". "Please! If you want to marry " Shafira said. Then he confirmed, "If you want a divorce, you have to proceed on your own and I will just sign the certificate, ONLY!" At that time, she thought her husband really wanted to release her. She felt relieved. This is what she wanted for many years. Three months later, Ali got married to a widow with three daughters in Samarinda.

But this second marriage only lasted for 8 months. He did not get along with his wife because he always compared his wife to Shafira. Ali wanted his new wife to be obedient and to give in to all his demands. But his new wife got angry at him and says, "Fine, you are welcome to go back to your old wife!"

In the midst of busy life as a teacher, Shafira had to petition for divorce at the Religious Court (*Pengadilan Agama*). Shafira consulted with representatives of the Religious Court and got suggestions on how to shortcut the proceedings. She also heard from some friends that it was difficult to get a divorce in her case, because of her status as a civil servant.

A staff at the District Education Bureau said to her, "It's hard to secure a divorce if you are a civil servant¹¹. I will help you write letter to the village office and head of education office in Province. But you have to go to court, if you want a divorce!" Then Shafira went to court and met some of her acquaintances. One of them was a clerk to a judge. He asked, "Mom, what can I help you with?" Shafira replied, "I have a letter for a divorce!" Then she asked him, "If I filed divorce as a housewife, would it be possible? The clerk called someone and replied, "Yes, you can. You only need marriage certificate and ID. But, let me see your ID, Mom. What is your job? "And Shafira examined her ID. The ID said that she was a teacher, not a civil servant. This could be understood as her being a teacher at a privately-owned school, and not a a state-Owned school, which would make her a civil servant. This is what saved Shafira because it was difficult to get a divorce as a civil servant.

Accompanied by the education staff, she went to the court to petition for divorce. At that time, she was asked by the staff of the court, "What is the problem? Since when has this problem been going on?" After the question and answer process, the court received her case file and few days later a confirmation was issued by the Religious Court. All costs of the divorce had to be covered by Shafira. After going through a long process of divorce (1 year), she was officially divorced from her husband. But during the trial, she had not mentioned the *gonogini*¹² treasure of both of them. During their marriage, they purchased two houses, one in Samarinda city, and one in Ketipung Kayu village. She followed the suggestion of Mr. Herman, her "*divorce consultant*" who advised her that the process of divorce would be long and tortuous if she demanded her share of the value of the two houses and the post-divorce *nafaqah* (*maintenance*). These two things became issues for her in the future because her ex-husband threatened to evict her out of the house at Ketipung Kayu, if she remarried.

Becoming a divorced woman

Her decision to divorce was the right decision because she did not want to live in the shadow of fear, humiliation and degrading treatment by her husband every single day. She did not want to be accused of being "a bitch" by her husband simply because many men admire her. Even her husband had once threatened her, "*If I see you with another man, I will beat you and have your son beat you as well.*".

Although she was happy because she was freed from her life with her husband, things were still difficult for her. Her ex-husband forbade her to marry again, and he threatened to throw her out of the house and take all his children with him. Ali who was now divorced from his second wife, was hoping Shafira

¹¹ Regarding the Government Regulation of Indonesia, No.45/1990 (The Amendment of The Permission of Marriage and Divorce for Civil Servant), Article 3 stated (1) Civil Servant who are seeking divorce must get permission or a letter of approval from his/her Superior. (2) ... to get the approval, he/she must write the letter of his/her reason to divorce to Superior (3)The reason of divorce must be clearly stated.

¹² Gono gini means the property gain during the marriage. In Shafira's case those are the houses at Ketipung Kayu and Samarinda.

would go back to him. Even the oldest daughter tried to convince Shafira to get back together with her father. But Shafira told her daughter, "Dima, you cannot force Mom to go back to Dad. You must understand my circumstances. Oneday Mom would love to let you know that I already have a future husband." But until now she has not dared to remarry. She continued to pray that her ex-husband would get a new wife, so that it would be safe for Shafira. But she said it looked like it was quite impossible.

Being a divorced woman was also hard for her. Divorcees were often negatively stereotyped by the public. It was especially hard for Shafira since she was attractive and friendly. Many men tried to flirt and seduce her. The head of Sub District office (Camat) pursued her, but she refused him because he was already married. So, Shafira sometimes felt harassed, especially with her status as a divorced woman. She often asked herself, "What do people expect me to do? How do they value me?" she sighed.

Shafira also talked about a former principal of her school who harassed her. She said: "Few months ago, I wanted to register for the health insurance scheme to the District Health Office. The form of registration had to be approved and signed by the Principal of the school where I worked in Ketipung Kayu. Once I got the form in Tenggaraong City (3 hour-drive from the village), I needed to return to Ketipung Kayu to get the approval and signature of the Principal. Because the back and forth travel would waste my time and money, I asked the principal to take me to the Health office when he had any business in the City of Tenggaraong. He agreed. On that day, we went to Tenggaraong city with his motorcycle. But on the way to Tenggaraong, his hands began to grope me and he said something embarrassing to me. I was upset. As we arrived in Tenggaraong, he took me to Herlang Hotel. Then I shouted, "I do not want to be brought here." I looked at him; his eyes were red and he started to get mad. He replied, "If you do not want (to check into the hotel, I will leave you here!". Then I thought, "If he left me here, I would not be able to go home since I did not have enough money. But it was just a threat, he did not leave me and brought me to the office.

After that incident, he was embarrassed, but I was worried because he was my boss and he could do anything to make things difficult for me. I felt that he was resentful towards me. One day he obstructed me to go to college. I really wanted to study and graduate from University. I was *crying because it hurt me. I threatened him, if he kept bothering me, then I would report the incident to journalists in the district. And then we would be equally embarrassed. Then he gave me permission to go for my studies.*

Meeting her future husband

Shafira told me that she had met her future husband, Braga, in the District of Ketipung Kayu, when she was attending the meeting of Komite Nasional Pemuda Indonesia / KNPI (Indonesia National Youth Committee). Braga was a former board member of KNPI, and he was invited to be the observer of the meeting. Shafira was very impressed with Braga's intelligence and compassion. She felt in love with him and her feeling towards him were obvious when she interacted with him. The good thing was that Braga also felt in love with her. Braga's ethnic origin was Kutai (East Kalimantan), and worked in a coal mining company in Papua Island, 7 hours flight from Kalimantan. Every six months he got a month off and took the opportunity to return home and see Shafira. Shafira said that she was happy because she finally found the man of her heart. Braga was very helpful and cared for her a lot, but she was still hesitant to accept his marriage proposal because her former husband threatened to evict her from their house if she remarried. Shafira was so ashamed to introduce Braga to her family, because she said that she was not well matched and Braga's economic status was lower than that of her former husband.

She was also afraid of stigmatization from the community. With her tear of anguish, she said some neighbors told her, “Shafira do not throw your shoes to get the slipper”, meaning that she had to find a man, better than her former husband. This made her very sad but she tried to be optimistic and had to run her life as a mother, teacher, and woman activist in PKK (local woman organization). She enjoyed having some activities in communities and applied her capacity to help other woman in need in her surroundings, by doing some counseling and supporting. Last year, she attended Gender and Leadership training in KNPI and when this interview was being conducted, she was participating in CEDAW training, conducted by Rumpun Gema Perempuan, a women-rights’ NGO based in Jakarta, in collaboration with KNPI.

At the end of our conversation, I asked “What are your hopes?” She replied, “I want to get married, foster the great family in Tranquility, Love and Compassion (Sakinah, Mawaddah, Warahmah). My future husband is sincere and he truly loves me. I hope one day there will be a miracle and I will get the best from Allah SWT, and I am waiting for the right time to accept my future husband’s proposal to marry me. I do not want to live in misery, any more.” At 00.15 AM, she concluded her story. Before she left, I gave her a rainbow-patterned scarf as a reminder that once in her life time she had shared her story with someone who admire her so much. Have a good life full of blessings, Sparkling Star. Aamiin Ya Rabbal Alamin.

Analysis of *qiwamah* and *wilayah* in Shafira’s story

- **Polygamy and Growing Up**

Polygamy, which is religious right given to Muslim men and linked to man’s claim to authority and guardianship (*qiwamah*), has affected Shafira’s childhood and life choices in significant ways. When Shafira was a very young age of 6 years, Shafira’s father took a second wife, and abandoned her, her siblings and mother. Their economic situation deteriorated. Instead of taking the role and responsibility of being the protector and provider for the family, her father cut down their monthly expenses, which affected the growth and wellbeing of her younger siblings. She was also deprived from her father’s affection and protection. Her mother was very depressed and this led to her illness, and then her death. This situation affected Shafira’s life during childhood, for she grew up without her parents.

At the age of 13, her father died and Shafira had to move to another provincial city (from South to East Kalimantan) to continue her school. She lived with her uncle and aunt, who treated Shafira as child domestic labor, scorned and discriminated against. Her routine work as child domestic laborer was very detrimental for her health and growth. Shafira had to do domestic chores like cooking, washing, cleaning the house and taking care of her cousins. She had to get up early in the morning, lived on leftover food and limited rest hours after school and was forbidden from playing with her mates. She got little protection and maintenance from her uncle and his wife. During three years of living with her relatives, she never got any school uniforms, books, new clothes and proper foods, even in *Eid Mubarak* when other children received gifts of new clothes, accessories, and money from their parents.

After graduating from junior high school, Shafira moved to the home of her eldest sister, who was married to a rubber tapper. Her eldest sister was very abusive, treated her badly and worried that Shafira would get involved with men and get pregnant. Her sister forbade her to go out except to

school. Sometimes male friends of Shafira would come over to play with her, but her sister would send them away. That is, her sister was overprotective of Shafira and limited Shafira's freedom, because she saw Shafira as a woman who can be sought by men, and thus as a potential problem. In patriarchal gender structures, women also can perpetuate violence against other women of younger age or lower status, or class. This shows the complex ways in which patriarchy operates. To escape from this abusive situation, Shafira was waiting for a male savior. She eloped from her sister's house, after one of their heated arguments, and asked Ali, her suitor, to immediately marry her. Later on, in their marriage, Ali used this against her and would say to her, "*If I had not married you, you would have been living under a bridge!*".

Her reason to marry Ali, whom she did not love, was to escape the violence and difficult life in her sister's house. So, marriage was a way to "overcome" her problem. Her marriage to Ali, then, was different from her previous relationship with Dan, her first boyfriend, which failed. Dan loved and cared for her a lot, but because of her sister's pressure she ended up fighting with Dan and eventually breaking up with him. In other words, Shafira's marriage choice was completely shaped by her difficult situation.

- **Provision and obedience in marriage**

Rather than fulfilling his role as protector and provider, Ali treated Shafira abusively. She often heard humiliating words from him, such as, "*If I had not helped you, you would not have found a job as a teacher.*" When angry, Ali took out his anger on Shafira and became abusive. He had angry screaming fits, which the neighbors heard all the time, and this embarrassed Shafira. His words were very rude and inappropriate. For example, he would say insulting words such as, "*Pig, Bitch, Satan, Motherfucker,*" He also threatened to beat her by saying; "*If I see you with your male friends, I will beat you and have your son beat you as well.*" During her marriage, there was a lot of tension between Shafira and her husband. The marriage did not work, and yet she waited for 20 years to go for divorce because women who get divorced face stigma and shame. People think that divorced women are morally loose, and marginalize them.

Shafira never received any money from her husband during her marriage. He did not trust her to manage the family budget and did the shopping himself. He also tended to control the family and wanted Shafira to be obedient and fulfill all his demands. After 5 years of marriage, she decided to work because she was feeling quite worthless without money. The financial problems between her and her husband caused tensions in the family. For instance, her husband forced Shafira to shoulder the financial needs of her children, although her salary as an elementary school teacher was small (RP 300,000 per month or US\$35). On one occasion, her spoiled son asked her for money. She told him that she did not have any money left. Then her husband said in front of Shafira and her children, "*I do not believe you have no money, Shafira. You have some but you spend the money on your male friends, instead!*" This statement reflected that he was suspicious of his wife and feared that she was being unfaithful.

As the situation got worse, Shafira decided to stop having sexual relations with her husband and no longer share a bed with him. But she felt guilty about this decision; she felt she was being a disobedient wife to her husband, and hence was committing a religious and social infringement. This religious and social norm that a wife should be obedient to her husband (and which implicitly entails being sexually available to her husband), is reflected in Marriage Law (No.1/1974), Article No. 31. (3) The article states that the husband is recognized as the head of family, and the wife is solely a

housewife. It is interpreted that the wife has to respect her husband as the head of family and obey his command.

After three years of bed separation, Shafira decided to divorce her husband. It took a lot of emotional strength from Shafira to make this decision, and that is why it took her three years to finally petition for divorce. She felt conflicted because, on the one hand she felt that it was her duty to obey her husband, and thus felt guilty about not having sexual relations with him. On the other hand, she needed to make a real change in her life. Yet the three years of bed separation from her husband enabled her to have distance and be protected from his angry fits and the humiliation and abuse. When she finally decided to go for divorce, she felt glad that she would finally be able to express her feelings to her husband without anger, or humiliation. This decision was a turning point in her life because she was able to get rid of the guilt she felt towards her husband and overcome her broken heart.

- **Departing from *qiwamah* and *wilayah* marital roles**

Unlike the dominant *qiwamah-wilayah* model of gender relations where a wife is financially dependent on her husband, Shafira provided for her family. She worked as an elementary school teacher and spent her salary on her three children. She also contributed financially to building their houses in Samarinda city, and Ketipung Kayu village by taking credit scheme from the Bank. Despite her financial role, Shafira was also expected by her husband to be a housewife and to take care of all domestic chores and the children's needs. Her husband expected her to be an obedient wife and fulfill his demands. Shafira tried to negotiate with her husband to take care of their son who potentially dropped out from school, but he refused and said, "*That is your business!*" As a school teacher, she was devastated when she realized that her son had no motivation for school, and finally dropped out at a later time.

There was divergence between the reality of gender roles and relations in Shafira's lived experiences with her husband. On the one hand and the model of gender roles and relations in *Qiwamah*, on the other hand did not change the gender dynamics between Shafira and her husband. Both Shafira and her husband did not see marital roles as being based on shared responsibilities. Shafira resented that her husband assumed that her earning an income, meant that he could neglect his role as a provider, and expected her to provide for their children. Her husband, also, on the one hand did not question his claim to authority and leadership over his family, yet at the same time he expected Shafira to take part in providing for the family and be an obedient and submissive wife at the same time. While Shafira was unhappy with this situation, part of her still accepted her role as the obedient wife, hence her guilt for refraining from having sexual relations with her husband.

Another divergence is the property rights' issue. Both houses in Ketipung Kayu and Samarinda (East Kalimantan), were under the name of her husband although Shafira contributed to the purchasing of these houses. She explained this by saying that it was a social custom in her community that the man would be the owner of the family property, even if the wife contributed to the costs of building the houses.

- **Divorce and confronting multiple systems of authority**

Shafira had to petition for divorce at the Religious Courts (*Pengadilan Agama*) on her own, since her husband told her, "*If you want a divorce, you have to proceed on your own and I just need to sign the certificate, ONLY!*"

In her divorce proceeding, Shafira did not demand the rights of equal property and post-divorce *nafaqah* for herself and children under her custody (Asif, 17 years, and Sana, 15 years). Her counsel advised her that it would delay, and make more difficult the divorce process. She followed the counsel's advice, and as result she was not able to make claims to her post-divorce financial rights. Moreover, her husband threatened to evict her out of the house at Ketipung Kayu village and take their children under his custody, if she remarried. A staff at the District Education Bureau said to her, "*It's hard to petition for divorce if one is a civil servant*". Shafira was aware of this situation because based on the Government Regulation No.45/1990, regarding Permission of Marriage and Divorce for Civil Servant" (*Izin Perkawinan dan Perceraian Bagi Pegawai Negeri Sipil*, article 3, (1) A civil servant who is intent on getting divorce must ask for permission from his/her Superior, and (2) The reason to get divorce must be described in a written letter". This made the process of divorce for civil servants complicated since they had to get the approval of their superiors at work. So, in the case of civil servants, the state played an intrusive role in their family lives, which limited their access to remarriage and divorce. This law was initially intended to "protect" the wife of civil servant from the practice of polygamy on the part of the husband. Several articles in the law also obligate male civil servant to submit a written request for taking a new wife after his first marriage and makes this new marriage contingent on the approval of his superiors at work. Also, the law prohibits female civil servants from becoming second, third, or fourth wives.

- **Trajectory of self**

At the beginning, Shafira was a woman who suffered a lot of abuses and lack of love from her sister. As a result, she resorted to marriage as an escape from an unhappy family life. But her experience of marriage, was not one of love and compassion. She suffered humiliation and marital relations that were full of tension and conflict. During her marriage, Shafira believed that a wife should be obedient to her husband, but she also felt she was entitled to happy healthy relationship in which she could feel respected and valued.

During three years of bed separation, Shafira did self-reflections. On one of her reflections, she thought that she did her best as wife and mother. She never cares about herself, but she had to end this situation that she needs to think about her happiness, she is entitled to be happy and fulfill her need to be loved and cared for. After many years of unhappy marriage, Shafira got the courage to end her abusive marriage. She was happy with the decision to divorce from her husband. Shafira confronted a lot of problems and gave up financial rights in order to get divorce. But she persevered because it was important for her to end the marriage.

Shafira's decision to end her marriage reflects some change in her in her religious beliefs. On the one hand, she felt right about the decision to divorce her husband, and no longer felt guilty, or had a sense of failure as a Muslim wife. On the other hand, she still remained a strong religious person. For example, she refused to get involved with a married man and didn't want to hurt his wife. She still remained interested in religion because it was important to her. She attended gatherings with women, where they advised one another on the importance of espousing moral values and doing good deeds. She also continued to recite Al-Qur'an regularly.

After the divorce, she faced a lot sexual harassment from men in the community and at her workplace. But she was able to fend off these sexual advances and harassment. She said "No" to the principal of her school when he asked her to sleep with him. Also, she was confident to say, "No" to chief of sub district who wanted to marry her and take her as his second wife. She remained true to

her principle of not getting involved with married men. She valued herself as a woman with dignity and wanted to be respected by others. She did not want people to see her as a sexual object and undermine her because she was a divorced woman. These challenges were particularly hard in Shafira's case because she was a very attractive woman.

Shafira evolved into a woman who knew what she wanted out of marriage, and would not settle for any marriage proposal. She wants a marriage that brought tranquility, love, and compassion (*sakinah, mawaddah, and rahmah*). But that was not all. Even though she has a man who loves and cares for her, she is hesitant to accept his marriage proposal and to move with him to Papua Island, because she does not want to give up her job, her current life and the custody of her children. She feels conflicted because it's not only a matter of protection, love, compassion and tranquility from a man, but her responsibilities for her kids and her financial security. She feels her life is complex and so put the marriage proposal on hold. She said that she was waiting for a miracle, and she believed in God Almighty.

Reflections on Shafira's story

Initially, our meeting was an accident. It started with the CEDAW training (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) organized by National Committee of Indonesian Youth (*Komite Nasional Pemuda Indonesia*) in Kutai Kertanegara, East Kalimantan, which is often called the "King's Gate" because there are historical relics of Hindu Kingdom, the oldest Kingdom in Indonesia.

Before leaving for the city, I discussed with the Indonesian "Global Life Stories" research team regarding the possibilities to conduct focus group discussions in order to explore the situation of woman in that area and assess *qiwamah* and *wilayah* resource persons to be in depth interviewed. My plan was approved by the research team and I prepared the materials needed for the above-mentioned activities.

I was lucky because my friends in KNPI are very supportive and provide technical assistance in conducting focus group discussions. The focus group discussion process ran very smoothly and focus group discussions were conducted in 2 stages because there were 20 women interested in participating and we divided them into two groups. One of the goals of this focus group discussions, among others, was to capture the opinions and experiences of women (as participant of training) on issues the *qiwamah* and *wilayah*.

In the focus group discussion process I found common patterns of violence and discrimination experienced by women (mostly married woman) in their daily life. In general, they are subjected to domestic violence, and violence perpetuated in public spaces. Sexual assault and domestic violence cases dominating as testified by them.

I sought participants who have a unique story, and face multi-faceted types of violence and discrimination. One of the organizing committees helped me persuade one of the participants to be interviewed, but she refused the request for an interview on the grounds that she does not want others to hear her story. Then I recalled that one of the FGD participants who told us about sexual violence she experienced in public spaces, but I feared that she would decline my request to interview her, as did the previous participant. Finally, I asked the chairman of the committee to approach and persuade her.

Surprisingly, she was willing to be interviewed. My friend approached me and said that she was willing to be interviewed. I'm very glad mainly after she said, "Pucuk dicinta, Ulam tiba", means that she was really happy to be interviewed because she was willing to share her story about her life experiences. I had a

feeling that this participant has an incredible story, which was strongly associated with *qiwamah* and *wilayah*. This is how I met Shafira.

Then we promised to meet in that evening. After evening prayers, she came to meet me at the hotel room and I invited her to choose a comfortable place for her to be interviewed. She chose to sit on the bed, and leaning her back against the wall. I created the room as comfortable as possible to let her share the experience easily. I first let her know about the study we've been doing in Global Life Stories research, and told her about the process that has been carried out by Indonesian researchers. She listened carefully to my story and asked, "How could I tell you?" Then I gave her some basic questions, and she was free to explore her life story. The interview process took over 4 consecutive hours and I record all our conversation with a tape recorder.

I feel that we have closeness because both my parents are from the same region and language with her. I invited her to speak in local language if she feels comfortable with it. Then she smiled and showed his white teeth lined with dimples on her both cheeks. She looks beautiful with curly hair and white skin.

This proximity makes her easier to trust me, and she tells her life story fluently and by sequences since childhood, adolescence and adulthood until marriage. She told the story with bitterness and misery. But Shafira is a strong figure, tough and does not want to give up regarding the various problems and difficulties she faces.

She described her life story with anguish of tears. She never stopped wiping her shed tears when she told me about the death of her father. She also sobbed while telling about her young boy's story. He was dropped out of school and she tried hard to prevent him to do so, but she couldn't do anything. Her son is very spoiled, and does not have the spirit of learning so that he failed to pass for the next grade at school. This is very tragic that happened because Shafira was a teacher. She feels shame and losing her face amongst her relatives and neighbors in her village.

Although I knew that she was very emotional when talking about her marriage, but I learned much about her patience in taking the decision to divorce, after she had bed separation with her husband for five years. She took the decision after she communicates with ALLAH SWT through her *Tahajjud and Istigharah* prayers. She told me that she took the decision to divorce because there is no way for both of them as husband and wife to maintain the marriage, because she did not obtain tranquility, compassion and love from her husband who is supposed to be her protector.

Instead of being the protector and provider for the family, her husband is a rough and jealous. He did not allow Shafira to work and enjoy her social life. In that situation, she still serves the daily needs of her husband well. However, the situation didn't change, it became even worse.

Within three years of separation, she tried to reflect on her marriage and she came to the decision of divorce. Although she did not know what is "*qiwamah* and *wilayah*", but her experience reflects a failure of the husband to carry out his functions in *qiwamah* concept. She also had a hard time when she realized that her mother died of depression because her father did polygamy in secrecy, and he was lying to the children and his wife for many years. In such a young age (6 years old) she still remembers the misery she felt. She said it was the culmination of her life because she separated from her siblings since her mother died. Shafira was cared for by her aunt and uncle who discriminated against her.

My interaction with her taught me about the importance of responsibility, compassion, understanding, openness and communication in the family between husband and wife, and between parents and children.

I was amazed with her because she stuck to her position not to marry a married man. Shafira said that women should not hurt other women. She rejected the marriage proposal of her chief of sub-district in the area because she did not want to hurt his wife. She realized that her late mother felt betrayed because of her father's polygamy. She also strongly rejected her principal's seduction to have sex with her to lure her promotion as a teacher and she would get money, instead.

Although she has a future husband, a young man who loves her very much but she is still very careful to decide to get married for the second time. She is still traumatized and does not want to face the bitter experience of her previous marriage.

I describe our conversation and interaction as a "symbiotic mutualism". Both of us took advantage of the sharing between us. On the sidelines of heartache and tears, I still see her smiling and laughing when she recalled some funny things that happened in her childhood with her sister. Her face was shimmering when she talked about her future husband. She wants to change her life and live happily with her future husband.

I learned a lot from her experience and wisdom of this story. Comparing with my marriage, I feel far better than what has happened to Shafira. I feel very grateful of GOD's love that I felt since childhood until now. I hope Shafira will find her happiness in her life.

Life story #2: Nawa – I and my baby got infected HIV/AIDS from my late husband

My family

I was born in a complicated family. My Mom was a Christian and she made a personal choice to convert to Islam. Then, Mom met Dad who was divorced with one son. After marriage, they lived in the family's houses owned by my grandfather in Jakarta. All children were welcome to live in the compound. My parents and I lived in a fairly big house with my step brother (call him Topan), my brother (Guntur), Dad's brother. and a domestic worker.

My Mom is an orphan. She was a hard woman and dominated the family's decision-making. Dad would cancel any decision that was not approved by Mom. She was a strong and disciplined woman. She probably had such character because she was born, grew up and studied in a Catholic school. She would knock the door repeatedly until we wake up for dawn prayer. During meal times, we had to do it at the dining table and on time. We were only allowed to play in our own yard, and prohibited to bring friends into the house. Mom worked at a private company and she earned big amounts of money.

My Dad was grumpy. If I was stubborn, he would beat me with broom stick or lock me in the bathroom. At the first I was afraid, but then I got used to physical punishment and was able to sleep in the bath tub. Dad worked as a contractor. He built building, bridges and roads. He used to travel to other provinces such as Bontang (East Kalimantan), Padang (West Sumatera), and other provinces for six months, or even a year. Mom taught me to write letters to Dad. As a daughter, I missed having my father around because my father was away for a long time and did not do what a father should do to his children.

My step brother, Topan was a drug user. He often sold home furnishing to buy drugs. One day, Dad found out that he stole the gas cylinder and sold it to the grocery store. Dad was very angry and tied him to the fence then punched him in front of me and neighbors. More often, Topan came home drunk at night. He didn't care and acted like no one was at home. When I was in kindergarden, I saw Topan having sexual intercourse with his girlfriend in our living room. I never asked, but I couldn't forget what I saw.

My brother, Guntur is a year older than me. He was obedient to our parents, but I couldn't communicate with him. Both of us were stubborn. He wanted me to listen to him, while he himself would never listen to me. So I decided to keep my distance from my brother, avoid having physical contact with him and not talk to him. I was closer to my step brother, Taufan. He used to take me swimming and bought me many things.

My little sister was born when I was 9 years old. At home, I was a good daughter. After my sister was born, all siblings loved her, but that was fine with me. Mom often asked me to take care of my sister. I was sometimes happy with the task, but when Mom asked me to take care of sister after school, I felt irritated because I was exhausted.

In their fifth year of marriage, Mom and Dad got better jobs and they bought a house in a sub-district because Grand Dad sold the house where they used to stay. Mom treated me and Guntur very well. She would provide us with whatever we wanted, and did her best to give us good education and enrolled us in some courses.

Topan decided to live alone, but he secretly visited me and my sister. He brought some presents for us and said that we have to keep this secret, otherwise Mom and Dad will accuse him of spending illicit money on us. I heard illicit money (*haram money*) since I was a little girl, but I thought nothing was wrong with the money, because I got some nice and interesting presents from my own brother. Taufan kept asking me to be keep quiet about it, otherwise Mom and Dad would quarrel. If Mom got angry, Dad would remain quiet. If Mom stopped being angry and quiet, then Dad would be angry.

When I was growing up I was stubborn. If people got angry, I would fight with them. I would say whatever I wanted to say. Mom asked me to study hard and be the top of my class. She said I have to get good grades of at school and I must obey her. But, I didn't agree with her because I believed that the knowledge I gained was much more important than good grades. . But Mom's always dominated me. I could not make choices about school subjects, I have no choice for school, except her preferences. She enrolled me in schools of her choices since kindergarden, elementary and Junior high school. If Mom went out with me, she wore *hijab* but I refused to because I felt hot and uncomfortable.

After graduating from Junior High School, I attended the Islamic Boarding School for a month and continued to Senior High School in the outskirts of Jakarta. Mom bought me some uniform with veils. She wanted me to wear *hijab* at school. I obeyed mom because I wanted to make her happy and avoid conflict that always made me stressful, discouraged and suffering from headaches.

When I was in Senior High School, my grandfather died and grandmother moved to our house in one of the sub districts in Jakarta greater.. Dad was my grandmother's beloved. Dad wanted to take care of his mom because she was sick and fragile. But mom and her mother in law were not getting along very well. They often quarrelled and did not speak to each other for days. This situation made me sad and I decided to find activities outside home.

I had leadership skills and the ability to speak well in public since I was in Elementary School. I was chosen as secretary of youth religious organization, and was very active in school's extra curricula activities. I had no power at home but I believed that I did at school. I was chosen as a student union, and art performing leader when I was at second grade. But my family didn't agree because they were afraid that I would be very busy and my achievement at school would decrease. When I did badly at school, she would be mad and blame me, saying that I was too busy with the extra-curricula school's activities.

Mom often used my position as a student union leader as an excuse. For example, when I protested at the way my teacher taught religion. The teacher had a habit of giving daily task to copy all the verses of the Qur'an printed in school book in our note book. Then he/she assessed without ever discussing it. For me, this kind of task has no benefit. I conveyed my thoughts to mom but then, she was angry. I got the bad score at this subject (5 score), although I still did the homework. Mom was angry and said that it happened because I was a student union leader.

My boyfriend

When I was in senior high school, I met my boy friend. He was four grades older than me, and he was the friend of my class mates. When I met him, he was a student of a university and had many activities. He attracted me because I found many similarities between us and we got along with each other. He always listened to me and made me happy. I needed someone to care and protect me. Some time later, I realized that he was a drug user but I didn't care.

My friends were busy to find their boyfriends. I could do my study and school's activities very well because my boy friend supported me. I didn't tell mom that I had a boy friend. She was very mad to hear this at a later time, because she said I broke my promise to her. My boy friend was not at the same school as mine, so if I had a trouble with him, it wouldn't disturb my study. Some of my friends would have troubles if they have problems with their boyfriends.

My boy friend played the role that mom and dad should have played. He was the one to accompany me to hike the mountain, taught me to ride motorbike, to swim, and told me about many types of alcoholic drinks, and prohibited me to touch them. He showed me the entertainment world as he studied advertising and journalism. I really loved learning about all the new worlds that he introduced me to. I really fell in love with him.

When I was in the second year of Senior High School, dad got sick and was unable to earn living. Dad tried to work at home by opening a garage. His friends came and gathered. Mom was the single breadwinner at that time. Meanwhile, mom and her mother in law quarrelled everyday. Mom had to face difficult situations in dealing with grandmother, who intended to rule everything at the house. Mom was frustrated and I became her scape goat. She blamed me because I did not obey her and play the role of the good daughter. I thought she was exaggerating. I was sick to hear her anger, then I locked my self in my room and created my own world. I thought the only one who was able to help me was my boy friend. He was my savior.

My parents forbade me to contact my boyfriend because they considered him a disrespectful young man. They also said I was still very young, had to focus on school and other reasons. My family didn't know that my boyfriend was a drug user, but at later time somebody told them that he was addicted to drugs. They became more protective of me, aggressively forbade us to see each other and tried to break us up. When I graduated from Senior High and intended to roll in to University, everything was very complicated. Mom did not agree with my choices to study advertisement, communication, or English literary. She wanted me to study economics or law. I was desperate and said, "Mom, please respect my choices...."

One of my brothers, Topan, brought me an application form to study broadcasting in Muhammadiyah University in Malang regency (East Java Province). He thought I might be interested in his offer. He brought the application home and passed it to me. Dad found out about this plan and restricted me go to. We were fighting and I felt very distressed that I could not determine my future. I said in desperation, "Well, let me be at home. I don't need to go to University. I'm very tired!". Again, they blamed me and I obeyed their demand. Then mom and dad enrolled me in Graphic Design Subject in one of colleges near our house. I followed their will and said, "Please, enroll me in and I don't care!"

Topan became a drug seller, destroyed, and imprisoned, but he was getting better. He married and stayed at our house. Conflict at the house increased because his wife did not treat us well. She had a miscarriage at her first pregnancy and in the second one, she was Ok.

My boyfriend was imprisoned for drugs for a year. I stayed at home and became Mom's beloved. One day, I met him at a music concert. He said he was willing to marry me, but I couldn't make any decision. I told Topan about his proposal but he strictly prohibited me to accept it because Topan knew that he was a drug user. My boy friend came to our house and talked to mom and dad and asked for my hand.. But mom and dad refused and sent him away. I was very depressed and tried hard to persuade them.

Married life

I was not happy to be at home and went to friends' houses to ease my sadness. Mom and dad became more protective of me. They dropped me and picked me up from college. I felt so desperate. Finally, dad said, "If you want to get married to your boyfriend, bring him here to talk to me". They let us get married afterwards.

I decided to accept his proposal because I needed someone to support me and thought I could persuade my boy friend to give up his dependence on drugs. I thought marriage would be a way to overcome my problems and I would be happy with him because he was very supportive of my education and future work. We married in simple way, and celebrated our wedding in my in-laws-house. Mom and dad were there and let me live at my in-laws-house, but I felt they left me alone.

After getting married, I was happy because I felt free and was able to prove to my parents that I could be independent, did not need to cry or ask for their help anymore. I could stand on my own feet, although I was not sure how to do it. But, the problems did not end. The in-laws family atmosphere was not the same as my own family. This could be understood by mom and others, who also had the experience of living with in-laws.

My mom in law is from West Java and my father in-law is from West Sumatera. They were really nice at the beginning when I first met them before getting married. But, things were different when I lived with them. My father-in-law was very hard person and said his words indiscriminately. He would denounce if he didn't like my cooking. He said in front of his children that I often wake up late and leave the house and act as if I was living in a hotel. His attitude made me depressed at the beginning of our marriage.

I tried to reconcile with my family. I visited them and they were happy to see me. I didn't share with them what was happening to me at my in-laws house. I was feeling very sorry for not having listened to their advice. I felt like I fell out of the mouth of tiger, but was now trapped in the mouth of lion.

At my in-laws' house I had one room that served as "our home". I made the room as comfortable as possible like a five-star hotel. My husband gave me monthly money and I used the money on mom's health care costs. I didn't care for other needs, because I was sure dad would take care of my sister and brother very well. I was happy with my husband and in the seventh month of marriage, I got pregnant. I was very shocked about the pregnancy because I was worried that I would not be able to take care of a child. And I was afraid that something would happen with my pregnancy because I was so careless and did not care about my health. I shared this with my mom and she was pleased to take care of me.

I left my husband for a while and stayed at parent's house because the situation at in-laws' house was not conducive. During pregnancy, I was easily getting depressed, sensitive and sick because of my husband's family. The house was very crowded because one of my husband's brothers moved to the house, and brought his wife with their three kids. The sisters and brothers of my mother in-law also lived with them with all their kids. There were about 14 people who lived under the same roof. The house become so noisy and bothered me. I started to lock the door, turn off the lights, turn on the fan, and go to sleep. I did some writings and readings in my room to ease my depression.

My husband was very protective and tried to dominate me. When I was in courtship with him, I felt happy with his protection because I really wanted to stay away from mom and dad. At the beginning of our marriage, we used to fight because he prohibited me to have any contacts with my friends, then I decided to sell my mobile phone to avoid the fighting. He was happy to accompany me to see my friends

and took me home afterward. On one occasion, I had a school reunion but he insisted to take me to the event. He said I had to leave the reunion within half an hour and go home with him. I had no freedom and he was very moody. But I tried to avoid any fighting with him.

My husband was rude, especially when he fought with his parents. I became his impingement. I was venting his attitude to my diary. When I reread the diary I felt very sad. I promised myself not to tell these problems to mom and dad, but Mom seemed to sense my problems, although she never asked about what was happening between me and my husband.

My baby girl was born

When I delivered a baby, I asked my husband to stay in mom's house for three months. I needed someone to care both of us. Grandmother died two months after my marriage. Topan died in 2006, when I was at the second month of pregnancy. My husband stayed with us in mom's house. Now that my husband was living with me under the roof of my parents' place, my , mom got to see his indifference and rudeness to me. My husband felt depressed living at his in-laws house. He often fought with mom and I tried to be neutral. My husband persuaded me to move to his mom's house. Mom didn't want to let me go, but I couldn't refuse my husband's demand.

At my in laws'house, problems arose again. . My mother-in-law and my father in-law became very rude, yelled and scorned me, but I fought back. . If they were rude, I would become very rude. Then, I over protected my baby because my family situation was not healthy for her. I locked my baby for hours in my room and I went outside without her. People were getting mad at me, but I didn't care. I never let my baby be with them more than two hours because my mother in-law was very rude with her children and grandchildren. She would beat them with broom sticks if they were naughty. But the grand children would fight with her.

HIV-Positive

I never let my baby be in my mother-in-law's hands. I was afraid that she might snap and become harsh. I put my baby in baby stroller while I washed cloths and dishes. She complained to my husband and we were fighting and yelling. During the following two years, my husband got ill and his health deteriorated. I had to take care of my husband. None of them cared about us.

There were 14 of us living under the same roof. We had a unique way to fulfill our own needs. All families earned their own living. We cooked at the same pantry, but we kept all groceries and foods in our own refridge. My mother in-law worked as a housewife, all her sisters earned for their children and my husband's brother-in-law worked as a minibus driver. My husband shared his money with his parents. I was OK as long as he didn't abandon me and our baby. I saved part of the money for two years. When my husband got sick, I spent our savings on his medication and treatment.

Two months prior to my husband's illness, my uncle- in-law had a terrible fight with my mother-in-law and my father-in-law. Aunty died of tuberculosis and had big amount of money from her company, but Uncle refused to share the money with Mom and Dad. They said that they had spent much of the money on aunty's treatment and medication, but Uncle didn't care. They fought almost everyday and uncle left the house with his kids.

After they left, there were nine of us who remained in the house. One day, I had no money left in the wallet. My savings dwindled to Rp 10,000 (US\$ 1). My husband left his bag at the office, so we didn't have access to the bank and ATM, because he left his wallet and ATM card inside. I spent the money to

buy rice and vegetable at the market and cooked veggie porridge for my baby. There were no food left at our fridge. I was very hungry then I went to *cassava* plantation at the back of the house and pulled some of them for my lunch. I asked permission from my mother-in-law to call my mom at home. I said to mom that I needed something to eat. This was the first time, I asked my mom for anything since I got married. Mom told me to come to her house to get some food for the day. I had to ride my bicycle for 2 miles with the empty bag in my shoulder.

I brought five kilograms rice, eggs and other groceries. I never received any thanks from my in-laws. . They and the rest of the family members would eat the food I cook without saying “thank you”. I was quite happy because I could provide for my husband and feed him.

One night, we just arrived from the hospital where we went to check on my husband’s health. I didn’t know my husband’s illness. He was referred from one hospital to another and received many kinds of medication. I took care of the baby and my husband. They were asleep then I changed my clothes and washed. I went to the bath room and washed some clothes. My mother-in-law approached me and handed me the electricity bill while saying, “Pay this bill soon!”.

I was very shocked and decided to move from the house. I said to my husband that his mom asked me to pay for electricity and its interest. I had no money left. I thought if we moved from the house, we would live much better with my mom. Mom would take care of the baby, while I focused on my husband illness. I brought all my furniture and other things and went immediately to my mom’s house. I felt exhausted. Two days later, I went to my husband’s office and brought his bag, wallet and ATM card.

My mother-in-law was very mad and accused me of kidnapping her beloved son. My husband was really caring to his parents and his parents loved him, mainly because he was a drug user. My husband was addicted to drugs since he was in 9th grade. His father was a sailor man. He earned a lot of money and shared them with his wife. His mom spoiled him and fulfilled all his demands. This was the reason that her son had some resources to buy drugs. He lived in a house with eight big rooms.

In mom’s house, my husband had some troubles. He was not getting along with mom. His mom often visited and persuade my husband to go back to her house. My husband’s health was very unstable and his behaviour changed. He couldn’t think properly and he had limited ability to talk. One day, his mom asked him to go home and promised to take care of him. Suddenly, my husband yelled and said, “I don’t want to be with you. I want to live with Umi (his wife)!” My husband realized that I really cared for him. Then he collapsed and we brought him to Cinere Hospital (South Jakarta).

I asked the doctor to do a CT-Scan to my husband because there were many problems with his nerves. He was not able to talk properly and had difficulty recognizing others. Doctors suggested that we test him for AIDS. He was referred to the Hospital in North Jakarta. The three of us were also tested (my husband, I, and our child). We all tested t HIV positive . I couldn’t even think anymore.

While my husband was ill, many of friends visited him, one of whom was his former girlfriend. She recommended my husband to HIV testing, but I refused and asked for a logical reason why he should be checked. I'm wondering if she was HIV positive and asked her for information about what it was like, but she did not answer. We turned out to be good friends until now. So, when I realized that I was positive, I had nothing to do.

From the time of my marriage and until the death of my husband, my family did not care about me. But since I had a baby they started to care about me. Once my daughter and I tested HIV positive, my family supported us. They welcomed us to live with them.

Revive

Seven days after my husband passed away, I went back to my parents's house. I bore my life under their responsibility, although I felt that their caring had no meaning at all. I felt confined, restricted and not trusted because I went home HIV-positive. I'm a widow, jobless and have no income. My parents are still over protective of me, but since 2011 they gradually changed their attitude because I could prove that what they thought of me was not true. My parents thought that I could not get a good job and salary if I ignored their advice. But I could prove to them that I had a job and contributed to their daily needs, even though I dropped out from the university.

When I realized that we are HIV positive in 2009, I didn't want to see anyone for six months. I tended to stay away from my family and I lost contact with my friends. I lost my self. I was irritated and didn't want to hurt people. I felt that I was a robot. I followed my mom's order to eat, to go to hospital and so on. I was exhausted then.

One of my late husband's friends came to visit me. He tried to uplift my spirits. I told him, "I do not need any suggestions. I'm healthy, I'm HIV positive, but I'm feeling well! I do not need anyone!" This went on for five months.

He kept on contacting me. One day, he wrote in my chat room, "Do not try to find me. I may die because I'm HIV positive like you. If you have a chance to see other friends, there are people to help and hear you. You will get an opportunity to hear their experiences."

I was astonished to hear his suggestions. He recommended me to go to Fatmawati Hospital and introduced me to his doctor. He said that we must face this situation sensibly. Then I made an effort to go to support group (*kelompok dukungan sebaya*). The people in that group had different kinds of problems. One of them said that her boy friend got infected, while others who were there were willing to support their family relative who were infected. I was anxious and curious to know more about them. I isolated myself for a long time. I noticed that they looked like ordinary people. They looked healthy. But, then I could tell that we were different because we had black spots on our skin.

I felt comfortable with them. We sat and shared stories. This was very different from the situation in hospital where we went for consultation and treatment. . We had many occasions, for instance to have "breakfast gathering". There were about 30 people who came to the gathering. I did not speak but observed that all people looked happy. They were chatting and interacted with each other. I muttered, "What a wonderful girl. Is she HIV positive?" My eyes went to a teenager. "Why is he so skinny?" Then, I encouraged myself to talk and introduce myself. I told them that I was infected five months ago. I told them that at first I was reluctant to share my story because I did not want to be pitied. But I finally told my story and someone offered me a job. She has a foundation and needs staff. I was interested in the offer and needed the money. Then I accepted the offer to work at Kotex Foundation. The Foundation has clinic for HIV positive patients.

I started to work as *buddies*. In Indonesia, our task is to provide support, motivate people living with HIV/AIDS and their families. In the West, they feed, wash and clean up people living with HIV/AIDS. I have a responsibility to manage information for patients and their families. The term "buddies" is used here in different way than how it is used in the international term.

The foundation where I work, is funded by donors and we have a responsibility to run the program and achieve the target. For instance, in a few months time we have to assist PLWH (People Living with HIV/AIDS) and conduct some meetings. Every month, we must meet three times. We have 7 centres and one referral Hospital in South Jakarta (Fatmawati hospital), 4-5 other hospitals in East Jakarta. I had to go back and forth to the hospital to get the stamp as a proof that I have already assisted many patients. So, I had to refer people from Community Health Centre to the hospital.

After working with this foundation for some time, I thought I didn't fit with the work they performed. This work was inhuman, ignoring the emotional ties, and blood sucking of my friends. Human beings could not be targeted like this. Three meetings a month for one patient were not enough. What about the other meetings that may still be needed? After a long time, I was embarrassed. Then I refused to report my work to foundation on a regular basis. This created a conflict, I was paid and I had to use the name of the PLWHA friends in my report. I have a complete record of their data including name (with code), address, place and date of birth, their development, and the solutions proposed by the buddies. We have age criteria, address, domicile, and areas like Multi-Level Marketing (MLM) system. After two years of work, finally I resigned and went to work at the clinic as a volunteer.

Helping people

My husband passed away when my baby was 2 years old. Once I was able to accept the fact that I am HIV positive, I tried hard not to cry and now it's my turn to help others. I was sincere. As buddies, I do the work in accordance with the task without report and stamp. For instance, there was a call for assistance from the clinic of Cilandak, and then I came and took her to the referral hospital. All costs spent on this work were from the allowance I got from helping the catering at mom's sister, and other works performed.

Working as buddy and volunteer allows me to broaden my links and network of people with HIV/AIDS. They know me as a field worker in South Jakarta. Then some friends offered me to work in the National Secretariat of IPPI (the Association of Positive Women of Indonesia) (<http://ippiindonesia.blogspot.com>), which is based in Jakarta. It has members in 22 provinces. We do not work directly to assist people living with HIV, but we work through provincial coordinators. The functions of National Secretariat are to update information and analyze the needed assessment.

At this institution, I found the spirit of women. I got a lot of new information, for instance about sexual and reproductive rights. I could directly say "vagina" to express women's genitals. When I was a child, mom taught me to say "purse" rather than "vagina". I could identify myself and change myself constructively. I would like to prove that I can be an independent woman.

IPPI was experiencing financial crisis. In this situation, I didn't give up. I still worked as volunteer while trying to find another job. I was then introduced to the IAC (Indonesia AIDS Coalition) (<http://www.iac.or.id/>) by my program manager at IPPI, whose husband was an executive director. I feel IAC has changed my thought. So far, I considered HIV as a disease that needs to be cured, or health-related issue that needs to be addressed. In IAC, I learnt how to see HIV as a result. IAC sees AIDS in a broader context. Therefore, in IAC we work by criticizing the level of transparency of the government in terms of their financial programs. For example, these institutions get donors for HIV/AIDS program but why PLWHA do not get any benefit at all.

IAC also did advocacy work. For example, they advocate drugs (medication) because Indonesia sometimes uses a type of medication that has been prohibited in the USA and Europe. I can see in this

case that people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) are only placed as an object. Similarly, a governor sometimes makes big parade commemorating the anniversary of AIDS, when the money can be used for other programs that are more useful for PLWHA. I was stressful, between the feelings of fear, anger and curiosity. At first, I just wanted to help people like me. NGOs which work in the field make me even more disappointed. I need friends who encourage me to remain humble.

I am now a Project Assistant in the IAC, and take responsibility for almost all activities conducted. I also work with social media that I use to serve virtual clients through twitter and Blackberry Messenger (BBM), although I do not work face to face with PLWHA. I work at IAC from 08.00 until 18.00. If there are clients who want consultation out of working hours, they can send me messages through BBM.

The attitudes of clients' families can diverge. In general, they need time to accept the reality. Initially, they become shocked, but then they realize the situation because they themselves are aware that their child is experiencing health problems. Families whose children are usually positive, marriage relations become strained. Some clients choose to keep their illness secret to avoid family's tension.

The economic situation in families is also important. I see that people of low economic means could actually accept their children who are infected with HIV/AIDS. For example, a mother in a scavenger family whose child was infected with HIV through free sex, said that she had to face this situation and take good care of him as part of her responsibility as parent.

In reverse, a mother in a rich family ignored her daughter in public eyes. When the daughter asked her to accompany her to the hospital, her Mom did not want to enter the examination room and waited outside, instead. She avoided communicating with her daughter while they were in the hospital.

One day, a friend of mine was hospitalized. Her mom worked in a health institution. She met some of her friends in hospital and asked, "Who are you visiting, here?" She lied and said she was visiting the son of her friend.

Another client was a polygamous man. He was such an introvert. A friend of his always accompanied him to counsel with us regularly. He and his wife were HIV positive. The wife said that her husband was married to two wives before, I did not know when his illness was detected and if the husband had died. So, people could get AIDS regardless of their marital status.

My recent condition

My condition is much better now. I'm still working and being a mother at the same time. I make the best effort to share my time with my daughter. Economically, I have enough income to send my daughter to school and give her a decent life.

I also share my money with my mom and dad to buy their daily needs and gas. Our relationship and communication with one another are getting better. I'm always trying to tell them about my activities, work, and share with them my problems. I think I have become the oldest child at home since my brother is working abroad. Now, I began to divide my time between me and my daughter. I bring her to Mom's house and gatherings with families. The good relationship and communication between me and my parents changed us. We are getting along well, enjoy having chats, shares, discuss and negotiate. I'm rethinking that living in good environment will have a positive effect on all of us. A happy heart will be a cure for many problems.

Analysis of Nawa's story

- **HIV/AIDS in the Indonesian context**

Nawa, an HIV-positive woman, was chosen as resource person in this story because the issue of HIV/AIDS in Indonesia is getting serious and its development is very surprising. In patriarchal society, women experience difficulties in their household because systems and values prevailing in society, disadvantage and weaken them. In this situation, Nawa is able to overcome her difficulties as woman living with HIV/AIDS and she succeeded to advocate for other women living with HIV.

The recent data from the Ministry of Health in Dec. 2012 showed that 92.921 people got infected with HIV, while 39.434 of them were infected with AIDS. HIV/AIDS case has been found in all provinces in Indonesia. The data also showed that HIV/AIDS has infected among various people; homosexual and heterosexual groups, the lower, middle and high classes, adults, adolescent and babies, sexually active people, and people who had sex before marriage. The most shocking fact that the data showed is that the highest number of people living with HIV/AIDS, are housewives.

Asian AIDS Commission reported that 50 million women are at risk of acquiring HIV from their intimate partners (*Commission on AIDS in Asia, report of the Commission on AIDS in Asia, 2008, in UNAIDS Action Framework; Addressing Women, girls, Gender Equality and HIV, 2009*). Evidence from many countries in Asia indicates that most women are acquiring HIV not because of their own sexual behaviour, but because their partners engage in unsafe behaviour. It is estimated that more than 90% of women living with HIV acquired the virus from their husbands, or from their boyfriends while in long-term relationships (*Bennetts A Et al. Differences in sexual behaviour between HIV-infected pregnant women and their husbands in Bangkok, Thailand. AIDS Care, 1999, 11:649–661*)

From 1987 to 2011, the most high-risk people who get infected with AIDS were entrepreneurs with the total cases 3.473, followed by non-state officers (2.767), and housewives were at third cumulative number with the total cases 2.672. Starting from early 2011 the number of cases until September 2011, were housewife groups with the total cases reached 228, which was the highest spread infection. In 2011, IAC-WWW (We Won't Wait) stated that women were the most vulnerable groups to get infected with HIV in Indonesia, where most of 90% cases were faced by housewives (*Thaufiek Zulbahary, Menuju Penanggulangan AIDS yang Responsif Gender: Kajian atas Strategi Rancangan Aksi Nasional (S-RAN) 2010-2014*).

- **Guardianship and protection**

The *wilayah* model of Nawa's family didn't reflect the normative *wilayah* concept in Islam. For instance, both Nawa's Father and Mother earned for living, and her Mother got a bigger salary than her father. This seems to affect the relationship in both of them since her mother has a strong enough bargaining position, and can fairly determine the decisions made in the family. Mom and Dad succeeded to build the equal *qiwama* relationships between the two. Nawa had never mentioned that her father engaged in domestic violence against her mother, although he did it to all of his children. Nevertheless, her parents failed to build equal *qiwamah* relationships with their children. Her mother, who actually had power and firm control over her father, adopted the husband's patriarchal relationship with their children.

This indicates that similar relationships occur more easily if the initiative came from the "weaker-side" party, then she became strong, because she has a good bargaining position. As a wife, Nawa's

mother was on the weaker side. Her large salary made it easy to build relationships with her husband. Similarly, to Nawa, she was in a weak position when she was a child, but when her parent had retired and she supported them economically, Nawa was easily to build equal relationships with her parents.

The same thing does not happen in relation between Nawa and her Mom when she was rich. Her Mom's position was very strong before. Her economic independence further strengthened her position as mother, and then it seemed difficult for her to build equal relationships with daughter, which ultimately was unsuccessful and ended up with patriarchal relation.

Patriarchal relationships between her parents with their children hindered Nawa from enjoying positive aspects of *wilayah* such as protection, support, guidance, etc. Instead of feeling protected, Nawa was pressured by her tough and hard stance parents, especially her mother who is much disciplined, and who tends to impose her will against her daughter. Her experience with *wilayah* is much influenced by her parents' control, mainly her mother. As a result, Nawa was often in conflict with her parents, which forced her to obey her parents, for instance, the way she dressed up, choose a school, and her major in college.

Her parents' attitude toward her and her siblings has caused inconvenience atmosphere in their house. This is the factor why Nawa fell in love with a man who was able to play her father's figure, the figure of her dream. Her boyfriend taught her many things and provided space for the "different" Nawa, introducing her to the "New" fascinating world for young people. Her boyfriend told her to be "herself", accompanied her whenever she needed and let her go to many places which she never had been to before. The positive aspect of *wilayah* provided by her boyfriend has become "powerful magnet" for her to defend him, even though she realized that her boyfriend was a drug user, had been imprisoned several years ago of drug trafficking accusation, and had been sent away by Nawa's parents due to their disagreement of him.

Her father's failure as the head of family to play the role as guardian in *wilayah* has caused his authority not to be recognized by Nawa, and failed to play his role as *wali mujbir* (the guardian who ensures that his daughter's future husband is a good man). Nawa insisted to get married to her boyfriend and did not flinch with the attitude of her parents who sent her boyfriend away from their house, and embarrassed him before their neighbors because they quarreled. At the end, both of her parents "agreed" or let her get married to her boyfriend because they gave up. Nawa was not to be warned.

- ***Qiwamah* and marriage**

People change! This sentence might be right to describe the *qiwamah* relation between Nawa and her partner. The positive aspect of *wilayah*, played by Nawa's partner when they were still engaged, didn't happen when they got married. He changed. He was a caring person before marriage and dramatically, he was very possessive after he got married. He used to accompany Nawa to go everywhere, but this has changed. He became over protective of his wife. This happened because he assumed that as a husband, he has rights to control his wife. It is widely embraced by the Indonesia society.

His change of behavior was triggered by economic pressure. Her husband didn't earn a lot of money, but he lived in his family's house, so he must provide for them because both of his parents were retired. Psychological pressure has also induced his behavioral change. Their marriage was not fully

agreed and supported by Nawa's parents. Nawa felt that she was neglected by her parents after she got married. She also had bad relationship with her parents in law, then she lost the opportunity to discuss with them and learn from them. Her husband's health deteriorated so her behavior has changed. During a year of their marriage, Nawa's husband's health was took a turn for the worse.

Nawa used the same strategy to deal with her husband. She obeyed her husband as she did her mother to avoid conflict. Her decision to obey her husband has violated her freedom. She was not able to make friends, dropped out from her college and couldn't work freely. At the end, economically, Nawa was totally dependent on her husband.

This situation was totally changed when her husband was confined to bed rest due to his sickness. Nawa took over the *qiwamah* role because her husband has failed to do so. Her first strategy was to improve her relationship with her parents. Her parents played the *proper* *wilayah* role after her husband failed to support her parents helped Nawa and provided for her, her daughter and husband, when Nawa's husband was sick. They let Nawa move into their house and took her husband along with her.

Theoretically, although the father's responsibility as *wali* for his daughter was moved over to her husband through marriage, in fact the protection of the father is still needed by the daughter after her marriage. In Nawa's context, she needed *the role of* *wilayah* function from her parents to overcome *qiwamah* function which couldn't be played by her husband, where she was unable to do so because she didn't work and her husband was ill. *Nasab* spirit, which binds the relation between father and his children, man and women was able to overcome respective issue.

Qiwamah and *wilayah* experienced by Nawa have the same form of violation, for instance, Nawa was not able to make friends and her freedom to socialize was limited, both before and after marriage. Nawa had no adequate information about the risk of being the wife of a drug user, who was infected with HIV. Parents, who are supposed to be the important source for her, couldn't provide her with proper information. Her step brother, who was a drug user, has never warned her about the risk. Her parents and step brother prohibited her to have any relationship with her boyfriend, but they didn't mention the risk.

Nawa had no information, whether her husband realized that he was HIV positive. If she followed the advice her husband's ex-girlfriend to let her test for HIV, she suspected that her husband had realized that he was infected with HIV. If her suspicion was right, then it was a pity, because her husband let her had sexual intercourse with him without any safe sex measures that ended with her pregnancy. Nawa realized that she and her daughter are HIV positive, when her husband was dying, and died after all. The unequal relationship between Nawa and her parents, indirectly has caused Nawa and her daughter to run their life as people living with HIV.

- **The divergences between life realities and *qiwamah* and *wilayah* models**

Nawa experienced that the relation between *qiwamah* and *wilayah* were different than her theory. Her father is not the only provider for the family, because her mother also met the needs of the family. Even her salary was greater than her father's salary. When the husband fell ill, Nawa and her daughter were not sustained by her husband. Her family, helped them for life. After her Mom and Dad were retired, Nawa decided to work and act as the single breadwinner for her family and parents.

Nawa has also experienced the concept of “*Mahram*” which means “control” for her. In its genuine context, *Mahram* is the obligation of men to ensure that women will be safe and comfortable, that she will not run for her needs outside home. It can be seen in *Rasullullah hadiths*, regarding the order of one of his fellow mates to accompany his mother to Pilgrimage, and *Al Rasul* prohibited him to go for war for the safety of his mother. What has been experienced by Nawa, when her parents encouraged her to go to a certain College was not based on the needs of Nawa, but it was meant to control her. The same things happened with her, when her husband accompanies her to go outside of her home, even when she wanted to see her friends.

She also experienced *Nasab*. All children have the concept of *Nasab* based on their father’s line, it is called “*bin*” (boys) or “*binti*” (girls), father with grandfather’s line, and etc. Father’s names were indicated in documents of his children, for instance birth certificate, etc. *Nasab*’s concept means that the father’s family and his up-lines are responsible for the children. But, what has happened with the daughter of Nawa was in reverse. After the death of her father, she got full protection from her mother and her mother’s family. Contribution made by her father’s family was very inadequate.

The same thing happens in the inheritance’s concept. A man, as a son and as a husband gets a bigger portion of inheritance than a woman, as a daughter and as a wife. This system is based on the assumption that men are burdened by the responsibility for their wives and children. In fact, Nawa didn’t get any inheritance from her husband, she even took the role as the single breadwinner for the family, when her husband was sick. Her daughter also got nothing from her father.

- **Trajectory of self-knowledge**

Nawa is the example of a woman who is growing stronger because of her problems. Her bad experience regarding the implementation of *qiwamah* and *wilayah* didn’t put her into frustration over her destiny. She took her bad experience as the lesson learnt to be a good mother for her daughter who is also infected HIV positive, to be a good member of community, and a good citizen.

Wilayah relationship which was constructed by the father and mother who were very influential in her family was unequal. As children, Nawa had to obey her parents’ wishes, although they were in contradiction with her will. In fact, Nawa was trying hard to negotiate with her parents about their decisions about her, but they always ended up in continuous conflict. This situation has not happened with her biological brother, not to mention that he is a boy, but he chose to be an obedient boy and had no initiative to criticize his father’s and mother’s decisions. After a long time of conflict and quarrel, Nawa decided to stay silent, and obey her parents.

During her marriage, Nawa also experienced unequal *qiwamah* relation, because she had to adjust to her husband’s will, just as what has happened between her and her parents. Her husband who used to be the figure of father, had changed after marriage. He acted as her ‘real’ father and forced her to keep silence to avoid conflict with her husband.

Nawa had to face the worst situation when she found out her husband was very sick, infected with AIDS, and eventually died. She experienced a heavy ordeal, for instance; her husband died, she became the single parent for her daughter, and realized that she, and her daughter are infected with HIV positive. She overcame her ordeal with silence and lived with no passion.

Drastic changes occurred when Nawa joined the support group for HIV positive. The spirit of her life was restored. She saw how people with HIV are able to live normally. Nawa has also become active

with organizations that concern HIV, learning and gaining more information, training and participation in various forums, providing assistance to those who are HIV positive, and advocating the public policies regarding the issue of HIV- AIDS in order to protect people living with HIV/AIDS.

Nawa is a prominent and stronger HIV positive activist. She is one of a few people in Indonesia who dare to introduce themselves living with HIV in the media and public forums. Nawa is active to join international forums and she is one of the board member of “*Ikatan Perempuan Positif Indonesia*” (Association of Positive Women of Indonesia) (<http://ippiindonesia.blogspot.com>). She has a broader perspective regarding the issue of HIV/AIDS, and is well trained to analyze the issue based on gender, police regulation, and international instruments of human rights related to the respective issue. Nawa also works directly with people living with HIV/AIDS by providing counseling and consultation through social medias.

The important and interesting thing in Nawa herself, is that she puts the bitter experience as the reason for becoming an activist, to help people who have the same destiny as hers. She took all her life story as the lesson learnt in her life. She didn't do pre-marital sex, she even witnessed her step brother do it before her when she was little. Nawa doesn't use physical punishment against her daughter, even though she witnessed her father hitting her step brother, and she had been locked in the bathroom by her father. Nawa is also a wholehearted person. She was not authoritarian when she was in a strong position and relationship, for instance her relationship with her parent after they retired. She provided for them. She also did the same thing with her husband after he was sick and had to raise her daughter by herself. Nawa took the initiative to build equal relationships with all of them. *Wallahu a'lam* (Allah Knows the Best).

Reflection of Nawa's story

I met with Nawa, a resource person of Musawah Global Life Stories research, in a socialization forum of HIV/AIDS, organized by women in a neighborhood association of “*Permata Hati*” housing compound in South Tangerang city, west Java. A friend of mine recommended her as resource person in this event for the reason that her house is not far from ours. Nawa shared information about HIV/AIDs calmly. She took her five years old daughter, who is now at kindergarten school, to the socialization forum.

Nawa is a cheerful young woman, I thought that an HIV/AIDs activist was not always HIV positive. Then, I know that some activists who fight for woman's issues are men. Therefore, I was quite surprised when I took Nawa, and her daughter back home; she testified that both of them are infected with HIV/AIDs. I couldn't imagine how hard her life is, because our society still assumes that HIV/AIDs is a contagious and deadly disease.

I was very lucky because I met her several years after she got infected with HIV, meaning that she has already been aware of her situation, and thought that her life story would be very important as a lesson learnt for other people.

At the beginning of this research, I explained the concepts of *qiwamah* and *wilayah* briefly and told her that her life story is a prime example of these concepts. I also told her about our flow of research as the guidance and some information needed from her. Nawa told her life story systematically in three different meetings we've arranged. She prefers to see me at night at the restaurant. Her boyfriend accompanied her twice because the interview was conducted at night. Dini, a fellow researcher accompanied me twice and I did the interview with her myself, once.

Technically, there are four things that influence the interview process:

1. Regarding the interviewer

There are some differences in the interview process. If a researcher interviews the resource person by herself, then the resource person will feel secure and open. But, when a researcher took her fellow resource persons in interview process, then the researcher needs to build the trust with resource person. I'm lucky; my fellow researcher is friendly, so it didn't take a long time to build the trust. Similarly, Nawa was quite reluctant to tell her story when her boyfriend accompanied her. Nawa was very confident to tell her life story when there was just the two of us.

2. Regarding the resource person

If a resource person came by herself, then she will have space to talk freely. In two of our interview process, she came to the meeting with her boyfriend. She looked worried because she might not want her boyfriend to know about her story, or she might not want him to tell her story to other people. In one of the interviews, I observed that she was in bad situation with her boyfriend. She looked very inconvenient with him because he sat not far from her while she told the story.

3. Regarding the time of interview (choice to be interviewed at night)

Nawa wanted me to see her at night after work, but I thought this is not a good time to interview because she didn't have enough time to share the story. She also felt tired and loss of her energy because she works all day and had to travel from her office to the venue we've arranged by motorcycle. Concerning this situation, I decided to interview her in a considerable time.

4. Regarding the venue of interview

Her option to choose restaurant as our venue to meet was intended to create a comfortable and relaxed situation. But the interview has to wait after she finished her meal, which means that it is reducing the precious time we have. Fortunately, some of the technical constraints do not hinder the resource person from telling her story systematically, then it was easier for me to put them together in the framework of whole life story. *Alhamdulillah*, after the interviews process was accomplished, I narrated her story and sent the draft to her to get some inputs. She gave some of her feedback which has not changed the substance of the story.

The next stage is the analysis process, which was quite challenging. The main difficulty in the analysis is to interpret the story in the context of resource person's *qiwamah* and *wilayah*. For example, how to make an interpretation regarding what has been done by her parents who forbade her to get married with a drug addict, and who had been imprisoned? Has her father akent his role as "*Wali Mujbir*" (who is obliged to ensure that his daughter's future husband is a good man), or conversely, the father is supposed to respect his daughter's choice although he thought that this is a high-risk option?

The most valuable lesson that I've learned from the life story of Nawa, is about the relationship between parents and children. I've learned a lot about her experience comparing with the relationship between me and my children. There were some factors which influenced Nawa to keep insisting on having a relationship with her boyfriend, even though she aware that she will face risks such as rejection from her parents. She also realized that living with a person who was a drug user, would be another risk she had to face. She denied all the risks because she found the figure of father in her boyfriend. Her boyfriend brought her tranquility and the figures of the father and mother whom she couldn't find at home.

My lesson learnt of this story is as a parent, I let my husband share his warmth as a father toward our kids and I did the same myself. I made efforts to let our children feel tranquility at home and find the figure of a compassionate Mom and Dad. Our home has to be more fun than his/her friends' home. When they get in trouble out there, we want them to immediately remember that the house (*Sakan*) can bring peace for them (*Sakinah*), and there are mother and father with whom he/she can find a way through sharing and caring.

Life Story #3: Amalia – Sinking in hot water

I would like to end this life, or at least go away from these senses of torment, degrading, humiliating and cruel treatment against me. Everything seems so dark, terrible and scary. GOD, why should I be burdened with these miseries?

The joyful childhood

I was born in 1983 in Sampay village, Rumpin sub-district, West Java. I am the 5th of 7 children. I have 2 brothers and 4 sisters. My dad was a farmer and mom is a housewife. Sometimes, mom helped dad in the paddy field to cultivate and harvest. In 1995 my father went broke. The cost of seeds and fertilizer were very high, and he couldn't afford to maintain it for the rice production. He found another job. He worked in cattle breeding, and he went to the market to buy and sell cows to earn for living. But, he couldn't afford to pay for our school fees. I dropped out from Junior High, and went to Islamic boarding school in my village to learn *Al-Qur'an* for a year. My elder brother, Erfan, had to work from a young age to ease dad's burden. He helped dad in the cattle breeding in the morning and went to the city to buy building materials such as cement, sands and stones to supply the needs of people in our village. He is a talented business person and successful in his work. He helped us with our living and was responsible for the whole family. Rofi, my youngest sister, went to Senior Vocational School, and Erfan paid for her school fees.

Mom and dad are caring. They love us and we grew up with their love and compassion. My dad wanted us to recite *Al-Qur'an* (*mengaji*), pray and fast during Ramadan. This is why he insisted on sending me to Islamic boarding school.

My teenage years

In 1996, I finished my studies in the Islamic school and stayed at home to help mom to take care of my sisters. One day, I met Cheppy, a charming man in the village. I fell in love with him and we were in a relationship for almost 6 months. But dad didn't approve of him because he was unemployed and dad arranged my marrying instead to a man from Sawangan sub district. I didn't agree with dad and went to *Pesantren* to avoid dad's plan to get me married to someone I didn't know. I lived away from home for a year and continued with my relationship with Cheppy.

In May 1999, a friend of mine, Syafrudin sought me and said he was in love with me. I was surprised because it was hard to believe that a good-looking man from a wealthy family in the village was in love with me. I decided to leave Cheppy and got engaged to Syafrudin. Syafrudin was a gentle, loving and a caring person. I did love him and wanted him to be my husband. Six months after, when I was 20 years of age, Syafrudin came to my parents to propose. My dad rejected his proposal to marry me. I fought with my parents and insisted on marrying him. During our fight, Dad said, "Amalia, I know his family. They are arrogant and abusive. If you insist on marrying him, then you must take responsibility of all the risks you might face!"

I didn't care about what dad has said. I really wanted to marry him. Few days before our wedding day, his family came to us and brought a million rupiah (US\$ 110) for food and drinks. For dowry, I received a copy of *Al-Qur'an*, prayer clothes, and a prayer mat. My sisters and brothers didn't attend the marriage because they did not agree with my choice. A week after the marriage, Syafrudin asked for the money given by his parents for the food and drink in the wedding. He wanted me to give him back the money to buy motorcycle. I was very shocked because we had spent the money on the wedding. I could not say no to him, so I begged my parent to pay me the money from their savings.

Boiled in hot water

The first night after the wedding, we slept together. After having sexual intercourse, he said, "Why are you different from Santi?"¹³ Then I replied, "How different?" He didn't want to answer the question. I was sad and silenced.

A week later, we moved to me in-laws' house. I thought I would be happy living with my husband's family. It was quite the opposite. I was treated like a domestic worker, and had to work from dawn to dusk. I woke up at 4.00 in the morning, cleaned the house, washed the clothes and cooked with fire woods for breakfast for 14 people. At 8 a.m. I bought the groceries and cooked for lunch. I had to wash all the dishes at mid-day and ironed all clothes till the afternoon. I prepared dinner afterwards and cleaned the kitchen and living room and looked after (*mengurus*) my husband. I had no time to rest except at night. I suffered and cried a lot in my room.

My husband left me every night. He went to his friend's house to have fun with men and women. They gambled every night until the dawn and came home without money. I never got *nafaqah* (maintenance) from my husband because all his money was spent on the gambling table. When I asked for money he would be angry and say harsh words such as, "*What a stupid woman. I have no money left!*" I never quarreled with him because I respected his family and did not want to offend him.

When all the family went to Jakarta for holiday, they never took me along. My mother-in-law said, "*No, you can't go. No one is at home, so you have to be at home!*" I couldn't go anywhere and had no contact with my family for several years.

I lived in this situation for 2 years and I couldn't stand it anymore. Then I asked my husband to move to my parents' house, but he refused. I kept asking him to go, but he didn't want to live away from his parent's house. He was too dependent on them.

One day my father offered me a small house where I could live. It was a house of my relatives and I was welcome to stay there as long as I wanted. I moved to the house with my husband, but he didn't change his behavior. He went gambling every night and went back to his parents' house. He left me to live alone and didn't give me money for food and other living costs. My elder brother often visited me, bought some groceries, and gave me money. My mom brought me some food, which would last me for days and weeks. Syafrudin knew that my family took care of me and he didn't care. He was indifferent. He left me every night and did not consider me as his wife.

Three years after marriage, I got pregnant. Again, I felt my husband had abandoned me. He never took me to the doctor to check my pregnancy. I asked my elder brother to take me to the doctor and he did it for me. He really cares and loves me. He bought me honey, milk and biscuits for me and the baby in my womb.

In the 7th month of my pregnancy, Syafrudin took me back to his parents' house. His mom wanted me to deliver the baby at their home. Instead of caring and protecting me and the baby, my mother-in-law treated me like her a domestic worker. Again, I did the housework just like I was doing a year ago, served and took care of all family members from dawn till dusk. It was awful because there were some new members in the family. Two of Syafrudin's brothers had married and I had to serve them all. I couldn't

¹³ His former girlfriend.

stand working with my pregnancy and had to be exposed to fire woods in cloudy kitchen. Also, I suffered whenever I washed clothes with my limited physical ability. No one cared for me. I cried and cried in silence every night.

My mother-in-law and sister-in-law often humiliated me by saying, *“Syafrudin, you need to find someone who is able to satisfy you. She is too stupid and ugly!”* This hurt me and I fell to the chair. Syafrudin never defended me. The day after, my mom-in-law threatened me by saying, *“Do not talk to people about this family. We are honorable family in this village!”* I respected and obeyed her.

I gave birth to a baby boy. In the first 40 days, people cared about me. They were very happy with the baby and my husband helped to take care of us. But this did not last long because again I had to do all the housework by myself. My burden was very hard; my mother-in-law and sisters-in-law became very cruel and degraded me. I’ve suffered a lot and got sick in both my legs because I stood all the time. I begged my husband to move me to my relative’s house, but he said his mom would never let me go because then there would be no one to help her in the house. But I couldn’t stand it anymore and I insisted on going. My son was a year old at the time.

After I left my in-laws ‘house, I felt much better, but Syafrudin never changed. He humiliated me and said, *“If I had not married you, no one would have!”* I was upset but had no idea what to do.

As usual, he came back home at 3.30 in the morning. Rifkin, the baby, had a fever and I breastfed him. My husband opened the door and asked me to do something for him. I refused and asked him, *“Why do you come home very late? The baby has a fever and you have fun with your friends!”* He replied with his madness, *“What the hell are you talking about? You are dog, Satan..... It’s my business, don’t you dare to question me, anymore!”*

He kicked my stomach with his strength and I felt a great pain in my body. The baby almost fell down and I made an effort to hold him tight. While I was holding the baby, he punched the back of my head, into the neck. I became unconscious. I woke up to hear the baby crying and tried hard to reach him. I really needed to cry but I couldn’t. I just sat down and recovered after a while. It was not the first time he hit me. He did this many times.

Two days later, a neighbor told me that Syafrudin had a girlfriend. He met his former girlfriend, Devi, who had just come back from her work in Saudi Arabia. Syafrudin stayed at her house for couple of days. I was very mad to hear this and asked him, *“Are you engaged to your former girl-friend?”* He became angry and threw all the glasses and plates and kicked the cupboard. He came after me and pulled my clothes as strong as he could. He tore my clothes, pulled my hair and pushed me against the wall. I screamed and became unconscious until my brother came and woke me up. He took me to the doctor and my head was cat-scanned by the doctor. I suffered a terrible headache almost every day. It was very painful, but I never told mom and dad because I felt very ashamed.

In 2008, I got pregnant for the second time. The doctor said that I was pregnant with twins: a boy and a girl. My husband said that I needed to go to his mom’s house because his family wanted to take care of me. I obeyed my husband as I always did. Again, I didn’t get protection but suffered discrimination and was treated as a domestic worker and mostly like a slave. No one helped me with the housework during the day. I was devastated and muttered, *“Why does this suffering never end?”* I was prohibited to go out, to the market and visit my family. *What a miserable life!”*

When I collapsed, my father-in-law helped me. He went to the store and brought me some milk and cookies. He let me rest for a while and then I resumed working. All women in this house were very annoying. Instead of easing my burden, they asked me to do many things. They never let me take a rest. It was torture.

One bright morning, my dad came to visit me. I was washing clothes while standing up near the well with a pile of clothes. My big belly made it hard for me to sit and I was exhausted. Seeing me this way, my Dad shed his tears, came closer and hugged me. I have never told him what happened to me. I was embarrassed because I didn't listen to him when he warned not to marry Syafrudin. He brought me to the room and promised to talk to my mother-in-law, but she was not at home. He tried talking me into going back home with him but I did not want to because I was afraid of my husband. He went back home with sorrow. I sank into silence and cried inside.

While expecting to deliver the twins, I heard the news from my dad that my husband married his former lover, Devi. I couldn't stand on my feet and fell to the floor. It was like I was struck by thunder and earthquake. I felt like I was in hell. It was very painful, and I couldn't believe what I heard. I cried of anguish and my 3 years old son looked at me while shedding his tears on my shoulder. Everything was so dark and I sighed, "Oh Dear GOD, *why should I be burdened with these miseries?*"

A week later, I gave birth to twin babies late at night. My elder brother brought me to the hospital with his car and prepared some milk, biscuits, fruits and money for me. My husband was not at home. He left with his new wife on holiday. My mother-in-law did not care and neither did all my sisters-in-law. My father-in-law came to the hospital to visit me with some fresh bananas and papayas. I was happy to see him because it meant a lot for me.

My mom and dad came and brought some babies' needs to the hospital. I felt so delighted. I held mom's and dad's hands to say sorry because I ignored their warning. They seemed glad to see me in a good health. They stayed at the hospitals for 3 days and some neighbors visited me and brought biscuits, milk and fruits. I really, really felt happy. I named the babies, Fika and Fikri. They were very cute little babies and we were all very happy. Fika was healthy but Fikri, the baby boy, had a respiratory problem. He got sick from the smoke from the fire wood that my lungs and womb were exposed to during all those times I was doing the cooking. He looked pale and thin. My elder brother got him health insurance and regularly took him to be checked by the doctor. He is much better now after 3 years of medication.

Two weeks after I delivered the babies, my husband came home. He looked very fresh and happy. I asked him, "*Where have you been lately? I've delivered the babies, but you were not with us. Where were you?*" He stayed calm and did not answer my questions. He looked at the babies and smiled for a while. Then he went to the bath room. I opened his bag and searched for documents. I found his marriage certificate. I was very tense and had terrible headache. I really needed to talk to him.

Once again, I asked him, "*Are you married to Devi?*" He replied, "*Yes, it was my mistake!*" Then he asked me, "*I want you to get along with her, please!*" I didn't answer. My heart beat so fast and I saw a dark sight in between. I loved my husband but I didn't want to live with another woman under the same roof. I was just boiling with anger.

Mom and dad came to visit me at in my in-laws' house. They were very concerned about my situation there. I had to do all domestic chores for all the people in the house and took care of the twins by myself. My husband left me and three kids for 2 months. I was desperate. Dad brought me some money.

He said I could build a little house near their house. He gave me land and helped me build a house. Three months later, we moved to the house. Syafrudin gave me some money to build a groceries store in front of the house. I run the business to meet our daily needs and save the money for the school fees of kids.

Syafrudin never came home. He stayed in Devi's house for weeks and even months. I was abandoned and forgotten. The kids grew up without their dad's love and compassion. My older son was so demanding. If he wanted me to buy something, I had to fulfill it right away; otherwise he would get angry and cry. I felt sad to see his development. He did it because he was traumatized by the abuse and violence that his father inflicted on me. This made my heart sad.

I raised my kids with my youngest sister, Rufi. She came to the house after school and helped me take care of all kids. During the weekend, she stayed with me in the house and we shared stories. I was very lucky to have her because she really cared about us.

The disaster struck....

In 2012, four years after their marriage, Devi asked Syafrudin to divorce me. She often visited my house and humiliated me. She said, *"You are not fit for your husband. You are black and ugly!"* Syafrudin did not say anything to defend me. He went to my room and slept with Devi. I didn't know what to say. I took the kids with me and went to mom's house. I thought I was getting insane. I asked my mom to look after the kids and I went back home. I packed my clothes and escaped for 3 days. I really wanted to end this life, but I knew it was a great sin. Three days after my escape, I went to my mom's house and took all the kids back home. Mom said that Syafrudin was very worried about me. My mother-in-law came looking for me and begged my family to bring me back to her place. But my mom said, I was away and they didn't have any idea where I was. When I arrived home, Syafrudin apologized for hurting me. I said, *"Well, I accept your apology, but I have one requirement. Do not bring Devi to stay here! It's sickening."*

They never kept the promise. Devi came to visit Syafrudin while he was in my house. She tried to make me sick and leave my husband. She showed her affection and romance toward Syafrudin in front of me. Syafrudin was just like a stupid clown. Devi said, *"Your husband does not love you anymore. He was unhappy living with you!"* Then I replied, *"Thank you very much! I don't need him anymore. Just go away from my home!"* I sent them away and they were both very shocked. Syafrudin got angry and we had a big fight. He took a gas cylinder and threw it at me. The gas cylinder hit my legs and I screamed. Syafrudin pulled my hair, punched my face, slapped my back head through neck and pushed my head against the wall. I felt dizzy and fell down. He kicked my shoulder and dragged me out of the house and said, *"Go to hell, Satan!"*

I was unconscious for a while and heard my babies crying. I tried to get up and reach the door. I opened the door and held the babies. I brought them to my husband and said, *"Syafrudin, are you satisfied to torture me physically and mentally? This would be the last time you torture me. You would never touch me anymore. I apologize because I will leave you forever and these are the babies. Please, take good care of them. If you can't raise them, bring the babies to me!"* Syafrudin got on his knee and begged, *"Please, Amalia. Don't go. I won't be rude anymore!"* But I didn't care. I ran to my mom's house with my clothes and towel wrapped around my neck with no money left. I forgot to bring my savings. I had saved a lot of money in my purse.

Dad opened the door for me. He hugged me and took me sleep in the bed room. In his silence, I noticed that he knew what had happened between me and Syafrudin. At 2.00 a.m. Syafrudin knocked on the door. Dad came and said, *"Who are you looking for?"* Syafrudin said that he wanted to see me and bring

the babies to me. Dad got angry and said, *“No, she is under my protection now! You can’t see her anymore.”* Dad took the babies, sent him away, and closed the door. I was really glad to hear what my father said and to be safe in my parents’ place.

I couldn’t stand anymore his cruel and humiliating treatment against me. Enough is enough. I had obeyed him during my marriage, was devoted to my in-laws and accepted my husband’s polygamy. But he was a traitor. I deserved to be free, and I’m still young. I have many opportunities to be happy. I want to be a strong, independent woman, and enjoy this life.

Under dad’s protection.....

I was happy because I could get away from my husband. But, I had doubts: how can I feed the kids and take them to school? I had no money left and I was very poor. Mom and dad came and talked to me. They said that they would take responsibility for me and all my kids. I was glad because all kids were in the good hands of mom and dad. My brothers and sisters came to visit me and I told them what had happened. They empathized and supported me.

One of my friends in the village told me that there was a legal aid foundation in Bogor District. I could ask them for assistance. I went to Bogor with my elder brother and consulted them about divorce. They gave me some suggestions and I got everything in time. I petitioned for divorce. It’s a petition of *Khul’*, means I give up all the financial rights as the lawyer have suggested me. After 7 months, I got the divorce certificate. It was really a blessing!

Being a divorced woman....

As a mom, I really wanted to see all my kids happy and healthy. I realized that dad’s economic situation was deteriorating. I had no heart to ask my parents for money. I felt confused and was uncertain how to face this situation. Then I decided to work in Jakarta as a domestic worker. It was a hard decision because I had to leave my kids at home. But, there was no other option.

At first, I worked for a wealthy family in South Jakarta. They had a two-story house with 10 bedrooms. But my female employer was a very bad person. She asked me to do most of the housework from cleaning, shopping, cooking, washing as well as taking care of my employer. It was very hard to work in this house because I had to clean the tile one by one, cook for 15 persons every day, wash pile of clothes and iron them. Again, I was suffering but I had to be strong because I needed money for my kids. I worked in this house for 6 months and then I resigned.

A month later, I got a job in Kebon Jeruk sub-district. It was just the same. I had some troubles with the new female employer. She was very stingy and chatty. I couldn’t hold on to work in this situation. My salary was very low, Rp 500,000 (US\$ 60), a month and I had to work from 5.00 a.m. to 11 p.m. I muttered, *“Why do I always face difficult situations?”* I worked in this house for 3 months and then moved to Pamulang sub-district.

My third job was better. The employers were nice and my workload was reasonable. I met a young man in this compound and he fell in love with me. I liked him but I was still traumatized from my past experience and I didn’t want to get hurt. I worked at this house for a year and 3 months, until they had to move to West Java. My employers had problems in their marriage. The husband betrayed the wife. He had an affair with his face book friend. He often locked himself in the bedroom and abandoned his wife. I heard him talking to someone on the telephone for hours and hours. Sometimes, they chatted and laughed until midnight. His wife knew about this but she couldn’t do anything. She was very sad and shared her problem with me. I had suffered a similar experience though somewhat differently, so I could

feel what she felt. I advised her to stay calm and to try to save her marriage. She was really fragile and powerless. She came and talked to me every night and needed me to support her. I supported and encouraged her to stay strong. But her husband did not change.

I went back to the village for 2 months. During my stay, some men proposed to me. But I was still traumatized and did not want to get involved with anyone. One of the men was married and I refused to have a relationship with married man. I felt pity for his wife.

Life must go on. I have to struggle for my kids. Their dad never pays any attention to them. One of my friends offered me a job in Depok-West Java. I accepted it and now I work as baby sitter. My employers are very nice and I like working here. I hope there will be a light for my future. I am surviving and I still want to live as other people. I want my kids to have education, so that their future will be bright.

Amalia's analysis

- **Childhood**

Amalia was a bright child in her village. She is a cheerful girl and has lots of friends. She lived with her family in a dry village with sand and Stone Mountains in Lebak, one of the Districts in West Java. Her father was a farmer and cultivated "Gogo" *paddy field*, a type of paddy which is cultivated in dry land, and harvested once a year. Her mother is a house wife and brings up her children with lots of care and compassion. Her Dad is also a caring person. He takes his responsibility to provide and protect his family. Father taught Amalia and her siblings to recite *Al-Qur'an* and pray five times a day. Amalia and her siblings grew up with love and compassion. She enjoyed her rights as a kid very much.

- **Teenager**

In 1997, At a very young age, 16 years Amalia fell in love with a man in her village. After having a relationship for 6 months, she asked her father to let her marry him, but her father refused her will because her boyfriend was unemployed. In the village, it was common that young girls aged 14-16 years old get married, or get into arranged marriages with a man without having adequate information about his family's background, education, and employment. Amalia's father was a very cautious person. He prohibited his daughter to get married because he thought her future husband was not able to guarantee her life. In reverse, he arranged his daughter's marriage to a man of his choice, who is considered as a wealthy person, but Amalia rejected his will and she ran away from the house to stay at Islamic Boarding School.

A year after she went back home and in 1999, she insisted to get married to her boyfriend at the same village, but again, her father refused because he knew that his family was arrogant. Her father took his role as protector for Amalia because he knew his daughter was a kind of person who was careless in making decision. On the other hand, Amalia believed her father's assumption was wrong because she found that her boyfriend was a gentle, loving and caring person. Her parents were in pressure by their daughter to marry her boyfriend.

- **Marriage and departing from marital roles in *qiwamah* and *wilayah***

Marriage was not as she has imagined. In her first night sleep with her husband, Amalia felt offended because her husband humiliated her by comparing her to his ex-girlfriend. She was devastated to hear that and asked, “*How different?*” but her husband was just silent.

She faced the “real” situation of her husband’s family by the time she moved to her in-law’s house. She thought her in-law’s would treat her well, but in fact it was the opposite. She was treated like a slave and had to work from dawn till dusk. This situation is common to village women who live in their in-law’s houses. She has to do all domestic chores and serve all members of family. If there are two or three daughters in law in a house, they used to work together.

In her in-laws family, she thought she would be treated as a wife, Amalia has to obey her husband and her family in law. She was discriminated against, and treated badly by her husband and in laws. Instead of being the protector and provider for his family, her husband was a rude and spoilt person. He had no job and had never given money for his wife’s daily needs. He spent most of his time with friends, drunk and gambled during the day and night, instead. As Amalia became pregnant, the situation had never changed. She had to work hard as she used to do as before.

As the situation was getting worst, she was desperate and told her parent about her situation, but her father suggested her to go back to her in-law’s house, being the devoted wife that she is who obeys her husband. It was against her will because she wanted to move to her parent’s house, but she couldn’t deny her father’s order because she has to obey to her father, too. It was a kind of Islamic tradition and norms that a woman has to obey her father and husband in *qiwamah* and *wilayah* interpretation.

- **Divergence**

After two years of living in this tiring and humiliating situation, she began to think of herself. In her reflections, she thought that she had obeyed her husband, and his family, and was devoted to him enough. She was sick living with a husband who was not responsible for her and her kids. Her husband has never provided for her, and his family treated her badly. She couldn’t stand for their discrimination and degrading treatment against her. At this stage, she is in subjective knowledge because she wanted to change her life to have better living. She started to run her own business. She had some money from the stall for their living and saved the rest for her boys’ education. She felt much better and worked hard for their good.

- **Saving the Marriage**

Even though it was very hard to save her marriage for a long time, she didn’t want to give up. She made efforts to be the good wife, obey her husband and her in-law’s family. Even her in laws treated her as a slave and discriminate against her, but she continued to take care of them. It was part of the patriarchal system in her in-law’s family and cultural tradition, where as a wife, she has to do whatever they wanted. Her in-law’s family let her down because they thought Amalia came from a poor family, and low education.

She insisted to pursue her marriage in whatsoever situation she had, even though she never enjoyed her rights as a wife and didn’t get the positive aspect of *qiwamah* and *wilayah*. Her husband thought as a husband, he has rights to control his family and to be served by his wife. Once, he wasn’t satisfied, he abused her repeatedly with items around her, such as a gas cylinder, a broom and

glasses. His bad behavior continued to happen because no one controls him. He also assumed that he has rights to polygamy. He had an affair with his ex-girlfriend and to married to her without his wife's consent. Later, Amalia felt suspicious because her husband had rarely come home for days. When she asked about his whereabouts, her husband became very mad and they quarreled a lot. He wanted his wife not to interfere in his business. When she found the marriage certificate in her husband's bag, she was just crying and couldn't do anything. She was afraid to confirm her husband's marriage because she didn't want to trigger fighting between them.

Even when Devi, the wife of her husband, came to her house and sleep with her husband in Amalia's bedroom, she was just crying and hugged her boys. She tried hard to stand to this situation because she was powerless and had nothing to do to save her marriage. She felt very desperate and was out of her mind. She wanted to end her marriage but she didn't know how. She was in conflict with herself because she was afraid to be the divorced woman and her children won't have their father anymore. Being a divorced woman is shameful. She will get negative stigma from the society because they often blamed her as a cause of the divorce. She was also afraid her children would get the same stigma. On other hand, she couldn't stand to see her husband and his wife have sex before her. She felt very humiliated and not respected.

- **Divorce Proceeding**

Later on, she made a brave decision for her good when she heard Devi force her husband to divorce her, and Amalia sent them away. Devi showed romance and affection with her husband before her to make her sick. Reversely, Amalia became very angry and sent them away from her house. She found courage to let them go because she was in such pressure, but her husband became very mad and abused her indiscriminately. He pushed Amalia to go and this was what she said to her husband, *“Are you satisfied to torture me? This would be the last time because you would never touch me anymore.”* Amalia left home without her boys and this made her husband very worried. Her husband asked for apology repeatedly but she didn't care. She ran away to her father's house and asked for protection. In her father's house Amaliafelt safe and decided to divorce her husband after a long talk with her family. Her husband couldn't stop her will and brought back the kids to her.

Amalia had to petition for divorce at the Religious Courts (*Pengadilan Agama*) on her own. She wanted to end her marriage because she couldn't find tranquility, love and compassion from her husband. She went back and forth to the court by herself, but the divorce went very slowly. Then she hired a lawyer and her parents gave the lawyer Rp 5 million (US\$ 450) to accelerate the divorce. Unfortunately, the lawyer cheated her and didn't fulfill her demand. Then, one of her friends told her to go to the Legal Aid foundation in Bogor City, West Java. She went to legal aid and was assisted by a lawyer until the divorce proceedings were accomplished, for free. She sent a petition of *khul'*, means she gave up all the financial rights as the lawyer have suggested, and after 7 months, she got the divorce certificate.

- **Trajectory of self**

Her sense of self was changed by the time she started to question herself about her future life. She thought her suffering would never end if she didn't make the real change to her life. She had a good friend in her neighborhood, and she shared her situation with her. Her friend suggested that she ends this situation and encourage her to think of divorce. She learnt that she had to be brave to overcome her problems. She couldn't just cry and do nothing to help herself and her children. She thought that she only has one chance to change her life. There wouldn't be second chance. Even, her

decision to divorce her husband was a conflicted one, but she kept on moving with it. She would never harm herself, physically and mentally in a terrible marriage. Then she took the risk to be a divorced woman.

Amalia's decision to divorce her husband after many years living in torment, reflects some change in her religious beliefs. Her questions over obedience and a devoted wife have been answered by her constructed knowledge, which she got from her friends in Legal Aid Foundation. She maintained the decision to send the divorce petition as the right thing she has ever done in her life. She felt relieved and wanted to continue her life in happiness. She still remains a religious person by conducting five time praying every day and reciting *Al-Qur'an* in *Fajr* (dawn). She taught her kids to pray, fast and recite the holy *Qur'an*. She evolves to be a tough, wise and mature woman.

After several years of living in misery, she deserved to be happy. In August 2013, she had married with a man she loved, whom she met when she worked as domestic worker in Pamulang city, Banten Provincial City. She wants her marriage to bring tranquility, love and compassion for her and her kids. She believed in ALLAH's Beneficent and Almighty.

Reflection of Amalia's story

As a woman and women's rights activist, I feel that Amalia's story reflects multiple forms of discrimination and violations as shown in many articles about gender and feminism in books scattered on my work table. I would say that this is the description of marginalization and subordination against a woman who is very poor and lacks education. I hardly ever believed that this life story really exists in the midst of social change and the growing of public awareness about gender equality, effort of elimination of discrimination, and violence. The fight against gender injustice has been done by Indonesian women activists since 1970s, which is almost 30s years, but violations against women's rights have never ended. Anti-Domestic Violence Act which was enacted in 2004 by the State of Indonesia has hardly ever touched the grass root women who lack information and education.

Reflecting on this story, I realize that discrimination and violence against women is rooted in the community, practiced, and the victims are left abandoned without protection. Referring to Amalia's life story, it can be said that this is a picture of the situation of poor women in rural areas, where they do not have the power to fight against patriarchy, male dominance, and discrimination by her husband's family. Such violence and discrimination were experienced by Amalia since she got married and have never stopped, the situation became even worse, instead.

I observed that Amalia has realized that something went wrong with her since her husband testified that she could not satisfy him as the same as his girlfriend, Santi. Her husband told her at the first night they slept together. She knew that her husband undermined and degraded her but she couldn't do anything. She was just silenced and cried in her heart, because she felt betrayed and humiliated. She was wondering if her husband loved her sincerely, but she never dared to ask.

Yet violation, discrimination and mistreatment against her have never ended. They got even worse when she moved into the house of her in-laws. She was treated as a domestic worker who must serve all members of her husband's family, even brothers -in-law, sisters in law, nephews and nieces. In her silence, she thought a lot to overcome the harsh situation because she couldn't stand the suffering. During the pregnancy, she was always told to work and serve the whole family with no rest during the day and night. Her husband, who should take his role and responsibility to protect her and their son, did bad things, instead. He went out at night, got drunk and went home at dawn. He didn't give them

nafaqah (maintenance) and depend on his parents. Her heart was conflicted because she wanted to go away from her in law's house and leave her husband with his family. On the other hand, she was afraid that her husband would accuse her as "*nushuz*" and divorce her. She tolerated living in sadness, grief and misery for 3 years and in 2010, she left her husband and took her son to her parent's house.

Her husband was a shameless and stubborn man. He persuaded Amalia's father to bring back his wife for him. Her father couldn't do anything, but Amalia didn't want to. She wanted to have her own life and be happy with her son. In this stage, Amalia was in *subjective knowledge* because she decided not to go back to her husband at her in law's house. She negotiated with her husband to live in separate house other than that of her in law's. Then her husband agreed and they lived in Amalia's parent's other house which is not far from their house.

Although the violence has never ended, she made strong efforts to survive and serve her husband as a good wife. But she couldn't stand to live in this situation, because she started to feel depressed and insane. The climax was when her husband brought his girlfriend to have sexual intercourse in her bedroom. She couldn't believe what she had seen, and felt devastated. Then she decided to run away with her children to her parents' house after having traumatic violations, physical and psychological violence against her and her children. She did not want to go back to her husband again. Finally, she decided to get a divorce and work as a babysitter in Jakarta to continue her life, with her children and parents. She finally achieved her procedural knowledge and put herself to be a single parent for the good of her children and her parents.

Life Story #4: Nadira – “Between love, violence, and victory”

Life is not as easy, but when we have courage to struggle for it then we will be happy.....

An amazing childhood

My name is Nadira. I was born on 13 October 1957, in Sukabumi District in West Java. I'm number six of seven children, all of us are women. My dad runs a business with my mom. They had a restaurant in the subdistrict of Cibadak and it was successful. They also hired people to make homemade traditional sweet sticky rice (*dodol ketan*), and sold them in train the station in Bogor city, West Java.

When I was 5 years old, my mom took me to the traditional midwife. I was circumcised and it was so terrible. I could feel the pain and was traumatized. My sister said, I cried and cried a lot and she felt pity for me. Years later, when I was 12 years I asked mom, “Why I was circumcised?” She said, it was a *Sunnah* and tradition in Islam. All your sisters were also circumcised so don't worry about that!”

I was mom and dad's beloved, they fulfilled all my demands and I became a spoiled girl. I have many friends, boys and girls in the village. We played at the riverside, jumped into the river, swam to the flow of the water, climbed mango trees, guava and other fruits in plantation. We picked the ripe mangos and *rambutan* (hairy fruit) and shared them with kids around. Sometimes I stole rice and foods (eggs, meat, and bread) at the restaurant and shared them with poor families near the house. When dad got to know about this, he was upset but I didn't care. Mom said, “*If you want to share foods with your friends, do not steal at the restaurant. Let me know and I'll prepare for you!*” I told my mom that I was afraid to ask her for some food to do that.

One day, Mom gave me a gold bracelet for my 14th birthday, but unfortunately, I didn't like it. I sold the gold to the market and the money I got was shared with people in need in the village. I have no heart to see people living in poverty. Mom knew that I sold the gold, but she didn't know what to do. She was desperate with me.

Dad was a hard person. He obliged us to go to formal school in the morning and went to *Pesantren* in the afternoon. But I often ran from *Pesantren* with friends, and watched the movie in Cibadak at night. It was an open-air cinema and we really had fun. We watched Bollywood and Cowboy movies. I love Hema Malini and Franco Nero. Dad never knew about this, but mom could feel that I didn't go to *Pesantren* often. Mom said that she wants me to go to Bandung, the provincial capital of West Java to continue to my school in Junior High. The reason was that she wanted me to be a good person and focus on school. I obeyed her and stayed in a relative's house in Bandung. But, I couldn't live without mom and life seemed very hard for me. I was desperate and decided to quit. It was my own choice to drop out from school.

At 15 years, I went to sewing and embroidery vocational training in Cibadak sub-district. I really wanted to be one of the business people like mom and dad. Mom bought the sewing machine and provided me with some materials for sewing and embroidery. She helped me run the business and sold them to the market. I did the knitting and some friends helped me with marketing. Part of the money I earned from the business was saved, and I shared the rest with sisters and families.

Two years later, someone asked me to join a business with her. She was a wedding makeover from *kampong* to *kampong* and let me help her manage her work. I worked with her for 2 years and earned some money, rice and chicken. I gave the money to mom and dad because I felt guilty of stealing their

foods some years ago. They didn't run the restaurant anymore. They sold it to my uncle because they wanted to work in plantation. They had tea leaves and fruit plantation in Cidahu sub-district.

The dependent husband

At 19 years old, I worked as a cashier in Billiard house in Cidahu and earned big money at that time. One day, I went to Bogor city to attend my friend's birthday. I met Benny, a divorced man with a son and a grandson. He was charming and I fell in love with him, so did he. A year later, we got married. I lived in my in-law's house. His mom and dad were nice and I was treated well. My husband worked at the elementary school as a driver at Cidahu sub district. He didn't get much money, and eight months later, he resigned from his job. He was too dependent on his parents and couldn't work for others.

His parents supported us in daily need, but I couldn't live in such a way. I got used to having money and being independent. I tried a small business by selling *gado-gado*, (mixed vegetables with peanut, and soy sauce) in the terrace of the house, but It didn't work at all. I was tired doing housework and taking care of a baby at once, then it was hard to run business in this situation.

I asked my husband to let me work in Billiard House, but he didn't give me permission because he wanted me to stay at home and take care of them. I didn't want to, because I couldn't stand to live at the in laws' house. I was quite desperate to persuade him to move, and then I decided to move myself. My son was raised by my mother in law because she didn't want to let him go, somehow. My husband didn't change and I decided to petition a divorce.

A miserable marriage

After a year of being a divorced woman, I met Husein – a soccer player of "Galatama Astra" club in Jakarta. He was a nice guy. His father is Dutch and mother is Ambonese. We were engaged for nearly a year and in 1980, we were married. My mom and dad did not agree with this marriage, because they were traumatized by the Dutch people. My grandfather, a Regent of Banjar District was imprisoned and exiled for 12 years by the Dutch Colonialism to Digul, West Papua along with Soekarno, (the first President of Indonesia). During the exile, the Dutch killed my grandmother in their home village (West Java) with a deadly injection. After all, our families hated the Dutch.

I insisted to get married to Husein and begged my parents to give the permission, but they refused. Another factor was because father was in doubt of my future husband. He felt that Husein's profession as a soccer player would not prosper to earn for a living. I forced my parents to allow me to marry Husein, then father wrote a letter to a judge in religious court in East Jakarta, to act on behalf of him as the "*Wali*" in our marriage. After marriage, we rented a house in East Jakarta for 13 years.

During the marriage, I helped my husband to earn for a living. I did small business by selling food and groceries in a stall. I used my own saving as the *capital* to start the business. The business ran well, but my husband didn't support my effort. He wanted me to stay at home to take care of the children. This was the first time I quarrel with him because I didn't agree with him. I needed money to support my family because the salary of my husband was not enough to fulfill our daily need. I couldn't stand to live below the poverty. My kids needed good food to grow and we needed money to send them to school. Then my husband sought another job. He had a job in an insurance company and his wage was getting high. I stopped doing my business and took care of the children as best as I could.

One day, a friend of mine called me and told that she saw my husband with another woman in a Restaurant in Central Jakarta. I was very shocked and asked myself, *“Why this is happening?”* I thanked my friend and started to investigate what has happened with my husband.

When he came back home, I asked, *“Where have you been lately?”* But, he didn’t answer my question properly. And I continued, *“I know, you have an affair with a woman in your office!”* He looked very angry and said, *“Don’t you dare accuse me. I have nothing to do with her!”* Then he walked closer to me and pulled my hair. He slapped my face and pushed my body to the floor. I fell down and I withstood an extreme pain in my stomach and head. Then he kicked me out of the room.

He had big body and I’m very skinny, then it was easy to defeat me. He was still in his anger and left me behind to the floor, by saying, *“listen, if you want to be safe, do not ever accuse me anymore. Otherwise I will kill you!”* I just cried and cried a lot to hear that threat.

My children came and helped me to sit down. They looked very worried to see me, and suggested to bring me to the doctor, but I refused because I felt ashamed to share what have happened with a doctor. The day after, I went to my husband’s office to tell about his abused against me to his Superior. Unfortunately, he didn’t believe what I’ve said and persuaded me to go back home. After reporting this case, I felt very afraid because my husband might be angry at me. My feelings were right. He came home and abused me several times. He kicked my stomach; throw the cone block stone from the terrace to my head, and took out the match from his pocket and burnt my head. No one was at home, and no one was able to help me. I screamed loudly and ran to the bathroom and flushed my head with water. I felt the severe pain in my head and body. My head and body were burning. I was shivering and ran away from the house to ask for help.

I went to a neighbor’s house and they helped me to go to the doctor to save me. I was hospitalized for a week and my children took care of me in the hospital. I felt devastated but I couldn’t think what the best thing to do at that time. I felt depressed, traumatized and afraid.

During hospitalization, I was visited by two women activists from Legal Aid Foundation to offer their assistance. They heard my case from the neighbor who has contacted them. After having discussion with my kids, I agreed to get legal assistance from the Legal Aid.

I was secure in the director of Legal Aid’s house after I was released from the hospital. My kids were raised by my relatives in Bogor, and my husband run his life as usual. After having a series of sharing and discussions with woman activist and lawyers, I agreed to sue my husband.

We proceeded the case to the police and attorney’s office. Three months later, we were in trial to prosecute my husband. It was the first case of domestic violence filed to the court in Indonesia. It was a long process of trial and we had to be very tough to face the corrupted legal system in Indonesia. The perspective of the Attorney and the judge were still masculine. They didn’t see the domestic violence as a criminal act because it has happened in a private house. As a result, my husband was free from any criminal prosecution. Again, I was really disappointed.

The struggle has never ended

We were not satisfied with the court and we thought of another strategy. First, I sent the divorce petition to a Religious Court, and second, we drafted a statement about Domestic Violence and sent to the media, the government and the Parliament. The lawyers and women activists asked me to testify to

some electronic media (TV, Radio) and newspapers about what has happened to me as the victim. I went to the Parliament and told them about my story. Many people have sympathized about the tragedy and they supported for a regulation to protect women and children from domestic violence.

In the religious court, I won the case. The Judge fulfilled my demand to divorce my husband and I got the post-divorce *nafaqah* from my ex-husband (for my kids). I went to his office to see his Superior to show him the judge's decision, and force them to provide education and health insurance for all my kids until they are 25 years old. The office has agreed with me and they deducted from my ex-husband's salary, and transferred the money to my account for the certain amount of money every month for kids.

Based on my experience, I got involved with women's movement in Indonesia since 1998 up to now. I campaign to end the violation against women and children in domestic and public spaces. I'm the member of Indonesian Woman Coalition for Democracy and Justice. Along with the Woman's Legal Aid Foundation, and The National Commission of Anti Violation against Woman, we campaign for The Eradication of Domestic Violence, and initiated Domestic Violence Bill. In 2004 the Bill was enacted by the State.

I was also involved in the National Campaign for Witness and Victim Protection. It was a big coalition and they pushed the government and the Parliament to enact the Bill of Witness and Victim Protection. The Bill was enacted in 2006, and it was an effective bill to protect witnesses and victims from any harm. Now, I work in the Witness and Victim Protection Agency. I'm happy because I am able to dedicate my skills and experience to work for the protection of Victims and Witnesses of any kind of criminal acts. I really thank *Allah* for the blessing.

Analysis of Nadira's story

- **Childhood**

First, the reason why I choose Nadira as the resource person in this life story research is because she is a brave woman, who broke her taboo and tried to overcome her problem in her own way. She has a strong sense of self and family.

In her childhood, she had a very happy and healthy life, lots of love and was encouraged to be independent by her parents. She was raised in a good environment and had lots of friends. But, these were changed because she decided to get married at a very young age (19 years old), to a 55 years old man who had a son and a grandson. This decision had negative impact in her life, which has changed drastically because she had to move to her in-law's house and took care of her family.

Unlike the dominant *qiwamah-wilayah* model of gender relations where a wife is financially dependent on her husband, Nadira provided for her family, even though her parents in-law supported their daily needs. She was financially active and got used to having money and being independent. Her experience is very much departed in traditional *qiwamah* and *wilayah* norms, where she had to earn money by herself because her husband didn't provide for her and her baby boy. She never fit with the picture of a dependent submissive wife. Something always came from her, as her own initiative. She faced multiple burdens as a wife because she had to do all domestic chores by herself, took care of the babies and had to work at her food stall at once. Her husband didn't help her to ease the burden of housework and business. She felt unhappy in her marriage because her husband was very dependent on his parents and didn't provide for his family.

She kept trying to persuade her husband to move from her in law's house and live on their own, but her husband always rejected her will. She was tired and gave a petition of divorce. Her husband agreed but their son had to live with him. She was very sad, but had to accept this situation and had to give up her child. She lost the custody of her kid within the negotiation to divorce, and the rights over her kid is taken from her.

- **Facing domestic violence over and over again**

After the divorce, she met a soccer player in a birthday party of her friend. They both fell in love and planned to get married. He proposed to marry her to her parents but they have not agreed to the proposal. Her parents were traumatized by the Dutch, who had killed Nadira's grandmother and grandfather in exile during Colonialism. Nadira's boyfriend is of Dutch descent. Responding to her parent's rejection, Nadira kept insisting to marry her boyfriend. Her parents gave up and were forced to accept this proposal.

Nadira was a typical complex woman. On one hand, she is very strong, active and has a good job but she chose a man in her second marriage without further knowing him. Nadira didn't realize that her husband is a typical rough, and abusive husband. He was very dominant and had always asked his wife to obey him. He forced Nadira to quit her job and take care of the children, but he didn't provide for them well. He controlled the money and resources himself, as the way he controlled his wife. When Nadira questioned this, he became angry and showed his temper by slapping and kicking her repeatedly.

The abuse of power relations because of *qiwamah* and *wilayah* had made her life deteriorate. She kept trying to maintain her marriage and give him a chance, but it didn't work. Her husband became more abusive after she found out that he had an affair with his friend in the office.

It was a bad marriage because she had lots of domestic violence; physical, psychological and economical violence, and she had to do something about it. She petitioned to legal aid of LBH APIK, and got involved in advocacy work against women's violence. She testified before members of the Parliaments, Ministries and Government officials, about her experience as a victim of domestic violence. She was the first person who let her case be shared with the public, and widely publicized in the media. Her testimonies have helped other women, and encouraged other domestic violence victims to open their cases to the public. She was turning to a particular experience, to make better things better for other woman who were suffering a lot at home.

Nadira cut off the taboo of telling her experience of domestic violence, and stood up to overcome her situation. This strength had carried her through, in the sense that she was able to get into it on her own ways, was able to heal herself by sharing her experience to help other women and get involved in advocacy work voluntarily. She believes that a wife is a garment for her husband, and the husband is a garment for his wife meaning they have to protect each other, not to harm each other.

Even though she faced difficulties in taking her husband to criminal court, she never gave up. She lobbied the attorneys, along with her lawyers to give her husband the most severe sentence as a punishment for what he had done to her. In fact, the judges only gave him 3 months in jail as his verdict. This case reflected what is generally faced by Indonesian women. The unequal position between men and women before the law, and male domination of judges has made women suffer. Most of the cases of domestic violence have ended in disappointment because of bribery, the

reluctance of victims to open their case to the public, threat from the perpetrator, in this case her husband or partner. In this situation, Nadira kept trying to win her case and went for an appeal. In her appeal, the high court put her husband 6 months in jail.

She is a very strong woman because she demanded to get health and education insurance for all her children from her husband. In the religious court, the judges fulfilled her demand and she showed the divorce certificate and its provisions to the Superior of her ex-husband. The Superior had agreed to transfer the insurance on monthly bases to her account until her children were aged 21 years old.

- **Trajectory of self**

At the beginning, Nadira was a woman who suffered a lot of abuse and lacked love from her husband. During her marriages (first and second), she didn't get tranquility, love and compassion as a wife. Her first husband was a dependent man and her second husband was a harsh, stubborn and abusive man. She had to deal with her marriage and compromised in difficult situations. She faced economic problems because her husband didn't provide for her well. Once she ran a business of her own, both of her husbands didn't allow her to continue, with the reason that she had to take care of the children and house chores as the wife. She obeyed her husband and did what he wanted.

Being the obedient wife, she had to make another sacrifice because she had to face her husband's affair and when she tried to confirm this to her husband, he abused her, instead. During her care at the hospital, in her reflections, she found out that she shouldn't live in a bad situation, because it could ruin and jeopardize her, and her children's life. After her silence, she stepped to subjective knowledge. She had courage to file her case to the criminal court, and send a petition of divorce to the Religious Court at once. Whether she had to face a male dominated criminal justice system, she was still happy because she won in the Religious Court and the High Court in her appeal. She had all her demands and pushed the office of her ex-husband to transfer any certain of money for her children's education and health insurance.

She is in the phase of constructed knowledge because she was aware that the cases of domestic violence remain existent until now. Then she decided to work in the women's movement to urge the Law of Anti Domestic Violence, and the Law of Witness and Victim Protection to be enacted. This is along with women activists in Indonesia. It is part of her normative value, the system of knowledge that she believed in. She also believes, this value should make women healthy and happy, and then if not, women should stop if it hurts them, if there is something wrong happening. It is very relevant to what has happened to many married women in Indonesia. Most of them are the victims of domestic violence in many forms. Physical, psychological, and economical violence, but they are in silence. They are afraid to report to the police their cases.

Now the law has been enacted and operable They saved hundreds of thousand women and children from domestic abuse perpetuated by men. Nadira said that her struggle has never ended and she keeps in working to help women and children. She works in the Agency of Witness and Victim Protection Agency now.

Reflection of Nadira's story

The life story of Nadira reminds me of the struggle of Indonesian women activists to initiate the Bill of Anti Domestic Violence against Women (and Children). It was in 1998, where we sat together in

Yogyakarta, and Jakarta to discuss the need of the legislation to protect women and children from domestic violations.

The campaign of the above-mentioned Bill, has spread to many provinces in Indonesia and obtained greater support from women in grassroots, to middle-upper class level. Nadira's case is the first to be highlighted at the moment because she testified her story of grief bravely before the public, members of Parliament, government officials, the media, and other parties. She voiced her case loudly and got sympathy from day to day, from people to people, and her case became the topic of discussion to fight for the Bill.

People are aware that women and children are very vulnerable and easily become victims of abuse, thus they have to be protected by the State. She is a tough and strong woman. She showed us that domestic violence occurs to women on all levels, from housewife, career women, to other professions. No matter where they came from, their ethnic, religious and racial groups. Women (and children) are very vulnerable in all kinds of violations and they are afraid to report to the police because their partners threaten her. I admire Nadira because she was aware that her case is one of hundreds of thousands of cases experienced by women throughout the country, as the result of patriarchy and male domination in domestic area. She voluntarily works to raise people's awareness to protect women (and children) from abuses at home, and she has joined a woman's movement ever since.

I feel I have a connection with her, and learnt a lot from her experience, that life is a matter of struggle. Life is not easy, but if we wish to achieve happiness, then it will be worthwhile. *Aamiin.*

Commonalities in the Four Life Stories

Guiding questions

- a. How were the four women's experiences and the options that were available for them differentiated by factors such as: education, class, family relations and support, self-knowledge and strength?
- b. The commonalities among them: how did the four stories demonstrate different aspects of *qiwamah* and *wilayah*-related problems: spousal violence, women's unequal and difficult access to divorce compared to men; marital sex as a husband's right, and a wife's duty; women's economic roles that are unacknowledged legally?
- c. What did you, as a team, learn from all the stories in terms of issues to work on advocacy and mobilization for legal reform or policy change?
- d. What are the things that you may have learned from the stories, which may have challenged your assumptions and positions, as a team and women's rights activists?

Overall analysis

Shafira, Nawa, Amalia, and Nadira are the strong women. They experienced multiple forms of discrimination and violence in their stages of life, and all of them were able to cope with their situations in their own ways. Shafira was deprived of her rights since she was a child when her father did polygamy, her mother depressed to death, and she was scattered with all her sisters and brothers. Nawa suffered physical and psychological abuse from her father, and mother and she had to obey all their demands even though they conflicted with her heart. Even though Amalia and Nadira had a healthy childhood life, and they were nourished in a better situation, Amalia and Nadira fell into the “wrong decision” when they chose a husband who turned out to be the perpetrator of violence that led to physical and psychological suffering, and economic deprivation of their marriage. Shafira and Nawa chose marriage as an attempt to escape from various forms of violence and suffering that they experienced from childhood to adulthood to, find their savior.

Their choices to get married, among others are based on their perception that marriage can make them happy, to save their lives from abusive parents, or guardians, and find the figure of a father. These were experienced by Shafira and Nawa. In other cases, Nadira and Amalia assumed marriage as a way to show their parents that they have grown up, and it is their right to choose their lives, even if their parents do not agree with their proposals for various reasons. Almost all parents and guardian refused their choices, for example Shafira's older sister, who acted as her guardian, was overprotective of Shafira and limited her freedom because she saw Shafira as a woman who can be sought by men, and thus as a potential problem. In patriarchal gender structures, women also can perpetuate violence against other women of younger age or lower status, or class.

This shows the complex ways in which patriarchy operates. Nawa's parents did not agree with her boyfriend because they didn't want their daughter to marry an ex-convict, a drug trafficker. Nadira's parents didn't agree with her choice because they were traumatized by the groom's family, who is a Dutch descendant, and who colonized Indonesia and sent their parents into exile and killed them. In Amalia's case, her parents also did not agree with her choice because they knew that the man's family is arrogant and were hated by the community in their village. These indicated that all parents played their role as *wali mujbir* (the guardian who ensures that his daughter's future husband is a good man), because they want the best husbands for their daughters.

The *wilayah* model of Nawa's and Shafira's families didn't reflect the normative of the *wilayah* concept in Islam. Rather than protect and provide his family, Shafira's father ignored his wife and children. He assumed that men had rights to polygamy. In other side, patriarchal relationship between her parents and their children hindered Nawa to enjoy positive aspects of wilayah such as protection, support, guidance, etc. Instead of feeling protected, Nawa felt pressured by her tough and hard stance parents, especially her mother who is much disciplined, and who tends to impose her will against her daughter.

There are some push and pull factors that influence the situation of women in these life stories. These factors are reflected in the situation of woman in Indonesia across the classes, ethnic groups, gender, education and other resources. They also determine how they make up their minds to decide their own good. For instance, Shafira decided to have bed separation with her husband after she realized that her marriage life has gotten worsen, and she turned into a brave woman to stop having sexual relationship with her husband, and no longer share a bed with him. But she felt guilty about this decision; she felt she was being a disobedient wife to her husband and hence was committing a religious and social infringement. This shows that women's decision was influence by their beliefs, social norms, and religion imbibed her since childhood.

Amalia did not have better options. When she experienced discrimination, humiliation and was treated like a slave in her in law's house for several years, she couldn't do anything. She didn't want to fight because her father taught her to obey her husband and his family. As wife, Amalia was obliged to be devoted to her husband's family with no exception. She let herself suffer and *sinks in boiled water* because she had nothing to do to overcome it. She felt that she did not have the confidence to overcome her situation which befell her. The lack of resources, education and awareness are the main factors which influenced her silence towards her problems.

Lack of family relations and support is what happened with Nadira, and what also affected enjoying her rights. She didn't communicate with her parents and siblings for a long time, during the time when she was assaulted by her husband, when she did not divulge her case. She didn't want to share her suffering because the violence she experienced was a taboo. She believes a *hadith* that woman is a gown for her husband and man is a gown for his wife.

In Nawa's story, she still had an option to escape from her situation when she didn't fit in with her mother in law. Her knowledge and emotional strength bought her to her parent's house with her very sick husband and baby girl. When she realized that she and her baby girl got infected with HIV positive, days after the death of her husband, she became devastated and fall into a deep well, but she recovered with her emotional strength and insight that she had to stand up and face the reality of her, and her baby's life.

Commonalities between resource persons

Divergences and economic roles of women and duties of women in family

Unlike the dominant *qiwamah-wilayah* model of gender relations, where a wife is financially dependent on her husband, Shafira Nadira, Nawa and Amalia provided for their families. Shafira works as an elementary school teacher, Nadira, and Amalia work as food and confectionaries sellers, and Nawa works in a NGO. All of them spent their salaries on their kids, and Nawa also provided financially for her retired parents. Comparing men's contributions to their families, all of the women were facing divergences in their economic life because of many reasons. Shafira's husband had never given her money because he wanted to control all the expenses for their daily needs, Nadira's husband spent his

money on his girlfriend, and Amalia's husband was jobless and dependent on his parents. Nawa has to work for a living because her husband was dying, and she took responsibility as the head of the family. Shafira contributed to build their house and bought motorcycle with the money she took from the bank credit scheme, but later after she filed for divorce, her ex-husband prohibited her from selling the house. She didn't have the right to property as her economic rights.

The divergence between the reality of gender roles and relations in all women's lived experiences with their husbands on one hand, and the model of gender roles and relations in *qiwamah* on the other hand, did not change the gender dynamics in their relationships with their husbands. All of them did not see marital roles as being based on shared responsibilities. All husbands expected their wives to take part in providing for the family, to be obedient and submissive wives at the same time, and care all domestic chores. Such multiple burdens were taken for granted by Amalia, Nadira, and Nawa, except for Shafira. Shafira asked her husband to take care of their son, who eventually dropped out from school, but he refused and said, "*That is your business!*"

Marital sex and sexual relations with husbands

Marital sex and sexual relations with husband was an issue for all resource persons in their life stories. In Nawa's case, she wasn't aware of her husband's mortal disease. Her husband had never told her that he had been infected with HIV positive. He let her have sexual intercourse with him without any safe sex measures that ended with pregnancy. The lack of information, knowledge and awareness often let women, mainly housewives like Nawa, to be trapped into the contagious HIV positive.

In Shafira's case, she decided to separate her bed from her husband because she was tired of his cruel, rude, suspicion and jealousy against her. Three years after bed separation, she sent a divorce petition to the religious court. Amalia really felt humiliated because her husband compared her to his ex-girlfriend at their first night, by saying, "*You are different with Santi!*" when Amalia inquired, "*How different?*" her husband didn't say anything. Her husband also cheated her by having an affair with Devi, another ex-girlfriend of his. Amalia has hardly ever questioned her husband's attitude toward her, because she was very afraid to lose him. She was forced to "accept" Devi as the second wife of her husband with no o because she had no courage to divorce him. Nadira was cheated by her husband, too. She found out that her husband had an affair with a married woman in his office. When she questioned her husband about this, she was repeatedly abused mentally and physically. Nadira said, what has been done by her husband was a way to disclose his guilt.

Spousal violence

Spousal violence is the common thread for Shafira, Nadira, Amalia and Nawa. Nadira and Amalia faced domestic violence on different levels, but they suffered the same abuses: beating, punching, kicking, and being thrown at with objects. They were dying, but survived. Shafira experienced degrading treatment and humiliation by her husband with inappropriate words, "*If I didn't marry you, you would live under the bridge!*" and "*If I see you with your male friends, I will beat you and have your son beat you as well!*"

Nawa faced the concept of "*Mahram*" which means "control" for her. In its genuine context, *Mahram* is the obligation of men to ensure that women will be safe and comfortable to run their needs outside the home, but in Nawa's case "*Mahram*" means restriction of movement. Her husband always "accompanied" Nawa, and limited her access to see her friends. He also prohibited Nawa to continue her study in College. All of the husbands expressed their anger with threats and violence to show that they have power, authority and control over their wives. The other common thread of the three; Shafira,

Nadira and Amalia was the restricted access to resources. All husbands had never given living expenses to their wives. They controlled the money, as the way to control their wives. Economical violence is the main problem facing Indonesian women, mainly occurring to housewives. The issue of economic independence for woman is the central issue to liberate woman from their dependency over their husbands.

Domestic violence is a form of violence against women that often occurs because it is in the domestic/private sphere, and is considered the most dangerous for the victims. In family relationships, women at all levels of age, education, ethnicity, religion backgrounds, etc., are vulnerable to violence. This action is perpetuated by traditional attitudes, and religious interpretations of gender bias. Economic dependence as experienced by Amalia at the beginning of marriage, forced her to keep on to a relationship based on physical, psychological and economic violence. The data collected by the National Commission on Anti-Violence against women concluded that 97% of the 105,103 cases of violence against women (2010) are of domestic violence experienced by both women and children.

Access to divorce

Lisa Marshall, et al¹⁴ (2012) wrote that within the United Nations' system, multiple treaties and conventions elaborate on different sets of rights that contain an overarching premise; **equality before the law**. The instruments vary with respect to clarity of standards, and mandates for non-discrimination, and equality, but all require States to recognize equal opportunity to exercise legal rights. The standard set forth in ICCPR (<http://www.cirp.org/library/ethics/UN-covenant/>), ICESCR (http://www.who.int/hhr/Economic_social_cultural.pdf), and CEDAW (<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>), all widely ratified (including by Indonesia) as international instruments (and ratified as national regulations), provide the most exhaustive elaboration of human rights standards that are significantly impacted by the legal postulates of *qiwamah* and *wilayah*.

Even-tough Indonesia has ratified all the Conventions, but their implementation is far from satisfactory. Women are still considered as second-class citizens, unequally treated before the law, and their voices are hardly ever heard by the authority, legal enforcement officers, (police, attorney, judges, and lawyers) and other decision makers. Women have to struggle to win their cases in criminal court and religious courts, because social norms and the substance of law are still gender biased. The attitude of legal enforcement officers often discriminates against, and blames women (as the victims).

In these life stories, Nadira, Amalia and Shafira sent their divorce petitions to Religious Courts after having traumatic experiences living with their husbands. The access to divorce between men and women is not the same. Mostly, women get difficulties to demand their and their children's rights in the proceedings. For instance, Shafira failed to get the "*gono-gini*" (rights of property) after her divorce because the process to claim the rights is too complicated and takes time, so Shafira decided to "ignore" her property rights. Another one is Amalia's case. She didn't get post-divorce *nafaqah* for her children because the judge considered that her husband was jobless and was not able to pay *nafaqah*. In other cases, Nadira won in court because she insisted that the judge fulfills her demands to get the health and education insurance for her four kids. The judges had agreed to fulfill her demand and ordered her husband to obey the decision.

¹⁴ "A Human Rights based Analysis of the Concepts of *Qiwamah* and *Wilayah*," Lisa Marshall, Leili Monfered, Emily Ponder and Deena Hurwitz, University of Virginia Human Rights Clinic (2012).

The level of awareness and courage to fight in court and negotiate with the judges is the key factor of their successful divorce. For Shafira, the divorce process is time consuming because she is a public servant (*pegawai negeri*). She has to get the permission from her superior to send the petition of divorce. Public servants are governed by specific rules and regulations to get married and divorced in Indonesia. Male and female public servants are prohibited from polygamy, and *sirri* marriage (*pernikahan siri*). In other cases, Amalia felt other difficulties to send the petition, because no one helped her and she didn't have any information on how to apply for the divorce. Her divorce took a long time, was delayed by the administration, and she was desperate. She hired a lawyer to help, but he cheated her after she paid the money. He ran away two weeks after the agreement. Then, one of her friends told her about the Legal Aid, and she helped Amalia go to legal Aid in the city of Bogor (West Java), and got assistance for her petition. This is to show how women still have difficulties to access gender-sensitive legal aid and access to justice.

For Nadira, she successfully got divorced because she was assisted by prominent women lawyers from APIK Legal Aid-Jakarta (<http://www.endslaverynow.org/legal-aid-foundation-apik-lembaga-bantuan-hukun-asosiasi-perempuan-indonesia-untuk-keadilan>). She also sued her husband in criminal court, and the judges sentenced her husband to several months in jail.

This is to show that men control family ownership over the property. For example, men control the house, land, cars and other valuable items and they are more often registered in the name of men, although these items are acquired during the marriage, and or combined. This gives an idea of the differences in economic and social benefits of women and men. In special situations, such as family conflict, domestic violence, divorce or separation, women do not have equal access to property acquisition. Even post-divorce, men often do not fulfill their obligations to provide for the child, as what had been decided by the Court.

How do women solve problems in their marriages?

All woman in these life stories tried to save their marriage in different ways, for instance; Shafira kept calm and decided for bed separation, and divorce her husband peacefully. She did *Shalat Istigharah* and prayed to Allah SWT to ask for the best decision. She "held" her marriage for three years and gave her husband a chance to change his attitude toward her, but lots of tensions between Shafira and her husband still existed. The marriage did not work and yet she had waited for 20 years to ask for divorce because she couldn't stand this situation anymore. Amalia had to wait for 5 years to come up with a decision to divorce her husband. In her silence, she brought up her courage to stand in very uncertain situations, and hope her husband would get back to her. As the situation was getting worse, and he was threatening her and kids' safety, she decided to run away from their house for good.

Nadira had never told anybody about the traumatic abuses she suffered by her husband, except to her husband's Superior at the office. In fact, her complains were hardly ever heard by the Superior. This case showed that women's voices are considered less important and undermined by the authority. Nawa was also frustrated with her marriage. She didn't find the figure of father in her husband as she expected. Her husband turned to be the real "man", controlled and limited her movement. This forced her to keep silent to avoid conflict with her husband, which made her sick. When she realized that she and her daughter got infected with HIV positive, she filled her day to day life hiding in her room, and overcome her ordeals with silence, and life with no passion. Six months after, she stood up and drastic changes occurred when she joined the group of HIV positive. The spirit of her life returned. She saw how people with HIV are able to live normally.

Trajectory of change and women's ways of knowing

Nawa is the example of a woman who is growing stronger because of her problems. Her bad experience regarding the implementation of *qiwamah* and *wilayah* didn't put her into frustration over her destiny. She took her bad experience as the lesson learnt to be a good mother for her daughter, who is also HIV positive, to be a good member of community, and as a good citizen. The important and interesting thing in Nawa herself, is that she put the bitter experience as the reason to become an activist to help people who have the same destiny as her.

Shafira evolved into a woman who knew what she wanted out of marriage, and would not settle for any marriage proposal. She wants a marriage that brought tranquility, love, and compassion (*sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*). But that was not all. Even though she has a man who loves and cares for her, she is hesitant to accept his marriage proposal and to move with him to Papua Island, because she does not want to give up her job, her current life, and the custody of her children. She feels conflicted because it's not only a matter of protection, love, compassion and tranquility from a man, but her responsibilities for her kids, and her financial security.

Amalia's decision to divorce her husband after many years living in torment, reflects some change of her religious beliefs. Her questions over the obedience and being a devoted wife have been answered by her constructed knowledge, which she got from her friends in the Legal Aid Foundation. She maintained her decision to send the divorce petition as the best thing she ever did in her life. She felt relieved and wanted to continue her life in happiness. She still remains a religious person by conducting five-time praying every day and recite Al-Qur'an in *Fajr* (dawn). She taught her kids to pray, fast and recite the holy Qur'an. She evolves to be a tough, wise and mature woman.

She is in line with constructed knowledge because she is aware that the cases of domestic violence remain until now. Then she decided to work in a women's movement to urge the Law of Anti Domestic Violence, and the Law of Witness and Victim Protection, along with woman activists in Indonesia. It is part of her normative value, the system of knowledge that she believed in. She also believes, this value should make women healthy and happy, and then if not, women should stop if they are harmed, and if something wrong happened. It is very relevant to what has happened to many married women in Indonesia. Most of them are the victims of domestic violence in many forms. Physical, psychological, and economical violence, but they are in silence.

Lessons learned

What did we as a team learn from all the stories in terms of issues to work on for advocacy and mobilizing for legal reform or policy change? Until now, there are many women who are neglected, due to the lack of information and awareness of their rights as citizens. This is partly due to socio-cultural norms that do not support women to participate in politics and decision-making, as well as the existence of institutions that continue to limit the role of women. There are several factors that influence the gender role of women, both in the household and public spheres. Some of the limiting factors are: first, social status, especially with regard to the process of education, health, and position in the decision-making process which generally provide a certain impact on their productivity. Disparities between the educational attainment of men and women, along with the fact that women generally have less gain and less equal access to educational resources and training, have created critical consequences for women in their productive and reproductive roles.

Access and control by men in decision-making began in the realm of family, household, community, organizations, and States. It is influenced by the paradigm of thinking that men are superior, and have more power than women to control all areas of life. In civil cases such as divorce, there is no guarantee for women and children to get the rights that have been decided by the court, such as the right to a living, child custody, joint property rights, inheritance rights, and the right to children's education, if the children are awarded to the wife.

Women who are still marginalized by the social, economic, and legal systems have to be empowered and strengthened. Improving the legal system through legal reforms in justice for both men and women, the enforcement of economic rights of women, the increase of women's involvement in decision-making at the household level, families, communities and countries, become very important in order to overcome the problem of inequality between men and women. Another important point is education and raising awareness of women in the economic, social and cultural fields, so that women become independent and leave their dependence on men. If there is a family conflict, women are easier to make decisions. In addition, the economic independence of women will improve their ability to have equal bargaining power with men in both domestic and public spheres.

Final Reflection on Process and Outcome

Although this study is the second phase of our research, after we completed the first phase of the pilot project, we feel that in this second stage we had a bigger challenge because in the process of documenting this life story of women, we faced ups and downs in various situations.

First, in the process of determining the theme, we agreed to decide the theme of minority women, whose voices are hardly ever heard by the public, the Government, the State, and other decision makers. But in the process of documenting these life stories, we had a very big problem, because some of our resources felt reluctant to tell their stories openly to researchers, for various reasons. Then we got together again to discuss this problem with the research team, then we looked for strategies and defined new themes called: "*Marginalized Women*".

This documentation process ran smoothly. To conduct this research, we used the method of focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with resource persons. After the interviews were completed, we felt very relieved but also challenged because the next step was writing and analyzing the stories. This section is the longest part we've done since we have to take one year to complete four individual analyses, along with a comprehensive analysis on the life stories.

We referred to this process as a process of ups and downs because we had to change many of the resource persons because they do not meet the criteria of *qiwamah* and *wilayah*. Even if the women we originally interviewed met the criteria, they were reluctant to tell their experiences regarding the context of *qiwamah* and *wilayah* to researchers.

Secondly, in terms of the process of sharing and learning amongst research teams, our team very actively communicated and shared our experiences about the issues relating to the context of the substance of the research. We learned a lot with friends of Musawah through Skype, especially with the team coordinator of the Global Life Stories Project, Mulki Al-Sharmani. Among the things we learned are: research methodology, implementation, evaluation/revision, and a variety of relevant sources in the writing of this research.

Internally, the intensity of our communication is a crucial substance of writing and analysis between the research team. Then, we discussed and did a joint analysis between the research teams. This section is very important to build teamwork and trust in each researcher and other team members who support the process of documenting life stories.

Third, in terms of learning and working together with the resource persons, we noted that the documentation process takes a lot of energy and time because there are multiple meetings between the researchers and the resource persons. During this precious time, we learned from each other, especially learning from the experience of our resource persons. We reflect that women should have the intelligence, knowledge and courage to get out of their bad situations.

On the learning process with this resource persons, we obtained some values that are important, both for a researcher and the resource person. We called this process mutual respect and understanding between us, as the resource persons' life experiences led us to work better and to understand the issue of women in the family relation. They are very complex and complicated. In many of the problems encountered, there was the ability to overcome the problems, and the way our resource persons have successfully done that.

For instance, "Silence" and "Letting the problem occur" are not the right attitudes because they were subjected to violence and oppression. Awareness to fight and uphold the principles of life as a female, and not to be discriminated against and oppressed continuously, are wise ways to address the problems experienced.

Another reflection was that the figure of parents is needed in the family, both mother and father, as figures of a democratic, attentive and loving persons for their children. This attitude determines the child's perspective and confidence, so that they have a place to ask, shelter and a place to feel safe and secure.

Finally, that we learned a lot from the whole process of documenting these life stories. Solidity of the research team, coordination in internal and external levels with other countries and Musawah's team, shared experiences, information and knowledge building of *qiwamah* and *wilayah* in the real sense, both in relation to children and parents, as well as the relation between husband and wife in order to achieve equality, peace within the family, the community, as well as the state.

Initially, we assumed that every problem must have a way out, but our assumption is not always right because the life story of our documentation, there are many compromises and contradictions that occur with resource persons. There is a resource person's silence against the violence she experienced on the grounds that she wanted her family united, with no divorce. However, this attitude cannot be tolerated because the more we are silenced, the more violations take place. Therefore, resource persons decided to split up, bed separation, process of divorce, divorced, widowed and re-married.

The stages of life are not black and white, but patterned and colored. Patterned and colored in life is strongly influenced by the level of education, knowledge, awareness, economic independence, and the courage to make decisions by resource persons. It makes us re-think, "Why would someone have obstacle to make a decision?" Why did they wait so long to get out of their misery? Internal factors within herself as well as the influence of the people around her largely determine the attitude, and her courage and her measures to resolve the problem.

How to resolve problems varies widely among resource persons. For example, Shafira, even though she knew that she suffered sexual harassment, and negative stereotyping and stigmatization because she was a divorced woman, she didn't fight against her discrimination and violation dramatically.

We have gained wisdom that a person's life experience makes them wise and courageous to face their life. For instance, Amalia experiences polygamy, but it does not necessarily make her shattered, but she waited for the right time to fight. Shafira, an elementary school teacher, did not necessarily approve the Regent's proposal to marry her as the second wife, because she has the awareness not to hurt his wife. She learned to understand that being a second wife is a physical and mental torture, as was experienced by her late mother.

Nawa life experience is very touching, as she struggled to get out of her problems since she was a child, adolescent, adult until she had a child. We learned that the way Nawa accepted the fact that she is an HIV/AIDS positive, as well as her only daughter, make us empathize with the HIV/AIDS cases experienced by women, especially housewives who are unaware that they have been infected with the deadly disease from their partners.

Nadira, a victim of domestic violence by her husband, teaches us that life is not straight. Life is winding and steep like a rock. She survived and did not fight for the sake of her family unity and the happiness of her children, but she learned and realized that this attitude does not solve the problem. Courage against the bad situation and dealing with her husband in court was very contradictory to her loving and compassionate nature. But she decided that she should not accept bad treatment from her husband. In future, she has also been involved in advocacy work with other women's rights activists for victims of domestic violence. She said women do not deserve to have their futures destroyed.

These valuable experiences have made us understand that life is not easy. Life is full of struggles and sacrifices. *Wilayah* relations, between children and parents (father), and *qiwamah*, between the husband and wife, should be based on appreciation, respect, mutual love, understanding and compassion. These are the trajectories of change that we experience as researchers in the process of documenting life stories of *qiwamah* and *wilayah*.

What are the things that we learned from the stories which may have challenged our assumptions and positions as a team and women's rights activists?

Learning from this process that Laws and Regulations are not enough to protect women from violence and discrimination they experience, but concerted effort is needed to provide information and knowledge, to raise awareness and independence of women to fulfill equality between women and men in *qiwamah* and *wilayah*-related issues.

Women should also be empowered socially, politically, economically so that they have a strong bargaining position to face their lives, especially in their marriages, the relationships with their husbands and children.

Agenda of changes are necessary to be done by feminists through cultural reform, reinterpretation of gender-biased religious interpretations, criticizing the systems and institutions that perpetuate gender roles between husband and wife, and prompting the government to sensitize the needs of women in all sectors.

These are agendas of change that can be done as listed below:

1. To immediately seek the establishment of various national pro-women legislations aimed at eradicating all forms of discrimination and violence against women to embody the principle of Equality before the Law under The Law No. 7/1984 on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
2. To promote Community Empowerment in response to the issue of violence against women and encourage them to be more sensitive to the rights of victims, such as gender sensitive legal training, the realization of the constitutional rights of citizens, and others.
3. To provide easy access to government funds for the protection needs of women (gender budgeting), and Programming.
4. To integrate the Laws of Anti Domestic Violence, Trafficking Act, Child Protection Act, Witness and Victim Protection Act, Revised Act of Criminal Codes and to harmonize all articles amongst these Laws and Regulation.
5. To revise national and local policies and Laws, and Regulation that discriminate against women (for example, the revision of the Marriage Law, the Criminal Procedure Code, Criminal Code, and local regulations of *Shari'ah* / PERDA *Shari'ah*).
6. To encourage recognition of the role of paralegals as legal aid to women victims in Law No. 16 of 2011 on Legal Aid.