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An Evaluation of Pathfinder's Early Marriage Education Program in Indonesia

**AN EVALUATION OF PATHFINDER'S EARLY MARRIAGE
EDUCATION PROGRAM IN INDONESIA**

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ABSTRACT

Indonesian government officials determined in the early 1970's that reducing the country's population growth rate required not only the use of contraceptives but also an increase in the age of marriage. In 1974, the government passed the Marriage Law Reform Act, which increased the minimum marriageable age for males and females, but compliance was rare.

In 1981, Pathfinder initiated a two-pronged campaign to address this noncompliance. The first objective was to educate religious leaders, policymakers, and grassroots community groups (especially women's organizations) about the provisions of the Marriage Law and the social and health benefits associated with delayed marriage and fertility. The second objective was to gather information and promote discussion of social norms that lead to early marriage and childbearing. The underlying assumptions were that non-compliance arose from a lack of knowledge about the Marriage Law and that norms promoting early marriage and fertility were amenable to change.

The Pathfinder-supported program reviewed in this Working Paper covers six projects with five prominent Indonesian organizations - three women's groups, a national public health association, and a branch of the Family Planning Coordinating Board. The activities began with national seminars held to discuss each of the major campaign objectives. A series of national and local-level activities followed. The activities ranged from the publication of a national bulletin to training marriage counselors to advise young couples about marriage and fertility. Enthusiastic women's groups incorporated the education program into their ongoing functions. The effects of the program were widespread.

In late 1984, two evaluators conducted an assessment of the program, its underlying rationale, and its potential for creating long-term change. Their findings suggest that the controversial topic of adolescent fertility has been intensively discussed at the national and local levels. They offer several recommendations to enhance the institutionalization of innovative project activities to contribute to the long-term process of changing attitudes towards early marriage and fertility.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelago in the Indian Ocean with 13,667 islands scattered over 741,000 square miles. It is the fifth most populous country in the world with a mid-1984 population of 162 million people. There is a strong national commitment to reducing the population growth rate, currently around 2.1% annually (Population Reference Bureau 1984). The moderate and declining crude birth rate of 34 births per thousand results largely from contraceptive usage exceeding 50 percent of the married women of reproductive age on Java. Contraceptive prevalence levels in the outer islands range from approximately six percent to fifty percent.

More than a decade ago, the government of Indonesia recognized that in addition to the provision of contraceptive services, increasing the age of marriage would also contribute to reducing population growth by lengthening the time between generations. Approximately forty percent of young Indonesian women become mothers by the age of 17. The age-specific fertility for women aged 15 to 19 is 160 per thousand. Virtually all of this fertility is within marriage.

Besides having a demographic effect, delayed marriage and fertility can also have social and health benefits. Thus, in 1974 Indonesia formulated a Marriage Law Reform Act, which increased the minimum age at marriage from 14 to 16 for females, and from 16 to 19 for males. The law also touched on such subjects as child marriage, forced marriage, indiscriminate polygamy, child custody after a divorce, property rights during and after marriage, and access to

procedures for women to obtain divorce. Compliance with the norms for age at marriage has been infrequent; noncompliance has been the norm.

In 1981, Pathfinder, in collaboration with several important Indonesian organizations, initiated a program designed to educate religious leaders, policymakers, and grassroots community groups (especially women's organizations) about the Marriage Law, and to foment discussion about the social and health benefits of delayed marriage and fertility. Through this twofold approach, Pathfinder sought to increase awareness of the specific cultural factors which lead to early marriage and childbearing, and to increase compliance with the 1974 Marriage Law. Through increased awareness, new programs to develop realistic alternatives to the foregoing pattern were expected to emerge.

THE PROJECTS

Pathfinder funded six projects designed to address the broad issue of adolescent fertility, using its two-pronged strategy: Marriage Law education and identification of factors leading to early marriage and pregnancy.

The programming strategies were based on two assumptions: First, noncompliance with the Marriage Law was primarily due to lack of understanding of the provisions of the law by policymakers, the general public, and officials responsible for implementing the law. Second, social norms promoting early marriage and fertility were culturally defined and could be changed.

Five prominent organizations were involved in implementing nearly 20 interrelated activities over the 4-year span of the overall program. These included:

1) KOWANI, The National Congress of Indonesian Women, which has responsibility for overseeing and coordinating the work of all nongovernmental women's organizations in Indonesia (including Muslimat and Aisyiyah, listed below).

2) IPHA, The Indonesian Public Health Association, established in 1970, the only professional organization which addresses the issue of adolescent fertility.

3) Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama, the most influential Islamic women's social welfare and Islamic education organization in Indonesia with more than 3 million members nationwide. It is the women's branch of Nahdlatul Ulama.

4) Aisyiyah, founded in 1917, the oldest Muslim women's organization in Indonesia; it is one of the founders of KOWANI. Aisyiyah is the women's branch of Mohammadiyah, an Islamic missionary organization. Aisyiyah has three youth organizations:

- Nasyiatul Aisyiyah (Islamic Youth Organization)
- Ikatan Pelajar Muhammadiyah (Mohammadiyah High School Students Organizations)
- Ikatan Mahasiswa Muhammadiyah (Mohammadiyah University Students Organization)

5) BKKBN, Bengkulu, a provincial branch of the National Family Planning Coordinating Board, established in 1970, as a non-departmental government institution charged with formulating family planning and population policies. It reports directly to the President, and has strong government support, both politically and financially. Marriage counselors work under the auspices of the BKKBN.

These organizations represent a mix of government and non-government organizations. They represent different segments of the Indonesian population, but all share broad member and/or government support.

The sequence of interrelated activities began with two national seminars held in 1981. Each seminar addressed a separate aspect of the programming strategy. The first was a 3-day workshop and seminar organized by KOWANI on Marriage Law implementation. It was held in Jakarta during April. The second national seminar held in December was organized by IPHA on the effects of early pregnancy and childbearing on young women. These two seminars in turn generated a series of related activities.

Out of the KOWANI national seminar came some specific ideas on Marriage Law education which were incorporated into projects supported by Pathfinder with Muslimat, Aisyiyah and BKKBN. These projects are summarized below.

Pathfinder worked with Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama, the women's branch of Indonesia's largest and very conservative Moslem welfare organization, to develop a curriculum and train trainers in Marriage Law education through a series of six workshops. The workshop series began at the national level in Jakarta in June of 1982. It was followed by regional level workshops in Palembang, Banjarmasin, Medan and Ujung Pandang, plus a second workshop in Jakarta. Over 200 women leaders received training in Marriage Law education and have gone on to disseminate this information through Muslimat's long-standing program of Koran Reading Groups, called pengajian. Muslimat focused on training older women who were already married, the majority of whom were no longer in the reproductive age group, but who exert influence on younger women.

A related project was begun in April, 1983, with Aisyiyah, the women's branch of Mohammadiyah, a large Indonesian Islamic missionary organization. In a series of four workshops, over 100 women were trained as trainers in Marriage Law education. In this case, the target group was young women, aged 15 to 25, some of whom had not yet married, but all of whom were in prime reproductive years. The young women trained in the Aisyiyah workshop have disseminated Marriage Law information through Aisyiyah's Koran Reading Groups.

A third Marriage Law awareness and education project was initiated in June, 1982 in the province of Bengkulu. The provincial chapter of

the BKKBN trained Muslim marriage counselors in the provisions of the 1974 Marriage Law. These counselors meet with newly married couples and now educate them about family planning and the benefits of delaying the birth of their first child (especially if the woman is under 20 years of age) and spacing the births of subsequent children.

As a result of the 1981 IPHA national seminar, regional variations in the factors that influence early childbearing were uncovered. A series of three regional workshops were held in the cities of Bandung Ujung Pandang, and Medan on the topic of adolescent fertility. These regional workshops sought to identify specific cultural and traditional factors which contribute to early childbearing. Two sub-regional projects in Pinrang regency in South Sulawesi Province and in Tanah Laut regency in South Kalimantan Province resulted directly from the regional workshops. Their purpose was to begin to develop local strategies to promote delayed marriage.

Another activity resulting from the IPHA national seminar was the publication of the twice monthly bulletin on adolescent fertility, Fertilitas Remaja. Forty-eight issues were published during the period August 1982 to August 1984. Topics addressed included the specific causes and underlying factors leading to early fertility, as well as problems regarding adolescent fertility ranging from the social and psychological to the health implications.

THE EVALUATION

Changing attitudes toward early marriage and increasing the average age at marriage is a long-term process. In 1984, after three years of programming designed to be a catalyst for social change, Pathfinder desired an assessment of the outcome of its projects to date.

There were three areas of particular concern to Pathfinder. The first was to evaluate the original set of assumptions underlying the programming strategies. Had the projects spurred other activities? What was the effect of the national seminars on the sponsoring organizations and their development? Had they expanded their original analyses or learned more from resulting experiences? The second area concerned the accomplishments of the demonstration projects and what had been learned from them. This included an analysis of the rationale, approach, activities, and accomplishments of the projects. What had been the effect on the community? How useful were the guidebooks and other materials generated by the projects? Lastly, what was the potential for initiating long-term change through these projects? Did other activities result from the national seminars? Have the projects influenced the thinking or messages from the sponsoring organizations? What indications exist that direct work has begun to delay early marriage and fertility?

Two external consultants were hired to conduct this evaluation. The first author was then Area Director of the Asia Foundation in San Francisco; the second is the director of the South Sulawesi branch of

the Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association. Together they reviewed project files and documents; they interviewed project directors, staff involved in project implementation, and participants and beneficiaries of the projects. They examined the original programming strategy and assumptions, and they assessed project outcomes and achievements. Finally, they made recommendations for follow-up activities.

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In this section, each of the six projects is reviewed individually. Each review covers project rationale and objectives; project outcome and achievements; and findings and recommendations. Particular attention is devoted to those aspects of the projects which are likely to yield long-range change or self-sustainability. The projects related to Marriage Law Education are discussed first. The projects related to the causes and problems of adolescent fertility follow.

KOWANI Seminar on Legal Awareness of the National Marriage Law

Research confirmed a pervasive lack of knowledge of the provisions of the 1974 Marriage Law by the general public and policymakers alike. Therefore, KOWANI's rationale for holding this national seminar was to increase awareness of the legal rights and responsibilities under the 1974 Marriage Law. It was assumed that this information would help to change attitudes and values, and finally behavior to reduce early fertility. KOWANI also argued that an improvement in the health of mothers and children, and the provision of greater educational and employment opportunities for women, activities that are associated with fertility decline, would enhance women's status and their participation in development.

Workshop objectives were:

- to promote legal awareness and basic knowledge about the 1974 Marriage Law

-- to identify major reasons for the lack of adherence to the 1974 Marriage Law

-- to formulate some practical approaches to the problem and develop action programs to be implemented regionally.

Outcome & Achievements. The seminar was planned for approximately 50 persons; however, a total of 113 participants from government, donor agencies and academic institutions attended. The Indonesian First Lady opened the seminar. The Associate Minister (now Minister) for the Role of Women, the Coordinating Minister of People's Welfare, together with the Ministers of Justice, Health, Religious Affairs and Information, delivered papers. The Ministers of Education, Domestic Affairs and Social Affairs were in attendance. Donor agencies such as UNFPA, UNICEF, USAID, and the Asia and Ford Foundations were represented. They were interested in follow-up research and action projects which required sponsorship. Academic institutions such as the Universities of Indonesia, Airlangga, and Padjadjaran were represented.

At the seminar, three working papers and two panel discussions were presented. The subjects included:

- awareness of the Marriage Law and efforts to enhance compliance with the law
- the Marriage Law as it relates to improving the status of women
- awareness of the law in the framework of the population program and planned parenthood
- implementation of the Marriage Law

-- methods of instruction in law, focusing on the 1974 Marriage Law.

Suggestions for eight follow-up programs to be undertaken by KOWANI emerged from the seminar. Each is described below, along with information on KOWANI's achievements in implementing the programs together with the evaluators' comments and suggestions about each program

1) Publication of materials and a guidebook on the subject of the 1974 Marriage Law.

KOWANI developed a guidebook and three illustrated pamphlets and pretested them with the support of the Asia Foundation. KOWANI printed and distributed 1,500 copies to its 55 member organizations as well as a number of government departments. The Department of Education subsequently decided to include these materials in its nationally distributed package of basic literacy materials. We recommend evaluation of the publications before further printing and distribution of the pamphlets.

2) Establishment of a system for training a team of leaders and distributors of information on the Marriage Law.

KOWANI has not systematically implemented this activity. The group does, however, participate regularly in Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga (PKK, a national women's organization) activities and integrates Marriage Law education into PKK programs.

This type of program has a great possibility for national impact due to KOWANI's prominence, its large membership base, and its cooperative relationship with PKK and the Minister for the Role of Women. We recommend that training on a national scale be preceded by

a study of the effects of the Muslimat and Aisyiyah training programs described herein.

3) A pilot project of Marriage Law guidance.

No specific project has been designed, but KOWANI has used students from the Teachers Training College in Jakarta to incorporate the Marriage Law message into the College's village outreach programs. To date, the materials have been used in five municipalities within Jakarta city limits. No evaluation of this program has been conducted. We recommend that 2-3 carefully designed pilot projects with specific monitoring and evaluation components be conducted. Muslimat and Aisyiyah are very good sources for technical assistance to implement these pilot projects.

4) Enhanced legal aid for women and families.

To implement this activity, KOWANI intended to use its own "Family Institute for Legal Aid" but the Institute has been inactive for quite some time. KOWANI has since decided to concentrate on increasing the number of women judges in religious courts. It may reactivate its legal aid programs in the future.

5) Determine how much of the Marriage Law is incorporated into common and religious law.

No activities have been conducted. It may be more appropriate for a team of legal scholars to undertake this study; thereafter, KOWANI may be able to determine appropriate follow-up, given its coordination role for all non-governmental women's organizations.

6) Research on the extent of compliance with provisions of the Marriage Law.

A small survey involving 300 50-item questionnaires has been

conducted. The questionnaires have not yet been analyzed. If KOWANI can effectively use the existing student field practice to conduct this research, the resulting information could be a valuable supplement to IPHA findings on factors leading to early marriage. Together they could provide guidelines for establishing programs dealing with adolescent fertility.

7) Periodic monitoring and evaluation of programs.

Implementation has not occurred due to lack of funds, lack of project monitoring and evaluation methodology and time constraints which result from the voluntary nature of KOWANI.

8) Establishment of a cooperative arrangement with government institutions.

Subsequent discussions between KOWANI leadership and the Ministry of Justice have centered around the Ministry's priorities. KOWANI has encouraged the Ministry to include information on the 1974 Marriage Law and its legal literacy programs for women. KOWANI will also cooperate with top government leaders in formulating a paper on "The Role of Women in the Year 2000," to be presented at a conference planned in Indonesia in the year 2000. Since this paper will focus on the Marriage Law and the long term benefits of compliance with its provisions, its presentation represents a good opportunity to re-emphasize the importance of the Marriage Law at the national level. KOWANI is in a good position to be able to influence cooperation due to its organizing role of the 1981 national seminar which generated a high level of interest.

Findings. The nationally prominent KOWANI is the appropriate organization to promote a nationwide discussion of issues as they

relate to women, including those arising out of the 1974 Marriage Law. KOWANI is able to draw on a tremendous pool of talent, including leaders inside and outside of government from all over Indonesia. There are strong indications of ongoing commitment and interest by KOWANI membership in publicizing widely the 1974 Marriage Law.

Through its vast network, KOWANI can effectively distribute their guidebooks and pamphlets, which have also been distributed through government ministries. Two of KOWANI's member organizations have trained over 300 women leaders as trainers in Marriage Law education. Student outreach programs have conducted surveys designed to obtain information on noncompliance with the Marriage Law.

Despite the fact that KOWANI is so well situated to disseminate guidebooks and questionnaires, it is hindered in its activities because it relies on a volunteer membership who have a host of other professional and familial responsibilities. Thus, KOWANI needs a full-time paid staff to bear responsibility for project management, monitoring, and evaluation. KOWANI should investigate funding for a full-time paid staff member.

There are two areas of critical importance to successful implementation of the broad range of programs KOWANI has undertaken. First, KOWANI must undertake an evaluation of the effectiveness of the guidebook and pamphlets. This is essential before mass printing and distribution. If KOWANI cannot conduct an evaluation, another organization or ministry which is interested in its distribution should do so. Second, a recurrent problem at KOWANI is the lack of project monitoring, analysis, and evaluation. It is important to evaluate their pilot programs.

Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama, Training of Trainers for Marriage Law Education

Pathfinder wanted to work with respected local leaders and existing community networks to reach its audience with the Marriage Law education message. Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama was a logical choice. Muslimat was established nearly 30 years ago; it has 26 provincial offices, 275 branches at the district level, and 3 million members nationwide. One of Muslimat's ongoing programs is pengajian, Koran reading groups. Pathfinder recognized pengajian as a valuable network to reach Muslimat's membership with information about the health, social, and psychological implications of early marriage.

During the 16-month project, Muslimat held a total of six 4-day training sessions through which more than 200 women religious leaders were trained as trainers in Marriage Law education. The project's long-term objective was to enable Muslimat N.U. to inform its membership about the provisions of the 1974 Marriage Law and the wide-ranging implications of early marriage.

Outcome and Achievements. Training was conducted by two resource persons and seven guest lecturers (including local leaders and representatives of the Department of Religious Affairs, Health and the BKKBN). The training sessions covered the following material:

- Review and update on teaching methodology
- Muslimat and Muslim law
- Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama and the new national Marriage Law
- The role of marriage counselors in Indonesia
- Health implications of early marriage and childbearing

- Socio-psychological implications of early childbearing for mothers and children
- Correlation between educational opportunities and early marriage in rural areas
- Alternatives to early marriage: education and skill development
- Guidelines for developing work plans and budgets for implementing Marriage Law education in 12 provinces.

A number of specific recommendations for follow-up programs emerged from the training sessions. They are summarized below along with Muslimat's achievements to date and comments.

1) Encourage the Department of Religion to assist in assuring greater compliance with the Marriage Law.

At the local level, Muslimat officials and representatives of the Department of Religion have worked together successfully. Muslimat has now adopted the marriage counselor's guidebook designed by that department. Muslimat N.U. receives a great deal of government support and attention, and its work is highly complementary to the Department of Religion's official government role.

2) Study the factors which motivate young women to marry later and delay childbearing.

No systematic study of this topic has yet been undertaken. However, it would be relatively easy to survey members' values. An initial survey could then serve as baseline data for a study of changes in values and attitudes over time. This kind of study is essential to assess the impact of the Marriage Law education program.

3) Play an active role in encouraging family planning programs

by the Nahdlatul Ulama Family Welfare Institutions, and encourage Marriage Law education and counseling.

Koran Reading Groups were the recommended vehicle to accomplish this task. Marriage Law education has become a regular part of Muslimat N.U.'s ongoing Koran Reading Groups, and is also a part of other periodic meetings held in each Muslimat branch. Questionnaires were designed for all heads of Muslimat branches throughout Indonesia that should enable the Central Board to measure the extent of follow-up. Central Board members should monitor the quality of the teaching message by conducting periodic site visits.

4) Hold training of trainers in Marriage Law education at the branch level.

It was recommended that training be concentrated in the twelve provinces where most of Muslimat's members live. Muslimat's Central Board was to fund follow-up activities. At Muslimat N.U.'s initiative and expense, at least five follow-up training sessions have taken place, resulting in approximately two hundred fifty additional trainers.

To enhance documentation of the extensive local level activities, we recommend that all provincial branches report regularly to the Central Office in Jakarta to facilitate compilation of an annual report on the project's long-term impact.

5) The Central Board should write guidelines for organizing Marriage Law education training sessions.

Muslimat has not yet done this, but it is now utilizing the Department of Religion's guidebook for marriage counselors which outlines the provisions of the 1974 Marriage Law.

6) Study the compatibility of Islamic Law with the Marriage Law.

Muslimat has no official policy on this extremely important concern. It currently provides ad hoc guidance and explanations. A well-respected high-level team of Muslim scholars could be drawn together to study the compatibility of the Marriage Law with Islamic Law. A concise summary of the findings could be shared with the membership, thus providing a more certain policy than currently exists. We believe this study is very important since the failure to resolve the compatibility question could be a major impediment to the success of working with Islamic organizations.

Findings. As the largest Muslim welfare organization in Indonesia, Muslimat N.U. has the potential to convey information on the benefits of delayed marriage to a wide audience. The top leadership is convinced of the value and importance of the message, which they justify in terms of improved family welfare. The fact that Muslimat funded an impressive amount of follow-up training at its own expense is evidence of its commitment. A crucial explanation for the strength of self-funded follow-up may lie in the early emphasis by Pathfinder that self-sufficiency would be necessary. Given the commitment by the Muslimat leadership, it is obvious that the organization will continue to conduct training activities without outside funding.

Three specific issues emerged during this evaluation:

1) Most trainees stated that training required more time; however, this was impractical given their time constraints. Most held other jobs or had full-time responsibilities at home. We therefore recommend that the 2-3 day training sessions cover only the key

issues, preferably those of greatest interest to the members. Training sessions could be supplemented with written materials and a simple guidebook to be given to participants for later reference.

2) Questionnaires were administered both before and after the training sessions for evaluative purposes. The results were compiled, but the recommendations and conclusions were never used to modify and improve subsequent training programs.

3) Our observational visits to three Koran Reading Groups revealed that the methodology was often a simple lecture followed by discussion. There was always ample time allowed for questions and answers and a free exchange of information. The groups displayed a spirit of understanding and cohesiveness that is rare and unusual in purely civic groups; the religious ties form a close bond. The religious leaders who delivered the lectures in the three Reading Groups were effective, dynamic, and clearly interested in the subject. The membership as well was clearly interested.

A survey should be conducted of the leadership to assess the quality and type of information being transmitted and to ascertain the topics of greatest interest to the members. This information should be incorporated into the Muslimat guidebook to assure appropriateness to the membership. The information would also provide clues to the types of visual aids which Muslimat might develop for its training efforts.

The training of trainers in Marriage Law education is now a self-sustained and self-financed activity within Muslimat. The Koran Reading Groups are an example of an effective local level network which can convey a message to a large number of women throughout

Indonesia. It should be noted that there are two types of Koran Reading Groups: one consists entirely of Muslimat members; the other is open to all women. Therefore, the potential audience is even greater than the 3 million members of Muslimat N.U..

After evaluating the training methodology and determining its effectiveness, Muslimat should study its members' attitudes and values to determine the project's impact.*

Aisyiyah: Training of Trainers for Marriage Law Education

This project is another in the series which resulted from the national KOWANI seminar. The Aisyiyah training of trainers project is similar to the Muslimat N.U. project, with one major difference: the Muslimat trainees were older women, most beyond reproductive age. Aisyiyah trainees were young women aged 15 to 25.

Several factors influenced Pathfinder's decision to work with Aisyiyah. They included Aisyiyah's prominence and broad appeal, a reputation for progressive thinking, the relatively high proportion of active young members and the existence of their three youth organizations. These three groups (the young women, the university students, and the high school students) all have ongoing Koran Reading Groups. In addition, Aisyiyah had been conducting a "Mental Health Course for Youth" for several years. Aisyiyah's leadership

* Subsequent to this evaluation, Muslimat established a central policy that women should not marry before age 20. This policy was a direct outgrowth of project activities and has potential for very broad impact.

recognized that discussion of the effects of early marriage and pregnancy could make an important contribution to sound youth development. The Pathfinder-sponsored project helped to strengthen the ongoing program in addition to increasing the organization's professionalism.

The objectives of the project were similar to those of the Muslimat N.U. project. The primary objective was to deliver the Marriage Law and small family message. The work plan involved training 24 coordinators and 102 Aisyiyah religious leaders as trainers in Marriage Law education. The leaders were to develop a specific plan to implement the training program in 34 regencies in 4 provinces.

Outcome and Achievements. During the project period (April through December 1983), a total of 38 coordinators received training. The initial workshop was held in central Java for coordinators from four provinces. Four subsequent workshops were conducted in Bandung, Yogyakarta, Semarang, and Surabaya. A total of 102 Aisyiyah religious teachers were trained.

The content of the workshops was similar to that of the Muslimat workshops. The coordinators' workshop included an intensive discussion of the subject matter plus a special session on project management. Additional topics related to the interests of Strengthening the Concept of Aisyiyah Youth Development Aisyiyah's membership such as:

- Development of terms of reference and a guidebook
to conduct training of trainers
- Islamic Law and Marriage

- Youth and education; Youth and employment opportunities
- Belief in God as a sine qua non for a Happy Family
- Concept of a Happy Family based on Mohammadiyah Teaching
- Concepts and benefits of childspacing in marriage.

Trainees found that the workshops were of too short duration, the training was too broad, and there was insufficient discussion time. They recommended focusing on the most interesting and important topics and allowing time for more in-depth discussion. The results of pre- and post-training tests indicated that the training did expand the knowledge of the participants, and that participants found the workshop issues worthwhile and appropriate to include in ongoing youth courses and reading groups.

Findings. Follow-up educational activities for youth were continuing a full year after the end of external funding. A work plan had been developed for follow-up in 34 regencies in four provinces on the island of Java. An impressive number of Aisyiyah's members had shown a commitment to disseminate information on the Marriage Law and implications of early marriage and pregnancy.

The energy, dedication, creativity and talent of Aisyiyah's young leaders were evident. Three young women interviewed were all exceptionally motivated to share their knowledge with other young women. They were convinced of the wisdom of delaying marriage and recognized the dangers of early pregnancy. They kept their workshop training alive by finding innovative ways to present their message in their weekly pengajian attended by 75 to 100 women per session.

A random sample survey of persons trained could provide information that would be useful in evaluating the impact of training

and designing follow-up educational programs and materials. The survey could identify which topics are most interesting to participants, which need more time, and which could be shortened or eliminated.

Aisyiyah board members and coordinators agreed that a guidebook should be developed for trained religious teachers. It should contain messages to be incorporated into weekly Koran Reading Groups and have a simple format which could be written as a lesson plan. Aisyiyah could model the guidebook on those developed by KOWANI and the Department of Religion.

Aisyiyah board members and project coordinators who were interviewed felt that a film would be useful to supplement their continuing education program. We recommend that the guidebook be developed first. It is more cost effective and more easily distributed to a broad base of the population.

Observation and monitoring of Koran Reading Groups were strongly advised to improve feedback to Aisyiyah's Central Board. Of particular concern is trainer effectiveness in the local groups and improvement of periodic information reports. Only ten of the thirty-four regencies in the project submit progress reports. The Central Board and project coordinators recognize the importance of fulfilling the reporting requirements and usefulness of that information. The data in the reports could contribute to assessing the effectiveness of trainers at the local level, to learning the membership's interests, and to meeting local needs.

Provincial BKKBN/Bengkulu: Muslim Marriage Counselors Education Project

This is potentially the most influential project to emerge from the national KOWANI seminar. It involves Muslim marriage counselors, respected community members who help young people prepare for marriage. In this capacity they can have a strong influence on fertility behavior. Their duties in relation to this project are to motivate young people to become family planning acceptors after marriage, and to inform the couples of the provisions of the 1974 Marriage Law and the health and psychological risks of early marriage.

This 2-year project began in July 1982. For the first year, the objectives were:

1) To develop and distribute 5,000 copies of an adolescent fertility guidebook. Topics include the problems of rapid population growth in Indonesia; the National Family Planning Program and concept of the small family norm; the social and health implications of early marriage and early pregnancy; and family planning methods.

2) To train 50 marriage counselors in a 5-day workshop based on the guidebook, its content, and its applicability to marriage counselors' duties.

3) To test the comparative effectiveness of three methods of training marriage counselors about the problems of early marriage. The marriage counselors were divided into three groups: 25 from Bengkulu received training plus a financial incentive of Rp. 7,500 per month (U.S. \$3.25); 25 from Rejan Lebong received only training; 20 from North Bengkulu received only the guidebook with no training or stipend. A provincial-level BKKBN staff person was to visit each of

the 3 groups four times per year. During the last visit the staff person would assess the quality and quantity of information disseminated by the marriage counselors.

In the second year 7,000 more copies of the guidebook for marriage counselors were to be printed and a refresher course for 50 marriage counselors trained in the first year was to be conducted.

Outcome and Achievements. The number of guidebooks produced and distributed to 70 marriage counselors met and exceeded the target. This was made possible by a high degree of local interest plus supplemental financial assistance from the provincial government for the second printing. In short, response to the guidebook has been very good.

In the first year 50 marriage counselors received intensive training on the subjects covered in the guidebook and its application to their duties. They now give a guidebook to each newly-married couple they counsel and send their names, ages and dates of marriage to provincial BKKBN and Department of Religion offices. The counselors also file monthly reports on the incidence of marriage, divorce, Islamic divorce (talak), and remarriage. In addition, the counselors fill in a checklist of topics covered in the counseling sessions.

Newly-trained marriage counselors completed questionnaires at the end of training sessions. However, responses were never compiled nor was a pre-training questionnaire used. Steps have been taken to rectify this problem.

Findings. In Indonesia's family planning program, Bengkulu was the number one province in Outer Islands II measured by the increase

in family planning acceptance. Some BKKBN officials attributed the increase to this project. The original project manager, Dr. Rukanda, has been promoted to BKKBN headquarters in Jakarta. His promotion was assisted by the project and he has carried his enthusiasm for it to the national level where he can share the project concept with others in BKKBN central offices.

A sub-district coordinator from South Bengkulu and an assistant marriage counselor who were interviewed reported that most untrained marriage counselors do not fully comprehend the provisions of the 1974 Marriage Law. In addition, only marriage counselors who participated in the Pathfinder project are providing both family planning motivation and information regarding the Marriage Law to the couples they counsel. As a result, training was urged to cover the full range of legal and social dimensions of early marriage to increase the effectiveness of the marriage counselors.

The new Bengkulu BKKBN leader, Dr. Rohadi, is enthusiastic about this project, and has designed forms to collect project data. Preliminary findings from the statistics he has gathered suggest that the financial incentive provided to marriage counselors has had no effect on the frequency of reporting to BKKBN, compared to those who received training only. In North Bengkulu, which received only guidebooks, reporting was noticeably lower, but this was improved over time.

Training and quality of supervision seem to be the important factors in obtaining results (when results are measured in terms of content of counseling and number of reports submitted). We found the project concept to be excellent and the design interesting, but

without a measure of project impact, it is impossible to determine its usefulness empirically. We, therefore, strongly recommend that Pathfinder provide financial support to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the project. The local BKKBN is qualified to conduct the research, and the new project manager could be an objective judge of the shortcomings and strengths of the early project design. More marriage counselors should be trained and their subsequent counseling monitored to determine its influence in delaying childbirth. Support through Dr. Rukanda at the central headquarters of BKKBN could help to strengthen his "impression" of project effectiveness.

We were encouraged by the appreciation that counseled couples expressed for the guidebooks which were later shared with friends and relatives. Such a practice holds promise for further dissemination of the message.

Indonesia Public Health Association (IPHA) National and Regional Seminars on the Effects of Early Pregnancy and Childbearing on Young Women

The IPHA, established in 1970, is the only professional association which addresses the issue of adolescent fertility. The IPHA national seminar, which was held in December 1981, was the result of discussions held during regular board meetings. The board members decided that one way to tackle the problem of adolescent fertility was to hold a national seminar for key leaders on the effects of early pregnancy and childbearing on young women. Follow-up seminars were held in West Java, North Sumatra and South Sulawesi. The primary objective of the national seminar was to initiate an interdisciplinary

discussion on this subject, with the ultimate goal of changing people's attitudes and values that influence behavior.

Outcome and Achievements. The following is a summary of the outcome and achievements of the national seminar and the three regional workshops which followed. A separate section reviews Fertilitas Remaja, which also resulted from the national seminar.

A total of 500 persons from various government departments (mostly women) were attracted to the national seminar, although there was room for only 300 participants. Papers were presented addressing a range of problems and issues surrounding early fertility. The papers were followed by discussion and small group meetings.

The seminar participants identified many factors which contributed to the widespread practice of early marriage and childbearing. These included culture, tradition, prestige for young men and women (and parents), obtaining land, the fact that the status of a widow is higher than that for a woman never married, and security in old age.

The seminar participants decided on two activities to follow the national seminar: (1) publication of a bulletin to facilitate ongoing communication and education for the participants, and (2) a study of the factors which contribute to early childbearing in three key regions.

The results of the national seminar were published and distributed to 1,000 government policymakers, public health professionals, leaders of women's organizations and other groups. By hosting the seminar, IPHA's recognition has greatly increased. IPHA has also received credit for beginning studies of the regionally and culturally determined reasons for early marriage and pregnancy. These studies

can identify important policy implications and help to identify follow-up projects.

Decisions on early marriage and pregnancy are complex. The three regions for follow-up activities were chosen for their high rates of early marriage, the capabilities of local IPHA branch offices, and for the especially interesting cultural factors that influence early marriage and childbearing. Participants at the national seminar felt that developing a greater understanding of the specific influences on early marriage and pregnancy would lead to appropriately designed programs to deal with early fertility.

West Java, for example, was chosen for having the youngest marriage rate in all 27 provinces of Indonesia. It is an extremely traditional culture with a high incidence of early marriage and divorce. North Sumatra was selected for its unusual cultural traditions including a marriage blessing, "may you have seventeen daughters and sixteen sons." South Sulawesi was chosen for its low marriage age and cultural traditions which encourage young men "to go around the kitchen seven times," implying the need for a circumspect, mature approach to the decision to marry. All three have capable IPHA branches.

Each seminar lasted 3 days and studied the scope of the problem in each region. Each identified significant causes and effects of early marriage and pregnancy. Key leaders were in attendance. Follow-up proposals were designed immediately at the conclusion of each workshop.

In West Java, major factors in early marriage included lack of education, local tradition and culture supporting early marriage, lack of recreational activities and lack of adherence to the Marriage Law.

Project proposals called for expanding educational programs for young women through local Dharma Wanita youth clubs. IPHA would also provide family planning information to young married couples. These proposals could be supported locally.

In North Sumatra, several cultural factors were identified, including the importance of family name, pleasing parents, and other traditional pressures. Other reasons included physical needs, psychological needs (affection, self-identity), and economic status (low income or lack of skills). Follow-up activities included 17 mini-seminars in Marriage Law training via mobile units.

In South Sulawesi, the primary cultural factor identified centered on the perception of an unmarried woman as a family burden. Religious practices were important because there were no guidelines pertaining to marriageable age. Economic factors were also significant (low income or lack of skills) as were psychological factors (feeling of well being and having a family).

Four follow-up activities were proposed in South Sulawesi: (1) a sub-regional seminar to be held in the Pinrang Regency, (2) improvement of services offered at the IPHA Ujung Pandang family planning clinic, (3) training in Marriage Law education by local Dharma Wanita, and (4) youth center activities including skills training. Pathfinder provided funding to the local Ujung Pandang IPHA for improvement of the family planning services offered at the local IPHA clinic.

The South Sulawesi regional seminar stimulated one-day seminars held by Zero Population Growth (ZPG), the National Youth Committee (KNPI), the National Women's Movement (PKK), and Aisyiyah. Local

newspapers began a public information campaign which lasted several months.

Two sub-regional seminars were conducted with Pathfinder support. The first was held in Pinrang regency; the second was held in Tanah Laut regency in South Kalimantan. The Pinrang seminar generated some new action project ideas for training youth and scouts (male and female) in the benefits of delayed marriage. Seminar participants recommended another sub-regional seminar be scheduled for Majene regency. The Majene seminar was deemed necessary because the findings from the Pinrang regency seminar were specific to the predominant Bugis culture and not to the Mardarese, the second largest cultural group in South Sulawesi.

Findings. The primary effect of the national IPHA seminar and its follow-up activities has been the increased attention brought to the issue of adolescent fertility. Discussions at the national seminar brought about a recognition of the importance of reducing adolescent fertility and of identifying regionally and culturally specific factors which lead to early marriage and pregnancy. This recognition led to the three regional workshops, each of which generated additional projects and a list of locally-specific factors that lead to early marriage.

Individual research projects on the issue of adolescent fertility were published in the IPHA's Fertilitas Remaja, which spread the seminar results more broadly. IPHA can claim credit not only for contributing to the literature on adolescent fertility, but also for providing useful information for policymakers.

The workshop results should be compiled into a reference book.

Some of the regional and sub-regional workshop papers have been published, but these have been generally unavailable outside the immediate vicinity, and therefore inaccessible to national leaders and academicians. IPHA should consider consolidating its findings by region and highlighting the commonalities. It could also address the needs for future research.

Analysis of the findings from the national, regional and sub-regional workshops would also enable IPHA to define a long-term strategy. Many good ideas have arisen from a committed IPHA staff. However, neither clear, uniform direction nor prioritization has been done yet to develop a long-term strategy.

IPHA has announced plans to extend its youth information campaigns to college campuses and youth gathering places. Such efforts indicate the level of commitment and ingenuity of IPHA's membership. IPHA has not contemplated a method to measure impact of the youth campaigns.

IPHA: Fertilitas Remaja

With the objective of facilitating ongoing communication and education of the national IPHA seminar participants, Fertilitas Remaja published.

Outcome and Achievements. A total of 48 issues of Fertilitas Remaja were published from 1982 to 1984. During that time, the mailing list expanded from 3,000 to 7,500 individuals and organizations.

The bulletins covered diverse aspects of the issue of adolescent fertility. It had a simple 4-page newsletter format. Page one contained current topics of general interest; page two reported on

problems related to adolescent fertility (social, psychological and health); pages three and four contained information on activities of interest to the media plus life stories illustrating the technical issues discussed in the publication. The Bulletin has stimulated further research and continued interest in the subject of adolescent fertility.

The Bulletin is now incorporated as a column into an expanded IPHA publication, the Journal of Public Health. Early issues have been mailed out free-of-charge, but IPHA is actively fundraising to get financial support and subscribers for the journal.

Findings. Roughly ten to fifteen percent of the articles contained in the Bulletin were picked up by the media, who distributed the information widely.

Two yearly surveys were distributed to 2,500 readers each. In the first year, responses totalled 580; in the second year, responses totalled only 93. Roughly fifty percent of the respondents found the Bulletin useful because it enhanced their knowledge, provided materials for lectures and the media, and provided a forum for health education to the general public. The topics of greatest interest to readers included the social and psychological implications of early marriage and pregnancy, the medical implications, the underlying causes of early fertility, and programs addressing early fertility.

IPHA should continue its efforts to locate individual or institutional sponsorship of issues, obtain paying subscribers, or ensure an income through advertising. IPHA would need 500 paying

subscribers immediately to cover publication costs. Pathfinder may wish to consider extending a subsidy to the new journal until IPHA can line up certain sources of income.

IPHA should also undertake efforts to mail copies of the journal to provinces in eastern Indonesia, since no contact has yet been made with these areas. This provides an opportunity to stimulate wider interest in the issue of early fertility and possibly generate new research in these regions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Pathfinder Fund's strategy to develop innovative projects which have a high potential for institutionalization has been admirably served by the six projects discussed in this report. The issue of adolescent fertility has been intensively discussed at the national, regional and local levels. Government officials, health professionals, members of religious organizations, academics and local leaders have all been involved in the discussions.

The KOWANI seminar and later research confirmed a pervasive lack of knowledge of the 1974 Marriage Law by policymakers and the general public. Several follow-up activities were recommended. They ranged from an analysis of the Marriage Law and its compatibility with Islamic Law, to a survey of KOWANI's 55-organization membership on compliance with the Marriage Law, to publishing a guidebook. Some activities are beyond the expertise of KOWANI's volunteer membership; others like publication of the guidebook have been successful, although an evaluation is needed. KOWANI needs a full-time paid staff to manage, monitor and evaluate its projects, and to determine the impact and effectiveness of its activities.

Three organizations, Muslimat, Aisyiyah and BKKBN/Bengkulu, conducted training of trainers in Marriage Law education. Thereafter, training activities were integrated into ongoing pengajian and marriage counseling activities of the various groups. Training activities were tailored to meet the specific needs and interests of the members in each organization. Muslimat, for instance, primarily

reaches older married women, while Aisyiyah reaches young women entering their reproductive years. BKKBN trained its marriage counselors who now counsel newly-married couples on the provisions of the 1974 Marriage Law and the advantages of delaying childbirth. The leaders of all three organizations are firmly convinced of the value and importance of delaying marriage and/or childbirth. Given this commitment, these groups are continuing self-supported educational programs to their extensive member networks.

Despite the enthusiastic backing the projects received from the organizations, there are several common problems. Most have experienced difficulty with reporting, monitoring and evaluating project activities. Projects are often undertaken without regard to measuring impact. In some instances, surveys have been conducted but the results have not been analyzed. Site visits by leaders and simplified reporting would help remedy some shortcomings.

The training activities specifically require careful evaluation. Pre- and post-training evaluations would measure the effectiveness of the training in changing the knowledge and attitudes of participants. In some instances, BKKBN marriage counselors did not understand the information they received in training. This has made refresher courses necessary. Frequently the time allotted for training has been too short or the topics covered too diverse. This may call for tailoring training programs to the special needs and interests of participants.

The distribution of guidebooks for training and later reference is a valuable and cost-effective way to reach a wide audience. Currently the organizations are using books prepared by KOWANI or the Ministry

of Religion. A careful assessment of the effectiveness of the guidebooks is necessary before wide distribution is attempted. Muslimat and Aisyiyah wish to develop guidebooks of their own to address the specific concerns of their members, and they may use either the KOWANI or Ministry of Religion booklet as a model. Since other government ministries are willing to employ these guidebooks in literacy campaigns, a careful analysis of the guidebooks is critical.

The follow-up activities which emanated from the national IPHA seminar were designed to identify specific cultural and traditional factors which contributed to the pervasive pattern of early marriage and childbearing. To accomplish this objective, a series of three regional and two sub-regional workshops was conducted. They attracted keen local interest and media attention, and they generated a comprehensive list of specific factors. Of particular importance now is for IPHA to consolidate these findings into a volume and highlight the commonalities. The results of these studies have important policy implications. They can also guide future project development.

The final project, publication of the Fertilitas Remaja, disseminated regionally-specific research and perpetuated discussion on the broader issue of early fertility. The next step is to extend the distribution of the bulletin information (which now appears as a column in the Journal of Public Health) to the eastern provinces.

All of the organizations participating in this series of projects are respected in their communities, are influential, and have the potential to reach large and varied segments of the Indonesian population. These organizations have good relations with government ministries and other agencies. Their leaders have expressed a

commitment to the program not only by integrating education and research activities into their regular programs, but also by formulating, conducting and financing projects of special interest to their communities and members.

In an effort to enhance the accomplishments to date as well as to put future projects on target with long-range objectives, we make the following recommendations:

1) Donors should consider focusing their work on the activities of organizations which have the greatest potential for a large impact or for institutionalization.

2) The evaluators strongly urge support for an evaluation of the BKKBN marriage counselors education project. The project director has made substantial progress in collecting data and is capable of designing and conducting an impact assessment. Pending the outcome of the evaluation, third-year funding support is recommended. Training more marriage counselors and closer monitoring should be incorporated into a project extension. The lessons learned from this project have the potential of being adopted by the BKKBN throughout Indonesia.

3) Muslimat has made impressive steps forward in its programs to promote delayed marriage. We therefore recommend financial support to improve the quality of information presented to the Muslimat membership. This might take the form of a grant to enable the organization's leadership to travel, observe, and critique ongoing pengajian. Alternatively it might take the form of developing a guidebook for pengajian leaders which could be introduced at refresher training courses.

4) We also recommend that Aisyiyah be provided financial support

to develop a guidebook for its pengajian leaders to further Aisyiyah's efforts to promote delayed marriage to its membership.

5) IPHA needs to evaluate its efforts to date. Its collection of writings on the regional and cultural factors which contribute to early marriage and pregnancy should be consolidated into a single volume and systematically analyzed to identify common themes and highlight unique cultural factors. We also recommend that IPHA take stock of its members' contributions to date as it reviews new project proposals. This analysis will aid IPHA in establishing priorities and building a long-term strategy.

6) Many of Pathfinder's innovative ideas have been adopted by organizations such as the BKKBN, the Ministry of Health and other donors. Pathfinder may wish to continue its focus on innovation by concentrating on several key issues, including the provision of services which are too sensitive to incorporate into the national family planning program.

Early emphasis on organizational self-sufficiency at the end of a project is commendable. To date, institutionalization of programs has occurred in Muslimat, Aisyiyah and KOWANI. This programming strategy should continue.

7) Training project management should be routinely integrated into Pathfinder programs. Attention to this issue will further institutional development. In the case of Aisyiyah, for example, leadership enthusiasm is high, but their success in data collection is low. The fact that Pathfinder has given special attention to helping Aisyiyah understand the causes of the problem has already resulted in improved compliance with report submission.

In general, Pathfinder needs to assess the project management capabilities of each organization before rendering further assistance. Then Pathfinder needs to establish a specific strategy to improve management skills for each organization.

8) Pathfinder should audit project proposals to assess whether or not the design is too complex or too ambitious. Frequently training programs cover too many subjects in too short a period of time. Concentration on a few key topics is advised.

9) Baseline data, together with indicators of project impact, should be routinely incorporated into project design. Such data are essential to measure overall change. The IPHA in South Sulawesi includes these indicators in project design; this could serve as a model for other organizations.

10) Delaying marriage and reducing adolescent fertility are long-term goals. They cannot be met in the normal life of a project, which is one to three years. Observable impacts can begin to emerge only five to ten years after first project inputs. It is recommended that the two-year approach to projects be lengthened to five years.

When two- to three-year projects are designed, plans should be made to provide funds for monitoring and evaluation in years four and five. The bulk of funding could be provided at the outset, with small amounts set aside for monitoring project impact for a total of five years.

Simplified forms which provide data to evaluate the impact of the project, concentrating on improved project management skills, and

working with only key organizations should make it possible for Pathfinder to build upon its past achievements and continue its innovative role in the Indonesian family planning program.