

## Interviews from Indonesia

### **Rev Dorkas Orienti Daely (General secretary of BNKP, Nias Island):**

In Nias tradition, not just in their teens, but marriages are also performed even when the embryo is still in the womb. This was done by the parents. It was meant to strengthen the family ties among the nobility. When children are born, and the sex of the two children is clearly female and male, then the marriage was legalized. But now this does no longer exist. Women and men since childhood are proposed to be married. But if a girl has been proposed by a boy, done by parents, and after that, as adult she wants to marry another man, then this would be a shame for the man to marry her. Because she had bonded with another man in her childhood. Except among them there is love, then they will go well. But if not it will interfere. My mother was a victim of early marriage, married when she was 15 years old after junior high school graduation. The age difference with my dad was 12 years. It was an arranged marriage, because of social relations. My father married my mother's pastor in that area in order to get recognition from the public. Now the similar case has been significantly reduced, because of education and also because the church has set the age of 18 as the minimum limit of marriage for women.

**Survivor 1: My name is Novita, age 15 years** to be married, now 16 years old, my son was 4 months old female. My marriage has two thing, happy and sad. It is the parent's preference, but was forced to, because I was pregnant. Marriage is sometimes makes happy, but also I regret, there are too many quarrels between me and my husband, our conversation was to much misunderstanding. My husband was 22 years old. He often talks very hard to me, like: "You should go back to your parents and leave the baby with me here". I am happy with this child and this child strengthening me. My father in law is happy, because I live here. My husband was a farmer, me too. I take my baby to the field. I still want to school, but I cannot. If there is a chance I would like to visit hair salon course. Message to friends of my age, do not marry early age, being married was not easy. School only once in order to have a good future.

**Survivor 2: My name Julita Damanik, age when married 18 years** now is 19 years old. My Baby is 6 months. Early marriage, happy, because I have good husband. Sadly because of dropouts. I got married when not finished from High School. Husband is 21 years, working in the office of Regent. When I knew I was pregnant I was so sad, but I am happy because husband would take responsible. I still want to hang out with my close friend, I feel sorry that they are free. I still wanted to go back to school. I worked from morning till night. At 06.00 waking to cook, then take care of baby and husband, continued to farm until 16:00. Go home to cook again, and serve dinner, break later at 20.00. I bring my children to the fields. Working 14 hours a day at home and in the fields. I think to be an independent woman that's good, because she does not need to ask money from husband. My message to peers: Do not get early married, because getting married is not easy .. (she cried)

### **Rev Enida Girsang MTh (General Secretary of NCC in North Sumatera)**

Rule of Law in Indonesia No. 1 of 1974 on Marriage, lists the minimum age limit for women 16, men 19. Means is an early marriage is before 16 years. 16 years in terms of the law are considered adults. Age 16 years seems to me still not adulthood, because it was still a teenager. There are movements from women activists who fight for human rights organizations of women, asking for the addition of minimum age 18 years for women. Women activists through the Constitutional Court requesting to change the minimum marriage age limit for women to be changed. But the Chairman of the Constitutional Court

last June said that the age limit marriage was not a matter of the Constitution, because it is an open problem, a social problem.