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People, Population, and Policy in Indonesia

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The story of the massive shifts, which have occurred in Indonesia's demography over the last half century, is an important one and this book, is a useful contribution to the literature concerned with it. It is one of four books produced to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Ford Foundation's involvement in Indonesia which focus on the development issues addressed by Ford over this period. The book contains three substantial chapters and a brief introduction and postscript by the editor. It is predominantly an informed perspective on the changes which have occurred in fertility, family formation, reproductive health, the role and status of women and marriage in Indonesia since it achieved independence in 1945.

The first chapter by Terry and Valerie Hull is entitled "From Family Planning to Reproductive Health Care : A Brief History". The Hulls have been perceptive researchers and observers of fertility and family change in Indonesia as well as wider social, economic and political shifts for more than three of the five decades under review in the volume and uniquely well qualified to write this history. It is required reading for any student of Indonesian society and economy as well as for demographers. The chapter analyses the shifts which occurred from the work of Indonesia's family planning pioneers, through the Sukarno years when requests to establish a national family planning program were rejected to the strong commitment of the Suharto regime to reducing fertility and the post 1998 period. The key role of BKKBN (National Family Coordinating Board) in mobilising the support and acceptance of the community and changing the thinking of Indonesians to support the "small healthy, prosperous family" (p. 47) is analysed. They argue that in the success of family planning in Indonesia the BKKBN and the governments "patrimonial authoritarianism and broad institutions of social control and governance" (p. 47) have played a significant role.

In examining the shift from a concentration in government policy and programs from family planning to a broader focus on reproductive health, the Hulls argue that Indonesia has been impeded ... "In areas of reproductive health and social policy where Indonesia appears to be facing major problems –such as adolescent sexuality, the heterosexual transmission of HIV, the practice of both illegal and legally restricted abortion – the political-cultural emphasis on the family and 'traditional Asian values' as the keys to dealing with these issues precluded either open public discussion of the problems or more specific targeting of practical solutions." (p. 48). This denial of sensitive elements of reproductive health among decision makers and leaders has also impinged on the approach taken to HIV/AIDS in Indonesia.

The second substantive chapter by Iwu Dwisetyani Utomo is an informative analysis of the changing role of women in Indonesia over the past half century. It argues that "policies, programs, educational opportunities and cultural influences have opened important new options for Indonesian women" (p. 72) and illustrates the changes with vignettes of the experiences of particular women. There have been significant changes in behaviours, attitudes and practice in marriage, fertility, labour force participation, gender relations and political roles. However the chapter picks up on the sexual double standard in Indonesia which is still strong in Indonesia and assigns greater sexual freedom to men but retains traditional attitudes toward women (p. 107). This points to the fact that there are certainly strong elements within Indonesia which inhibit improvements in the role and status of women.

Chapter Three, written by Sri Moertiningsih Adioetomo, is entitled "Reshaping Populations" and is also an excellent analysis of shifts which have occurred in education, women in the labour force, marriage, changing

ideas and family size, contraception and fertility. It makes effective use of time series data to demonstrate the scale of changes which have occurred over the decades. It departs from the practice in the other two chapters which eschews the use of tables and maps to illustrate and substantiate the changes described in the text. The chapter also includes an interesting discussion of availability of demographic data in Indonesia, especially in the early post Independence years when so little was available. There is an analysis of projections of Indonesia's population made by the demographic pioneers Widjojo and Iskandar at the time when there was so little data on which to base them. The chapter is followed by a short postscript by the editor which argues that contemporary Indonesian policy makers and planners may be influenced more by the understandable preoccupation of their twentieth century counterparts with population growth rather than directly addressing the new concerns of the twenty-first century.

In all this is a useful contribution. It is presented largely in a narrative style and the editor indicates that he had deliberately not provided referencing, citations and footnotes. Although this undoubtedly widens the audience for the book it is a little frustrating for those who wish to follow up many of the statements and assertions in the text. This is not compensated for by a fairly short and limited bibliography. The book is not a comprehensive treatment of Indonesia's population and population policy. Little or nothing is said about internal and international population movement, population distribution, urbanisation, ageing, ethnic diversity, youth or population and environment. It is a national perspective and does not indicate the enormous diversity within Indonesia. However these elements are beyond the stated scope of the book. It is an excellent treatment of change in Indonesian fertility and families over the last half century. It is required reading for anyone interested in Indonesia's demography.