



## Podcast Series: A Glimpse in to Two Year Journey of Migration FPAR Partners

### Episode 3

“Organise returnee migrants workers to fight against document confiscation by recruitment agencies” Interview with Poniwati, Kabar Bumi, Indonesia

**Poniwati:**

Nama saya Poniwati, biasa dipanggil Onie. Sebetulnya saya hanya ibu rumah tangga, tapi karena saya melihat dari sebagian buruh migran yang mengalami banyak kasus di Indonesia dan di sini ada organisasi bernama Kabar Bumi, yang menangani kasus-kasus buruh migran dan keluarganya. Jadi dari situ saya tergerak hatinya untuk mengikuti organisasi Kabar Bumi.”

*“My name is Poniwati, but people always call me Onie. I am a stay-at-home mom, but when I saw that many migrant workers in Indonesia faced injustices I learned about Kabar Bumi, an organisation that works on migrant rights for the victims and their families. I was moved by them and decided to join Kabar Bumi.”*

**Andita:**

“Apakah Onie pernah bekerja sebagai buruh migran?”

*“Thank you, Onie. Did you use to work as a migrant worker too?”*

**Poniwati:**

“Dulu saya pernah bekerja di Singapura di tahun 2006, lalu pulang, dua tahun, lalu pergi lagi tahun 2010 sampai 2013.”

*“Yes, I used to work as a migrant domestic worker in Singapore for two years from 2006 to 2008. I then came home and went back to Singapore to work again from 2010 to 2013.”*

**Andita:**

“Sekarang setelah kamu bergabung di Kabar Bumi, pekerjaan sehari-hari, komunitas yang kamu kerja bareng, dan isu-isu apa yang mereka hadapi sehari-hari sebagai buruh migran?”

*“Now that you have joined Kabar Bumi, can you describe what you do on a daily basis, what kind of communities that you work with, and what are the issues that these communities face as migrant workers?”*



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## **Poniyati:**

“Kabar Bumi menerima berbagai kasus yang dialami buruh migran, salah satunya kasus penahanan dokumen. Dimana para buruh migran kebanyakan dokumennya ditahan oleh PT. Kalau dokumen ditahan, dampaknya banyak sekali. Kita tidak dapat melanjutkan pendidikan, tidak dapat akses ke program bantuan pemerintah, seperti bantuan sembako. Tapi kita ga punya KTP karena ditahan, jadi kita tidak bisa ambil sembako nya. Kita juga tidak bisa membuat sertifikat tanah, akte lahir anak, sama dokumen-dokumen lainnya.”

*“Kabar Bumi responds to many cases and injustices experienced by migrant workers. One of them is the retention of worker identity documents, where many migrant workers have had their documents retained by PT [agencies]. If our documents are retained, the impacts are enormous. We cannot continue our education, nor can we gain access to government aid programmes, like the ‘sembako’ (staple foods distribution). In order to get the aid, we must show our ‘KTP’ or state identity card, but if we don’t have it, then we won’t get the food aid. [Without our documents] we also cannot obtain land certificates, child birth certificates, and other documents.”*

## **Andita:**

“Ya memang ini cerita yang jarang didengar, tetapi penting bagi buruh migran Indonesia di luar sana yang sudah berjuang mati-matian. Dan untuk orang di sini yang mungkin ga terlalu kenal sama isu-isu seperti ini, supaya mereka tau apa realitanya bagi buruh migran di luar sana. Terima kasih sudah menceritakan ceritamu barusan. Kemudian, Onie juga merupakan seorang peneliti FPAR yang mana merupakan sebuah program APWLD di Thailand. Onie bisa menceritakan perjalanan Onie sebagai seorang peneliti FPAR?”

*“This is indeed a not well-known story, but it’s important for Indonesian migrant workers out there who have been struggling. For those who are not familiar with these issues, they need to know what the reality is for migrant workers out there, so thank you for sharing that story, Onie. Now, you are also an FPAR, or Feminist Participatory Action Research, researcher, which is a programme by APWLD in Thailand. Can you tell me your journey as an FPAR researcher?”*

## **Poniyati:**

“Tentunya sebelum Covid-19, saya bisa dengan mudah menemui pelapor atau korban penahanan dokumen ke rumah mereka masing-masing, atau mereka bisa datang ke pos pengaduan kami untuk interview dan pengaduan kasus. Lalu saya dan tim bisa dengan cepat menangani, karena sebelum Covid, kita bisa dengan mudah mengunjungi kantor pemerintah setempat sehingga korban bisa dibantu dengan cepat.”

*“Before Covid-19, I could easily meet the complainers or victims of document retention at their homes, or they could come to our office to file their cases and conduct interviews. My team and I could quickly handle the matter, because before the pandemic, we could easily visit local government offices to support the victims.”*



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“Kemudian organisasi kami Kabar Bumi semakin dikenal masyarakat Cilacap setelah kami melakukan broadcast di Radio Bercahaya Cilacap. Saya bersama teman saya Yani dan Naza mensosialisasikan tentang pemahaman dokumen. Banyak yang merespon siaran kami disitu. Jadi itu sebetulnya bagus sekali ya siaran itu. Untuk broadcast ini, bisa dilakukan secara reguler ya, agar masyarakat bisa semakin tahu akan pentingnya dokumen, karena tanpa dokumen kita tidak bisa berbuat apa-apa.”

*“But then our organisation Kabar Bumi was getting popular after we did the broadcast at Radio Bercahaya Cilacap. Together with my colleagues Yani and Naza, we spread awareness of the importance of personal documents. Many people responded to that broadcast so I think it was really good. I think we should do this kind of broadcast on a regular basis, so that people will become more aware of the importance of documents, because without them, we can’t do anything.”*

“Kita juga sempat membuat posko online. Dari media sosial di Facebook, ada beberapa pelapor yang dokumennya ditahan oleh PT karena tidak diberangkatkan. Tentunya menjadi pendamping kasus itu tidak mudah ya. Kita harus menyesuaikan waktu luang korban agar mereka bisa sharing terlebih dulu, menceritakan kronologinya. Kita juga tidak bisa memaksakan dengan pertanyaan2 yang mereka tidak mau jawab. Kita harus melakukan pendekatan dengan korban agar mereka lebih leluasa membuka diri. Kita juga harus minta izin kepada mereka jika kita ingin mengambil gambar atau video untuk keperluan pendataan.”

*“We also made an online page [where people can file their cases]. On Facebook, we found many people that had their document retained by their agencies because they did not get to start their work overseas. It is not easy to be a counsellor of these cases. We need to adjust our time with the victims’ free time so that they get to share and tell us the detailed chronology. We also can’t force questions that will make them uncomfortable. We have to do a careful approach so they can open up and we also have to ask for their permission if we wish to take their photos or videos as part of data gathering.”*

## **Andita:**

“Kemudian pelatihan FPAR ini kan sudah berlalu di tahun 2020. Awalnya latihan langsung di Chiang Mai, karena ada Covid, semuanya jadi terhalang. Ada ga tantangan apa yang kamu rasakan melakukan pelatihan di tengah pandemi?”

*“The FPAR training finished in 2020. At first, you participated in the training in person in Chiang Mai, but due to the pandemic, everything was stalled. Were there any challenges that you experienced when conducting the training in the middle of the pandemic?”*

## **Poniyati:**



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“Setelah pandemi ini kita tidak bisa bertemu secara langsung, kita menggunakan online, seperti Zoom. Latihan full day di Zoom sebenarnya kita sangat kesusahan. Satu, soal sinyal. Kadang kita ga ada listrik, jaringan tidak stabil, dan kalau tidak ketemu langsung itu interaksinya sulit. Di tengah penelitian, sangat sulit karena banyak juga kantor yang tutup dan kita juga harus melakukan pelaporan secara online. Di sini LTSA tutup selama 6 bulan, jadi kita harus lapor online, dan baru setelah itu bisa kita datangin.”

*“During the pandemic, we weren’t able to meet in person so we used online facilities like Zoom. We were really struggling to do a full-day training on Zoom. Sometimes, we don’t have proper electricity, the connection is unstable, and online interactions are more difficult. In the midst of the research, we were also struggling because many local authority offices were shut down and we had to online filing. In Cilacap, LTSA (Layanan Terpadu Satu Atap), the One-Stop Integrated Service was closed for six months and we had to file our cases online, then we got to schedule our visits there.”*

## **Andita:**

“Ketika menjalankan pelatihan FPAR ini, apakah ada manfaat besar yang Onie rasakan? Atau mungkin bukan hanya Onie saja, tapi teman-teman di Kabar Bumi atau di komunitas. Bisa ceritakan apa yang berubah, berubah dalam artian yang positif ya?”

*“When you were participating in the FPAR training, what was the biggest takeaway? Maybe it’s not just you who felt the impact of the training, but your colleagues at Kabar Bumi or friends in the local communities. Can you tell me what’s changed for you, in a positive way?”*

## **Poniyati:**

“Sebetulnya banyak sekali manfaatnya setelah mengikuti pelatihan ini. Saya sendiri banyak improve tentang penelitian, juga cara menangani kasus. Dari komunitas sendiri, setelah saya pulang, saya share juga ke teman-teman, kita ke masyarakat juga dan sebetulnya banyak dari mereka yang masih kurang paham akan hak-hak mereka. Setelah kita bersama komunitas, mereka jadi tahu hak-hak mereka. Seperti dokumen, itu kan hak kita yang harus kita pegang sendiri. Tapi mereka itu belum sadar akan hak mereka. **Stop di 12:10, lanjut ke 12:30** Kalau misalnya dokumen kita ditahan, itu adalah suatu larangan.” **Stop di 12:37, mulai lagi di 12:45 pertanyaan Andita berikutnya**

*“I felt so many benefits participating in this training. I learned many improvements on the research methods and how to handle cases. At the community level, after I came home and shared my experience, I learned that so many people were still unaware of their rights. After I work with them, they are now more aware of their rights. Like documents, for example, it is our right to keep our personal documents with us at all times, but many people in the communities are not familiar with this, that if our documents are retained, it is a violation of our right.”*

## **Andita:**



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“Selama kamu melakukan penelitian kemarin, kunjungan ke lapangan misalnya, bertemu dengan teman-teman di komunitas, ada ga cerita-cerita dari teman-teman perempuan yang Onie dengar dan cukup menggugah atau Onie terinspirasi misalnya? Atau membuat Onie merasa emosional, ada ga sih cerita-cerita yang Onie dengar soal perjuangan mereka?”

*“When you were out in the field to do your research and meet local communities, were there any striking stories about the struggles of women migrant workers that moved you, inspired you, or maybe made you emotional?”*

**Poniyati:**

“Sebelumnya saya buat posko online di Facebook tentang penahanan dokumen bagi siapapun buruh migran, agar mereka bisa lapor ke kami. Ada salah satu pengguna FB yang menghubungi saya kalau dokumen dia ditahan di PT. Dia sudah menunggu satu tahun tapi belum berangkat, maka dia berniat mengambil kembali dokumennya. Tapi PT tidak mengizinkan, kalau kamu mau ambil dokumen, kamu harus bayar sebesar Rp 750.000. Sedangkan korban ini belum proses apa-apa, baru medikal saja. KTP, KK, ijazah asli semua ditahan oleh PT. Sementara si korban ini merasa saya udah nunggu 1 tahun sia-sia dong. Kalau tau saya tidak diberangkatin saya sudah mencari kerja lain dan menghasilkan uang. Itu sangat menggemaskan ya.”

*“We made a Facebook page for migrant workers who wished to file their document retention cases online. There was one user who contacted me and told me that her documents had been retained by her agency for one year, yet she never managed to leave the country to work, so she wanted to take her documents back. Her agency didn’t allow it, however, and they told her that if she wanted her documents back, she had to pay IDR 750,000 (USD 52). This person had not done any preparatory steps; she had only done her medical exams. Her ID, Family Card, and education certificates were all retained by the agency. She felt like a lost cause waiting for nothing for one year. She told me that if she knew she would never go overseas, she would have looked for other jobs and earned money. This was really frustrating.”*

**Andita:**

“Iya iya, uang yang besar. Untuk ke depannya, kita hanya berangan-angan saja. Apakah perubahan besar yang Onie harapkan Onie bisa capai terutama setelah melewati perjalanan FPAR yang merubah hidup dengan menambah wawasan. Apa sih harapan besar yang Onie ingin harapkan buat Onie dan orang-orang terdekat Onie misalnya?”

*“Yes, that was indeed a big sum of money. [Moving on], let’s make a wish. What is the biggest change that you wish you could achieve, especially after participating in FPAR, which I think is a life-changing opportunity that expands your horizons. What are your hopes for you, the communities that you work with, and your loved ones?”*

**Poniyati:**



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“Harapan saya adalah masyarakat Indonesia sadar akan hak mereka bahwa dokumen itu hak mereka. Dan bila ada suatu lembaga atau perorangan yang menahan dokumen mereka adalah suatu pelanggaran. Orang atau lembaga tersebut harus diberikan sanksi atau hukuman. Aku harapkan kita masyarakat Indonesia lebih baik dan maju dan kita semua menjadi imigran yang sejahtera ya, yang cerdas, tanpa ada diskriminasi lagi.” **fade to music**

*“My hope is that communities in Indonesia become more aware that their documents are their rights and if there’s an organisation or an individual who want to retain their documents, they are aware that it is a violation of their rights. These organisations or individuals must face legal punishments. I wish that Indonesian society will get better so we migrant workers can be prosperous, smart, and will not face discrimination anymore.”*