

**Interview by Jemma Purdey and David Lowe with Eva Kasim, Jakarta, 13 February 2015**  
**MA, Disability Studies, Deakin University, 1998-1999**



**PART 1**

[00:00:13]	Born in Batusangkar, West Sumatra, but her family moved to Jakarta. She is third of five children, two boys and three girls. Her mother was a teacher and her father a government official. When she was thirteen she had a disease that caused paralysis and affected her ability to walk. She had a year off school then went to the school where her mother taught. The family didn't have a car and weren't very well off so she travelled to and from school by bajaj, with her mother or older brother. Because it was her mother's school, they arranged for her classes to be rooms that were accessible for her.	Childhood; Family background
[00:03:48]	She was a top student. She did social science and history was her favourite subject. She wanted to go to university and was accepted to the Faculty of Political and Social Science at University of Indonesia (UI). Her parents both had diplomas but not university degrees. All her siblings went to university.	Childhood; Early education; Undergraduate education; Family
[00:06:54]	She moved out of home and rented a room when she went to university. It was hard to find accessible accommodation and the university did not make allowances people with disabilities e.g. if she had an exam upstairs, Eva would get there very early so she had time to get to the room but sometimes the room would be changed at the last minute. She was at UI from 1985 to 1990. Her favourite subject was public policy. Her friends helped and sometimes the university arranged classes on the ground floor. There were no disability support groups then. It was very hard, she's not sure she could do it again.	Undergraduate education; Living with disability
[00:10:52]	She wanted to be a lecturer but when she	Undergraduate education;

	finished the university said lecturers needed to be dynamic and energetic, be able to move easily. She had support from some lecturers, one appointed her to be her assistant, in a voluntary capacity, and she enjoyed that. She was also involved in research and seminar activities, group discussions. She wasn't thinking about disability studies, it wasn't a public issue then, she was interested in other social issues.	Mentors
[00:13:56]	After she finished she applied to private universities, she got interviews but didn't get the jobs because of her disability. It was frustrating but she was writing articles in Kompas about discrimination against people with disabilities. In the early 1990s no-one else was writing about that. Her first job was in Human Relations, her role involved reading about welfare issues in the newspapers and sending an analysis to the minister. She enjoyed it.	Early career; Living with disability; Leadership; Community service
[00:18:30]	In the interview for the government job she wasn't asked about her physical ability. She was already thinking about further study when she started work. She applied to go to an Indonesian university but the department preferred employees to go overseas. She went to an exhibition about Australian universities, looked at what subjects she could do and applied for a scholarship.	Early career; Opportunities for further study
[00:22:03]	She applied to go to Belgium but got no reply. Then she applied for an ADS scholarship in 1997 and got an interview. She did the IELTS exam and got 5.5, needed 6.5 so did pre-departure training for six months in Jakarta. She was worried about her English. How did she choose Deakin? During the English course she looked for a university and subjects and found disability studies, she'd never heard of it before. She was interested in doing research into social policy relating to people with disabilities. Had an email conversation with Paul Leung and he came to Jakarta and helped arrange a scooter wheelchair for her in Australia.	Scholarships opportunities; Application process; Pre-departure training; Course selection in Australian university; Connections with Australia
[00:29:40]	AusAID helped organise accommodation for her in Burwood, not far from the campus. She shared a house with other international students. Her classes were at night while her housemates were undergraduates and studied during the day. She did coursework and a minor thesis. Most of the other students were Australian. Access around the university was good.	Scholarship experience; Arriving in Australia; Studying in Australia

[00:32:30]	She was involved in international students activities and in the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA).	Leadership; Community service; Living in Australia
------------	--	--

## PART 2

[00:00:00]	She gets Deakin alumni newsletter and emails. She's been involved in the Australian Reference group since she got the inspiration award – professional development about different issues like poverty, infrastructure, reformation and bureaucracy. She's been too busy to be very involved. She met Kevin Rudd and spoke to him about disability. In 2011 or 2012 Sydney University invited her to attend an ASEAN forum.	Alumni network; Ongoing connections with Australia; Professional networks; International mobility
[00:03:35]	AusAID offered her an Australian Leadership Award to do a PhD but her English didn't meet the requirement (6.0 instead of 6.5) so it wasn't granted, even though people from Australian universities vouched for her. Her department won't let her do a PhD in Indonesia and she feels she's getting too old to apply to go overseas again. Thinks she might do more study when she's retired.	Scholarship opportunities; Challenges
[00:07:19]	She mentors other staff. The Ministry of Social Affairs has been a key agency since 2012 so about five staff go on Australian scholarships each year. Getting a high enough English score is a challenge, they have to learn English independently. She recommends Deakin and Flinders University to them. Eva went to Flinders for two months, then four weeks and four weeks. She lectures part time at the Faculty of Social and Political Science at UI and helped to establish their Centre for Disabilities Studies. The centre does research and runs summer courses in collaboration with a university in the Netherlands.	Post-scholarship career; Mentoring; Leadership; Ongoing connections with Australia; Returning to Australia; Professional networks
[00:11:07]	Doesn't have time to do research now, especially with the requirement to clock on at work at 7.30. She has to leave home at 5.30, she has a car and a driver now. She advocates for disability issues but change is slow. [Discussion about Ibu Inge.]	Post-scholarship career; Leadership
[00:14:50]	She travels overseas and around Indonesia advocating and now almost 15 provinces are drafting local regulations on disability. [Discussion about Suaedy's project on inclusive governance.] The Australian embassy used to be in touch regularly but not recently, changes to embassy staff and AusAID.	International mobility; Community service; Leadership; Professional network

[00:17:49]	Her first trip overseas was to Bangkok in 1995 to attend the working group of UN-ESCAP (The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific), also in 1997 and 2000. In 2001 she went to the WHO meeting in Cambodia. She would like to go back to Melbourne but hasn't had the opportunity, has been to Sydney, Adelaide and Darwin. In 2010, she was nominated for an Advanced Global award, part of the Australian alumni global activity.	International mobility; Professional networks; Leadership; Alumni network; Ongoing connections with Australia
[00:20:25]	She didn't know anyone in Melbourne before but met some people during the pre-departure training, three people were going to Deakin. In Melbourne she went to events at the Indonesian consulate and got involved in the Indonesian community, went shopping to Laguna [Oriental Supermarket] in the city with friends every Saturday. She got discount taxi fares so friends liked to go with her. The director of international students offered to let her take her scooter home to Indonesia but she didn't think it would be practical so she left it for other international students to use. In Indonesia she uses her crutches and cars or taxis for longer distances. When she goes abroad she takes her wheelchair, it's not an electric one and isn't practical to use every day.	Living in Australia; Indonesian community in Melbourne; Living with disability in Australia
[00:25:45]	[Discussion about future collaboration and the focus of Australian aid in relation to disability.]	Ongoing connections with Australia
[00:30:17]	END	