

Interview by Jemma Purdey and David Lowe with Yulfita Rahardjo, Jakarta, 24 April 2014

MA, Demography & PhD, Anthropology, ANU, 1970 and 1980 cohorts



[00:00:27]	Comments about Australian alumni who became government ministers.	Alumni network
[00:02:26]	At ANU '76 to '78, doing a master's in demography, and again '80 to '86, doing a PhD in anthropology. The first was from the Population Council, which is usually to study in the US, the second was an AIDAB scholarship. Husband also studied at the same time on different scholarships.	Education background; scholarship experience; international mobility
[00:04:46]	Paternal grandmother is from Bugis, paternal grandfather is from Java, maternal grandfather is from Sumatera, maternal grandmother is from Sunda, but was born and raised in Jakarta. Father was a Dutch colonial bureaucrat.	Family background; childhood
[00:06:58]	Went to a Dutch kindergarten, then went to Jogja for five years during the revolution, returned to Jakarta in 1950. The family were given a nice house in Jogja and Yulfita went to a good school, although instruction was in Javanese.	Childhood; early education

[00:11:37]	SMP and SMR in Jakarta, at a good Catholic School, but it was too strict so changed to SMR1. Father continued working in local government until he retired. Big family, Yulfita is seventh of eight, mostly boys. Special memories of father's library, lots of books about ethnology. Finished school and studied anthropology in 1959 at the UI Faculty of Letters.	Childhood; family background; early education
[00:16:07]	Not many students studied anthropology but Yulfita loved it and met good professors, some Dutch, some Eurasian. Met her husband there, love at first sight. Wrote a thesis on land issues, land reform in East Java.	Undergraduate study
[00:19:40]	Worked as a research assistant in the UI anthropology department but it was a bit boring so got a job at LIPI in 1969 or 1970. Husband was working for an NGO, his salary was not enough for them both to live on. At LIPI worked with Mely Tan	Early career experience; family
[00:22:47]	There were lots of study opportunities for population studies but not many applicants so Yulfita was sent to many places. Once stopped in Sydney on the way to Hawaii and thought it was a nice place. In 1975 was going to go to the UK to study under a Dutch professor but her father was very ill so she postponed the trip and then the professor died, and her director offered to send her to Australia. A new	International mobility; Scholarship opportunity in Australia; international networks

	Demographic Studies Centre had just opened. Is still in contact with some of the other overseas students in her batch, from Thailand, Burma, Nigeria.	
[00:27:46]	Finished in 1978 and joined anthropology. In 1980 got the AIDAB scholarship to do a PhD in anthropology. Husband continued from master's to PhD but Yulfita, because she was coming from demography, had to start again with course work. Supervisors were Professor Anthony Forge, Margot Lyon and Jim Fox.	Scholarship experience; studying in Australia; family
[00:29:59]	Master's thesis was on educated females in the Indonesian labour force, PhD thesis was 'Three communities in Blitar, Java'. Husband's master's was about social stratification during the Japanese era, PhD thesis was 'A quest for justice: the millenary aspirations of a contemporary Javanese wali'. They went back to Indonesia together to do field work. Their son had his sixth birthday in Australia. He enjoyed going to school. Yulfita was impressed by the welcome she got on arriving in 1976 and that her son was picked up, with other children, by taxi every day and taken to kindergarten, organised and subsidised by the department.	Study and fieldwork experiences; family and children; living in Australia
[00:35:32]	Neighbours were mostly elderly people, very friendly, and students. At first found it very empty, no people. They had to learn how to do the	Living in Australia; friendships; social life; Indonesian community networks

	<p>housework and cooking. There were lots of Indonesian students in Canberra then, some with children too. One of the Indonesian students died of a heart attack, leaving a wife and four children. The Indonesian Students Association and Moslem Students Association gave the children scholarships.</p>	
[00:39:55]	<p>One December saved up and drove to Sydney and Bega and to Melbourne. Got lost going to see the penguins. Made a lot of friends in Canberra and at university, one of them recently visited in Jakarta. Retired in 2005, then was sent to East Timor. Officially finished with LIPI in 2001 and did contract work.</p>	<p>Travel in Australia; friendships; ongoing connections</p>
[00:43:00]	<p>Last position at LIPI was as Director of Centre for Population and Manpower Studies, 86 staff with 36 researchers. All were encouraged to go to Australia so lots of connections. Some, who could not go to Australia, were sent to do an AusAID project on population studies in East Java. Husband continued to work for NGOs with a development focus, devoted to the disadvantaged. They retired in the same year, he went to Aceh with the International Red Cross after the tsunami, and Yulfita went too but to a different city.</p>	<p>Leadership; mentoring; connections with Australia; family</p>
[00:47:00]	<p>In 2007 they came back because Yulfita's husband had a heart problem. Yulfita's son also studied anthropology, at</p>	<p>Family; connections with Australia; returning to Australia; networks</p>

	<p>UI, then worked for Freeport for nine years in human development. Now he does translation work. Yulfitra has two grandchildren, fifteen and ten years old. They live 25 km away. Going to Canberra this year for a sentimental journey. Yulfitra visits Australia often, last time went to Adelaide with staff from the Ministry of Women's Affairs.</p>	
[00:52:53]	<p>Graeme Hugo, Gour Dasvarma, Anton Lucas are good old friends. Met them in Adelaide, stayed there in 2010 and at other times. Travelled a lot with work, was tropical disease reviewer with the WHO and wrote a research paper reviewing malaria nearly everywhere except Indonesia. Also went overseas to seminars.</p>	<p>Connections in Australia; friendships; networks; international network and mobility</p>
[00:55:57]	<p>As director decided to be outward looking and could leave internal LIPI matters to her two vice-directors and an excellent volunteer manager who was very good. The Centre's money was from the government so had to make reports to the ministry of manpower and undertake projects for them. Had a good relationship with them.</p>	<p>Leadership</p>
[01:00:14]	<p>Finished as director in 2000, worked as a researcher on social economic aspects in nine provinces. Project funded from a number of sources and in collaboration with other universities. Budgets were cut with the Asian economic crisis but UNICEF had approved a</p>	<p>Collaboration; international networks; mentoring; post-work experiences</p>

	<p>study into the effects of the crisis. Also got WHO funding for research. Now there is more competition for research grants, LIPI is not the only place. Yulfita has presented seminars on how to write funding applications and proposals.</p>	
[01:05:17]	<p>Knows many people in Australian Aid, has good relationships. Yulfita was invited to talk with the Minister of Women's Affairs, did it but doesn't like media appearances, prefers to focus on research.</p>	<p>Connections in Australia; Leadership; networks</p>
[01:07:53]	<p>In 1989 Australian Embassy asked her to study the impact of the scholarships, specifically why women are not represented. Yulfita had moved to women's issues, felt more comfortable with that than land issues. Went to different universities and interviewed alumni and applicants. The problem was that mostly the scholarships were for science. Yulfita recommended affirmative action for a while and that was implemented.</p>	<p>Connections with Australia; Australian Aid; scholarships</p>
[01:12:16]	<p>Unequal representation from west and east Indonesia was also identified around that time. In February 2007 Yulfita's house was flooded and many things, including photos, were destroyed so she doesn't have a copy of the report. Also recommended making women scholars comfortable, letting their families come.</p>	<p>Connection with Australia; Australia Aid; scholarships; gender equality; family</p>

[01:16:11]	No bad experiences in Australia, always enjoyed herself and accepted the differences. There were no Chinese groceries in Canberra when she was there, could get some things at the market but otherwise ate other food. Doesn't like fish and chips. Often invited to people's houses for meals, especially barbecues.	Living in Australia; friendships; social network
[01:22:14]	Enjoying current gender advisory role. Went to Beijing in 1995 as part of the Indonesian delegation. Knew the women in the delegation to Habibie but wasn't involved because she was a government official and felt she needed to be careful. The situation for women in Indonesia is better now but still many things to do. More women are in higher positions but there's still a gap. Ibu Roos Mariwati was one of Yulfita's researchers.	International networks and mobility; leadership
[01:25:31]	At LIPI retirement is at 65 although this can be extended to 70 if the centre needs you. Yulfita had mixed feelings about retiring but felt it was not healthy to stay. Was invited to do gender studies in East Timor and Irian and Aceh. Mixed feelings about leaving the directorship, never felt it was hers to keep but enjoyed the writing and work.	Post-work experiences; international mobility
[01:28:53]	Turner Primary School asked Yulfita's husband to teach Indonesian when they were in Canberra and he did. Yulfita was invited to Monash University in 1978 and met	Living in Australia; family; community connections; Indonesian community networks in Australia

	Ailsa Zainu'ddin and Ddin, Tutti, Mas Kartomi. Will spend ten days in Canberra in September and catch up with people there.	
[01:32:15]	Talked about another Indonesian ANU alumnus, Mari Pangestu. Showed photos of grandchildren and son.	Alumni network

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