

Chapter 6

Warung and Urban Poverty

This chapter will discuss warung within the urban context, particularly in relation to poverty and the survival strategies of the poor. The first section discusses the government's criteria of poverty. The second section discusses warung and the survival strategies of the poor, focussing on the poorest 'pre-prosperous' families in Cicadas.

6.1. Criteria of Poverty

Various institutions apply different criteria to classify poverty and poor people, mostly using economic indicators such as per capita income. Sumodiningrat et al. (1999:7-11) summarize a number of different poverty criteria used in Indonesia, which includes Susenas, the World Bank, Sajogyo, Central Bureau of Statistics, and the Department of Manpower. Susenas sets monthly per capita income as a base to classify poverty. The World Bank uses similar criteria but on a yearly base. The rural sociologist Sajogyo uses individual income in comparison to the price of rice to determine the poverty line. The Central Bureau of Statistics determines the poverty line based on an estimated minimum expenditure to fulfil basic needs, which cover food and non food needs such as accommodation, land ownership, educational level, and working hours of the head of household. The Department of Manpower uses an index of physical minimum needs to classify the poor and the non poor.

Partly as a result of different institutions adopting different criteria of poverty, there have been various poverty alleviation programs in various places throughout Indonesia over time. In this chapter however I will describe some of the criteria and programs which have been applied in Cicadas, particularly those of the National Family Planning Board (BKKBN).

BKKBN Criteria on Poverty

The Cicadas village government uses indicators developed by the National Family Planning Board (BKKBN) to classify people's socioeconomic status.

According to BKKBN, the family (*keluarga*) is society's smallest unit, and consists of either a husband, a wife, and their children, or a father and his children, or a mother and her children. Law (*undang-undang*) number 10/1992 defines a prosperous family (*keluarga sejahtera*) as a family which is formed from a legal marriage, is able to fulfil its members' material and spiritual needs, is devout, and maintains a harmonious relationship among family members, and between the family and the society. A staff member at BKKBN Bandung municipality office reported that according to the regulation there are eight family functions:

- religious
- social and cultural
- love and affection
- protection
- reproduction
- socialization and education
- economic and environmental maintenance

These functions are used in devising five categories of families as follows.

Table 6.1.
Types and Indicators of Prosperous Family¹

Types	Description	Indicators
Pre-prosperous family (<i>Keluarga Pra Sejahtera</i>)	Pre-prosperous families are those who are not (yet) able to fulfil their basic needs such as clothes, food, housing and health.	Those who are unable to meet any the following 23 indicators of a prosperous family.

¹ My translation. Compiled in a table by author.

<p>Prosperous family I (<i>Keluarga Sejahtera I</i>)</p>	<p>Prosperous families I are those who are able to fulfil their basic needs but are not yet able to fulfil their social-psychological needs such as education, family planning, housing, transportation, and to perform mutual relationship with their community (<i>hubungan timbal balik dengan lingkungan</i>).</p>	<p>Those who are able to meet the following five indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The family members follow the religious services of their religion. 2. Normally all family members have meals twice a day or more [economic reason]. 3. All family members have different clothes for different occasions, such as clothes to wear at home, clothes for working/studying, and clothes for other activities outside the home [economic reason]. 4. The largest part of the floor of the house is not made from soil (in other words it should be covered by cement, tile, wood, carpet, etc) [economic reason]. 5. When the children are ill and/or a fertile period couple would like to join family planning, they have access to doctors or nurses and are given modern medication and modern contraceptive methods.
<p>Prosperous family II (<i>Keluarga Sejahtera II</i>)</p>	<p>Prosperous families II are those who are able to fulfil their basic needs and their social-psychological needs, but are not yet able to invest or to save money and to have access to information,</p>	<p>Those who are able to meet the indicators of prosperous family I and the following nine indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. The family members follow the religious services of their religion regularly. 7. At least once a week, the family members consume either meat or fish or eggs [economic reason]. 8. In the last one year, every family member had at least one suit of new clothes [economic reason]. 9. The floor area of the house is at least 8 m² for every family member [economic reason]. 10. In the last three months, all family members have been in good health, so that they are able to perform their work. 11. At least one family member aged 15 years old or older has a regular income. 12. All family members aged between 10-60 years old are able to read Latin characters.

		<p>13. All children aged between 7-15 years old are currently going to school.</p> <p>14. If there are two children or more, the fertile period couple currently uses some contraceptive method.</p>
Prosperous family III (<i>Keluarga Sejahtera III</i>)	Prosperous families III are those who are able to fulfil their basic needs, social-psychological needs, to invest or to save money, and to have access to information, but are not yet able to give regular financial contributions to the community or to be actively involved in community activities.	<p>Those who are able to meet the indicators of prosperous family I, II and the following seven indicators:</p> <p>15. The family attempts to improve their religious knowledge.</p> <p>16. Some of the family's income is saved for family's saving.</p> <p>17. The whole family normally gathers at least once a day for breakfast, lunch, or dinner and uses such an occasion to communicate with each other.</p> <p>18. The family normally participates in community activities in their neighbourhood.</p> <p>19. The family is able to take part in a recreational activity outside their house, at least once every six months.</p> <p>20. The family has access to information from newspaper or radio or TV or magazine.</p> <p>21. The family members have access to the transportation facilities available in the area where they live.</p>
Prosperous Family III Plus (<i>Keluarga Sejahtera III Plus</i>)	Prosperous families III Plus are those who are able to fulfil their basic needs, social-psychological needs, to invest or to save money, to have access to information, to give regular financial contributions to the community, and are actively involved in community activities.	<p>Those who are able to meet the indicators of prosperous family I, II and III and the following two indicators:</p> <p>22. The family or its members are able to give material (incl. financial) contribution for community activities, regularly.</p> <p>23. The head of the family or its members are actively involved on the organizing committee of a community organization in their neighbourhood.</p>

Source: Undang-undang (law) number 10/1992 on prosperous families.

Certain indicators (numbers 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9) are followed by 'economic reason' in brackets. This means that the ability or inability of the families to meet the indicators is based on economic factors. For example, if a family does not consume either meat or fish or eggs (indicator number 7), it is because they are

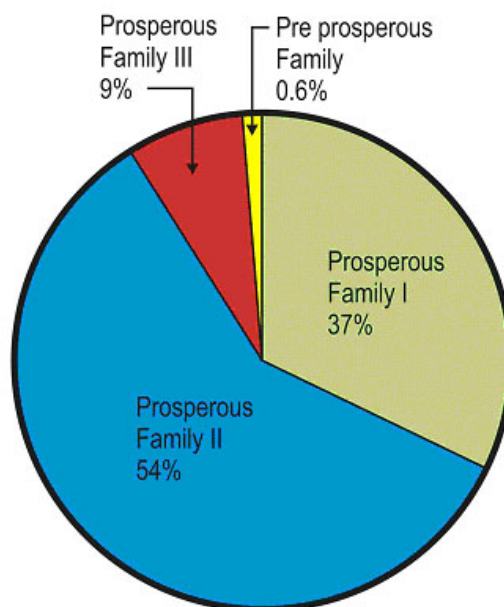
financially not able to buy them, and not because they are vegetarians or because of other non economic reasons. Table 6.2. lists by ward the number of families in Cicadas which fell into the various categories in 2002. Chart 6.1 summarizes the composition of prosperous families in Cicadas village.

Table 6.2.
Composition of Prosperous Families
In Cicadas Village
2002

Neighbourhood Ward	Pre-prosperous Family	Prosperous Family I	Prosperous Family II	Prosperous Family III	Total
RW 1		75	103		
RW 2		90	152		
RW 3		83	121		
RW 4		95	97		
RW 5		26	43	No data	
RW 6		41	60	available	
RW 7		16	25	per	
RW 8		119	188	Neighbour-	
RW 9		78	87	hood ward	
RW 10	2	157	226		
RW 11	7	69	109		
RW 12	3	199	305		
RW 13		6	6		
RW 14		95	153		
RW 15		108	149		
Total	12 (0.6%)	1,257 (37%)	1,824 (54%)	311 (9%)	3,404 (100%)

Source: Cicadas Village Office (2002), percentages based on my own calculations.

Chart 6.1.
Composition of Prosperous Families
In Cicadas Village
2002



The official data listed in Table 6.2. and visualized in chart 6.1, shows that the number of pre-prosperous families, or the poorest in Cicadas, based on BKKBN standards, is very small (0.6%) and may be considered as not significant. However, my field observations and interviews with local government officials suggest that we have to be careful in reading the data. The real situation shows that there are only very slight social and economic differences between the families categorised as pre-prosperous and prosperous families I. In Cicadas, those who fall into the pre-prosperous category mainly do so because they do not meet indicator number four ‘the largest part of the floor of the house is not made from soil’. I visited the 12 pre-prosperous families and looked at their earthen floor. However, according to some staff at Cicadas village (*kelurahan*) office, some families who are actually quite poor fall into the higher prosperous family I category instead of the pre-prosperous group simply because they cover some of their earthen floor with a plastic carpet, so that the soil is no longer visible.

A similar problem occurs when categorizing prosperous family I and II. Many families (54%) seem to meet all the indicators of prosperous family II. However, my observations and interviews with some village staff highlight some problems

with these indicators. For instance the staff refers to indicator number seven 'at least once a week, the family members consume either meat or fish or eggs'. While it is true that it is hard to buy meat for many low income families, many of them are nevertheless able to consume eggs. Many of them are also able to buy dried salty fish, which is cheaper than fresh fish. Culturally, dried salty fish is a favourite dish of the Sundanese people.

Indicator number 11 'at least one family member aged 15 years old or older has a regular income' may also pose a problem when classifying prosperous family I and II. The indicator does not say anything about the amount of one's income, only that it is regular. As a result, many families are eligible to be in the prosperous family II category because they do have at least one family member with a regular income. The real situation however shows that this does not always contribute significantly to the family's prosperity. For instance, take the case of a family consisting of a husband, wife, and three children, with only the husband working full time as a worker in a roofing tile factory. Although he has a regular monthly income of Rp 400,000, the family will find it very hard to make ends meet². My interviews with this type of family confirm that the already low income is actually even lower, since it is rarely the case that the worker brings home the whole amount. Some of the income is deducted to pay off credit from a nearby warung or to other parties. When one loan has been repaid, more credit will be sought.

A local government official mentioned to me another problem with the classification that he found in the field. He referred to indicator number four 'the largest part of the floor of the house is not made from soil' in relation to indicator number 20 'the family has access to information from newspapers or radio or TV or magazines'. He found that some poor families had earthen floors, while at the same time he saw a TV and a radio in their houses. Based on the earthen floor this family is supposed to fall within the pre-prosperous category. On the other hand, having a TV and a radio means the family has access to information, which is an indicator of prosperous family III. In other words, they are financially capable of

² The monthly income of Rp 400,000 is below the regional minimum wage. In 2002, the minimum wage for West Java region was between Rp 500,000-600,000.

buying electronic goods such as TV and radio. He pointed out the many people offering credit (*tukang kredit*) who actively market their goods in the kampung, including electronic goods, and offer very low repayment instalments (*cicilan*). In such a case, the official uses his common sense to decide which category is most suitable for the family, by considering other factors not necessarily related to BKKBN indicators, such as the family's income and the number of dependants.

Another village official admits that she often feels 'confused' with the BKKBN prosperous family classification, particularly about the slight differences between pre-prosperous and prosperous family I. She said that the real situation shows many families who fall into prosperous family I category should be eligible to be in the lower pre-prosperous group. She sometimes has to 'modify' the data so that more poor families can have access to the government's poverty alleviation programs. She particularly pays attention to their income in comparison to the number of dependants, although this is not included in the indicator.

I would also like to note some problems in data collection at RW and RT levels. As stipulated in the 'Guidelines on Families' Data Collection', a PLKB³ at the village (*kelurahan*) office is responsible for collecting data in her village. She is assisted by the coordinator of Posyandu, in Cicadas is known as *Pos KB*⁴, who is responsible for collecting data in her RW. Since the whole RW consists of hundreds of families, this is too large a task for her alone so she is helped by *Sub Pos KB*⁵ who collect data at the RT level, which each consists of tens of families. Technically *Pos KB* and *sub pos KB* are those who collect data on prosperous families in their respective RW and RT. During data collection in October to December every year, *sub pos KB* have to visit all the families in their RT, to identify how each of them meets the indicators of prosperous families as

³ PLKB stands for *Penyuluh Lapangan Keluarga Berencana* (Field Proselytizer of Family Planning Program). PLKB is at the same time an official at village (*kelurahan*) office and is normally a civil servant.

⁴ *Pos KB* stands for *Pos Keluarga Berencana* (Family Planning), Also known as PKB which stands for *Penyuluh Keluarga Berencana* (Proselytizer of Family Planning Program). PKB is responsible for the promotion of the family planning program at the neighbourhood ward (RW) level, as well as coordinating monthly integrated mother's and child's health post (Posyandu) meeting in her RW. *Pos KB* is a woman and is unpaid.

⁵ *Sub Pos KB* stands for *Sub Pos Keluarga Berencana* (Family Planning). Their tasks are similar to those of *Pos KB*, but at the sub-neighbourhood ward (RT) level. *Sub Pos KB* are women and are unpaid.

stipulated by BKKBN. For each family they visit, they have to answer 74 out of 76 questions, 23 of which are questions on indicators of prosperous families, while the rest are questions to collect demographic and family planning data.

Pos KB and *sub pos KB* are not paid or are paid very little, to survey tens of families in their areas, and record the answers to 74 questions for each family they visit. In 2001, *pos KB* and *sub pos KB* in Cicadas village were paid Rp 22,500 to be divided between the six of them, meaning that each received Rp 3,750, which is very little as compared to their contribution to the survey. The very small amount was expressed by one as ‘I got a headache [doing the survey]’⁶ and ‘what is it all about [paying me] only Rp 2,000-3,000 that will only buy a bowl of noodle soup’⁷. Another one said what she does is *lillahi ta’ala*, an Arabic term meaning for the sake of God [Allah]. As a Muslim, she ‘accepts’ that although she is paid very little she does the survey for the sake of Allah and hopes for reward from Him.

During my fieldwork, I heard the term *lillahi ta’ala* quite often when people, especially community organizers, commented on the unpaid work they do for the community. Some people even ‘manipulate’ this term to persuade others to do unpaid work. For instance the PLKB at the village office says *lillahi ta’ala* to *pos KB*, and *pos KB* says similar thing to *sub-pos KB*, to persuade them to collect the data on prosperous families. Although this is a very poorly paid and laborious job, the implication is that they will have a reward from God. Only a few people are willing to take on the job of collecting data on prosperous families. In Cicadas, those who at the end do the job are women.

In view of all the above, it is not surprising that one cannot expect a really high quality survey. A *sub pos KB* said that ‘it is easier to collect data on old residents, because I already know them. It is harder to collect data on newcomers, because I have to ask that many questions. When I spoke further to her, she explained that she did not visit and ask questions of each of the surveyed families. She answered

⁶ Translated from Sundanese language ‘*lieur pisan*’.

⁷ Translated from Sundanese language ‘*naon ngan ukur 2,000- 3,000, keur meuli baso ge geus beak*’.

some of the questions by herself based on estimation. She does not feel it necessary to do a proper survey, since she feels familiar with the surveyed families who are her own neighbours. For instance, she said she does not need to ask indicator number one 'the family members implement the religious services of their religion'. She ticked 'yes' or 'no' for this question simply based on her daily observation of whether or not the family members go to the mosque regularly to perform prayers or attend the Qur'an reading group (*pengajian*). She said 'as a neighbour I know who regularly goes to the mosque and who doesn't'. She mentioned that another indicator 'at least once a week, the family members consume either meat or fish or eggs', can also be seen from daily observations, while chatting with other women on the bench beside the alley. In most cases, women with young children feed the children while they chat, so every body knows what menu is given to them. Another pos KB explained the way she did the survey by 'seeing [the surveyed families] while thinking and using my feeling to fill in the columns [to answer the questions] in the survey forms'.

Oey-Gardiner (2000) criticizes the way data on prosperous families is collected and questions its validity. She writes 'Data on prosperous families are often collected by PLKB based on estimation. They completed the survey forms without visiting each family in the surveyed areas'⁸. She also questions using women as surveyors, asking them to work without payment in the name of loyalty to the nation. She adds that the assumption behind this phenomenon is that women do not need to be paid at all or paid very little.

Furthermore, Oey-Gardiner questions the Rp 3 billion budget spent by BKKBN to conduct the survey nationally, using 1.5 million surveyors to cover 47.3 million families. Based on this data, she calculates that each surveyor in Jakarta receives Rp 2,000 for approximately 30 families⁹, meaning that a surveyor is paid Rp 63 for each family she surveys. Oey-Gardiner comments that Rp 63 is not enough to even buy a sweet. She compares this with the parking fee in Jakarta which is at least Rp 1,000.

⁸ My translation.

⁹ 47.3 million families : 1.5 million surveyors = 31.5 families for each surveyor

Now I will move to discuss the government's poverty alleviation programs which were applied in Cicadas during my fieldwork in 2002, namely the RASKIN and TAKESRA/KUKESRA programs¹⁰. Since this chapter discusses urban poverty, it is necessary to discuss the government poverty alleviation programs which are relevant to Cicadas.

RASKIN - Rice for the Poor

RASKIN stands for '*beras untuk masyarakat miskin*' meaning 'rice for the poor'. RASKIN is one of the Indonesian government's poverty alleviation programs. According to Bulog (2004) the program aims to assist the poorest and those classified as 'food susceptible' (*rawan pangan*), to enable them to have an adequate amount of rice for their families. Bulog (2004) defines the poorest and the food susceptible as follow:

The poorest refers to pre-prosperous and prosperous families I groups, plus those outside the categories who are considered as eligible to access the subsidized rice. 'Food susceptible' includes families who meet at least one of the following criteria: are unable to eat twice a day, unable to consume—at least once a week—protein food, families in which one of the children has stopped going to school, the income is insufficient to buy food. Others in this category are casual labourers who face redundancy (PHK - *pemutusan hubungan kerja*), and people who are unable to access health facilities. Nationally, it is estimated that two million families fall within the food susceptible category¹¹.

Presidential Instruction number 9/2002 on rice policy states that the government guarantees to provide and distribute rice to the poor and the food susceptible families. At national level, the RASKIN program involves several government institutions: the Coordinating Ministry of Economics (*Menko Perekonomian*), Coordinating Ministry of Social Prosperity (*Menko Kesra*), Department of Domestic Affairs (*Depdagri*), National Logistic Agency (*Bulog*), National Development Planning Agency (*Bappenas*), and National Family Planning Board

¹⁰ Another program, the *JPS Bidang Kesehatan* or Social Safety Network in Health, will not be discussed in this thesis. This program is basically the distribution of a health care card to the 12 families in Cicadas who were formally recorded as being within the pre-prosperous group, to enable them to access medical services for free at the local government's health centre (*puskesmas*). The card is given temporarily and is reviewed on a regular basis. Should the card holders move into a higher category or they no longer need the card, it will be given to others.

¹¹ My translation.

(BKKBN). These institutions coordinate and implement the program, both at national and regional levels. In 2002, the program allocated 2.4 million tons of rice to 9.7 million poor families throughout the nation (Bulog, 2002).

Rice is sold to the poor at a subsidized rate of Rp 1,000 per kg, while price at the market is Rp 2,500-3,500 per kg for medium quality. In other words, through this program the government subsidizes Rp 1,500-2,500 or approximately 60-70% per kg rice for the poor. Each poor family is eligible to have a maximum of 20 kg of subsidized rice per month

Cicadas is one of the targeted villages for the rice for the poor program. How is the program implemented in Cicadas? Technically, the rice is distributed to eligible families by the head of the neighbourhood wards (RW). In this section I will discuss one of the wards which receives the rice. I will use the pseudonym RW 30 to protect the identity of relevant parties.

The head of RW 30 receives the rice on the 10th of every month. The head's wife (Ibu Juju) and the coordinator of the Posyandu (Ibu Juleha) are responsible for packing and distributing the rice. They said that over time the amount of rice they receive is getting less and less. In the past, RW 30 received 2 tons, which gradually decreased to 1 ton. In August 2002 they received 280 kg only. The lower amount has nothing to do with the decreasing number of poor families in RW 30, but more to do with what they described as 'the decreased allocation from the government'. Their statement implies that they did not know much about the reasons behind the decreasing amount of rice. They are more concerned about how to distribute the rice to people in their neighbourhood. As a result, eligible families receive rice in much smaller quantities than they are supposed to.

Even in the past when the ward received much larger amounts, it had never been the case that poor families had received the full amount of subsidized rice as stipulated by the government, 20 kg each. A local staff member at Cicadas sub-district office said 'in reality it was difficult to supply 20 kg subsidized rice per poor family'. Theoretically, when there is a limited amount of rice, priority should first be given to pre-prosperous families, then to the higher prosperous families I

group. In fact, it is not possible to do this, because many people wish to have the subsidized rice, although they are not theoretically eligible to receive it.

Pressure from the community has made community organizers offer a 'win-win solution'. Regardless of their socioeconomic condition, each family in RW 30 can now buy 2.5-5 kg of the subsidized rice, which is only one eighth to one fourth of the stipulated amount of 20 kg per family. Some organizers responsible for rice distribution confirmed that this is the only way to deal with the limited amount of rice and the high demand from the community.

In practice it is also not possible to sell the rice for the Rp 1,000 per kg stipulated by the government. In RW 30, the selling price is Rp 1,200 per kg. The additional Rp 200 per kg is to cover transportation and packing costs which are not provided by the government.

Ibu Juju said that she distributed 2.5 kg of rice per family, while Ibu Juleha distributed 2.2 kg per family. Each of them is responsible for distribution in different sub-neighbourhood wards (RT), though still in the same RW. Some people question the different amount of rice between the two wards, and Ibu Juju pretended to know nothing about it. Nevertheless she mentioned to me it is because Ibu Juleha also wants the rice, although she is not eligible for it. Ibu Juleha takes three ounces of rice from each family for herself. Ibu Juju 'ignores' such corrupt behaviour on the grounds that Ibu Juleha has contributed a lot to community activities. As a coordinator of Posyandu, she is responsible for the operation of Posyandu meetings every month and other related activities such as collecting data on pregnant mothers, the immunization of young children, and surveying BKKBN prosperous families in October to December every year. Moreover, Ibu Juleha's husband is an RT head, meaning that as the head's wife she is also actively involved in many other community activities. So having the subsidized rice for free can be considered as a 'reward' for the contribution she makes to the community.

Another person responsible for distributing RASKIN rice is Ibu Tina, who said that distributing it gives her a headache. She said when she was collecting data on

poor families, many people objected to being categorized as 'poor'. On the other hand, when there is government assistance for the poor, such as the rice for the poor program, those who objected to being called poor protested to her over their lack of access to the subsidized rice. In the end every body has to compromise, the rice has to be distributed to as many people as possible regardless of their social and economic status, which also leads to a reduced amount of rice for eligible families. Ibu Tina said that she has been involved in the rice for the poor program for years, and has confirmed that it has never been the case that eligible pre-prosperous families receive 20 kg rice each.

Evaluation of the implementation of rice for the poor program in 2000 by Gadjah Mada University, confirmed that one of the problems in many places is that subsidized rice does not reach the primary target, that is, the poor families. The report mentions that 36% of 'the not so poor families' still receive the rice, while 38% of poor families do not receive it (Bulog, 2004).

KUKESRA – Credit for the Poor

KUKESRA stands for '*Kredit Usaha Keluarga Sejahtera*' or 'Credit for Prosperous Families' which is another of the Indonesian government's poverty alleviation programs. According to BKKBN (1997:2):

KUKESRA targets pre-prosperous and prosperous families I to assist them to access credit for productive economic activities and to enable them to improve their life, in particular to be able to step into a higher level of prosperous families as stipulated by BKKBN. At national level, this program is organized by the BKKBN, Indonesian Post Ltd [*PT. Pos Indonesia*], and Indonesian State Bank Ltd [*PT. Bank Negara Indonesia*]¹².

According to BKKBN (1997:19), to be eligible to apply for KUKESRA, one should meet the following four conditions:

- 1) Be a pre-prosperous or prosperous family I who forms a business group and is willing to share the risk among the group members in relation to their position as KUKESRA credit receivers.
- 2) Take part in TAKESRA, which stands for *Tabungan Keluarga Sejahtera* meaning 'Prosperous Families Saving', a saving scheme specifically designed for the poor.

¹² My translation.

- 3) Conduct or be planning to conduct a productive economic activity, which will be developed as an income source, in which part of the income will be for credit instalments.
- 4) Not receive credit from other sources¹³.

In Cicadas, the terms TAKESRA and KUKESRA are used together to refer to small-scale credit for pre-prosperous and prosperous families I. A community organizer named Ibu Euis is responsible for allocating the credit to eligible families. Although KUKESRA nationally targets groups, in Cicadas the credit is given to individuals from eligible families who already have, or are about to develop, some business. All credit receivers are married women from pre-prosperous and prosperous families I. Many of them use the credit to start small-scale trading, that is selling ready-to-eat meals such as making snacks and cakes.

Very few credit receivers are able to use the credit to improve their business into something more substantial, or to improve their life. One among those few is a married woman who is talented in making cookies. Prior to receiving the credit, she was only able to make a small number of cookies to sell to neighbours. With the credit, she has been able to increase production and regularly supplies a food store whose owner is happy with the cookies she makes. However, Ibu Euis confirms that such a case is very rare. Many credit receivers have to rely on continuous credit, otherwise their business will collapse. She points to Ibu Muhe, whose family is within the pre-prosperous group, who has been receiving KUKESRA credit since 1996 and is still receiving it today, but has made little improvement in her business. Ibu Muhe uses the credit to make some snacks and tasty rice (*nasi uduk*), which is sold by one of her daughters who is a factory worker. On week days, the daughter brings the meals to the factory and sells them to her colleagues.

In 1996, when KUKESRA credit was launched for the first time in Cicadas, the credit was Rp 20,000 per person per year, which has gradually increased up to the current amount of Rp 160,000 per person. Credit instalments (*cicilan*) should be repaid monthly over 10 months. Ibu Euis confirms that all credit receivers pay the

¹³ My translation.

instalments on time, which means that 100% of the money and the interest are returned. KUKESRA credit applies a flat interest rate which is equivalent to 6% per annum (BKKBN, 1997:29).

Ibu Euis receives the KUKESRA funds from the Cicadas village office to be distributed to eligible families in her neighbourhood. A village office staff member (normally a PLKB) is appointed to regularly monitor the distribution, but technically Ibu Euis is the one who deals with all aspects of credit distribution. She is not paid for this task, and like other community organizers I met in Cicadas, she said that what she does is *lillahi ta'ala* or 'for the sake of God (Allah)'. She hopes that she will get a reward from Allah for helping her poor neighbours to access the credit to improve their life.

None of the KUKESRA credit receivers are warung owners or are able to become a warung owner with the support of the credit. The credit receivers and warung owners are different people with different social and economic status. This situation confirms my argument in chapter 2, in the section which discusses social rank, that most warung owners are from the kampung area and have a higher socioeconomic status than people from the lower kumuh area, many of whom fall into the pre-prosperous group. Kumuh residents have lower paid and different types of work, such as domestic helpers and pedicab drivers. I will discuss some of these families in detail later in this chapter. As noted previously, not everybody is able to establish a warung since a warung, no matter how small, requires more capital than those from the kumuh area can access. Only 'the not so poor', in Cicadas, those at the kampung level, are able to develop warung, but not the poorest or those in the kumuh area or the pre-prosperous group.

The two groups have different types of access to credit. The kampung people, in this case the women, are able to organize themselves into *arisan* and a cooperative¹⁴ which enables them to have access to credit and to accumulate capital among themselves. Many people from the kumuh area rely on external assistance for credit such as the KUKESRA program.

¹⁴ See chapter 2, section 2.3.1 for more details on *arisan*, and section 2.3.2 for the *cooperative* in Cicadas.

6.2. Warung and the Survival Strategy of the Poor

During my fieldwork, I approached the 12 pre-prosperous families identified in BKKBN data and visited them regularly for interviews. I regularly contacted them, though less frequently than warung owners, to develop an insight into the life strategies of the poorest of Cicadas.

The 12 pre-prosperous families all live in very poor housing and have very poor hygiene and sanitation conditions. Their house walls are made half of brick and half of bamboo, wood or cardboard. The roof is made from wood, old iron sheets, or old roof tiles, which poorly protect the inhabitants from rain. The house size is 4-12 m², which accommodates 1-10 people. People normally call such houses *rumah petak* meaning a house which has only one multi purpose room. One such house is pictured in Plate 6.1.



Plate 6.1. A pre-prosperous family in their *rumah petak*

All of the pre-prosperous families have access to electricity, even if it is only a 5-10 watt light, but since they have no access to piped water they have to acquire water in other ways. Some of them have access to poor quality, dark brown well water, while others have neither access to piped water nor well water and rely heavily on buying water from neighbours, who have developed a side business of selling piped water.

Poor access to water leads to poor hygiene and sanitation. All of the 12 pre-prosperous families use communal toilets, known as *WC kering*, literally meaning dry toilet, a toilet with no water. Similar arrangements apply to the bathroom. In this situation, nobody feels responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the bathrooms and toilets. Having already spent a relatively high proportion of their income on water for their own use (for drinking, cooking and bathing), no water is left for cleaning. As a result, the toilets and the bathrooms are very dirty. Regardless of the quality, those with access to well water are in a somewhat better situation. At least they do not have to buy water for washing, bathing, and cleaning, but only for cooking and drinking.

The area where pre-prosperous families live is surrounded by blocked drains and sewers with black and smelly water, which during the rainy season overflow into the families' yards, and even into their houses. For many of these families, the rainy season is a miserable time of constant struggle to deal with water coming into their houses.

Pre-prosperous families work as well diggers, pedicab drivers, factory workers, domestic helpers, scavengers, or have no work at all and rely heavily on the pity of others to survive. These jobs offer very low or irregular income. For instance, a well digger may only be called on to dig one well a year. Pedicab work is more in demand, but a pedicab driver relies heavily on physical fitness.

In most cases, pre-prosperous families cannot rely on a single income. The more family members work the better, since this leads to more money coming into the household's pot. If somebody is unable to work, at least there is still some sort of income for the family.

Chronic poverty has to a certain extent led these pre-prosperous families to 'withdraw' from community activities such as Qur'an reading groups and *arisan*. It is also hard for them to attend social events such as weddings and circumcision parties. They often gave reasons such as 'lack of time' or say they are 'too tired' to attend such events. Some of them openly admit: '[I] have no money' to attend a

wedding party of a close neighbour. Custom requires people to contribute some money instead of a gift when attending such events. When they do participate in activities, they selectively choose ones that give a real advantage such as the monthly integrated mother's and child's health post (Posyandu) meetings, which provide immunization and supplementary food for young children for free.

Pre-prosperous families in Cicadas live in kumuh areas which are scattered through the kampung¹⁵. They tend to reside in groups of similar status and some are in extended family households. The following is a brief picture of some pre-prosperous families in Cicadas, the Thamrin family, Ibu Eti, and Ibu Reno. I will also discuss how they relate to warung.

The Thamrin Family

Thamrin is an 82 year old man, a widower, some of whose children are also within the pre-prosperous category. He has eight children, 31 grandchildren, and 12 great grandchildren. In the past, Thamrin was self-employed, making and distributing traditional weaving machines. He supplied the machines to Majalaya¹⁶ traditional textile industries in South Bandung. He said that from 1966, his business gradually collapsed. Currently, Thamrin relies on his children for a living.

Thamrin and three of his eight children live in Cicadas just next to each other. He lives with one of his married daughters Yanti, and her children, while the other two children, Tenten and Yati, live in their own *rumah petak* with their families. Within the kumuh area of 140m², there is only one *rumah petak* occupied by a family who has no kinship relation with the Thamrin. In total there are more than 20 people living in the area, in five *rumah petak* occupied by five pre-prosperous families.

¹⁵ See map 1.2 in chapter 1.

¹⁶ Majalaya is a small town located in Southern Bandung. Since the Dutch colonial period, Majalaya has been the centre of traditional textile and weaving industries. Some of the industries still survive.

People label the area where Thamrin's family live as 'the drunk's kampung'. Prior to my visit to his place, some people reminded me to be careful, when interacting with the 'bad people' in the kampung. Although I did not ask about the labelling, Tenten, the oldest of Thamrin's children, confirmed to me that it is routine for him and some adult men in his neighbourhood to have a drinking party in the evenings. He assured me:

Don't worry ma'am we have no drugs, including ecstasy. We only have the cheap 'Intisari' brand wine which costs Rp 5,000 per bottle. No way could we afford to buy ecstasy, we have no money. Please excuse me, I am telling you straight to the point about what happens in my neighbourhood. We just want to be happy [with the drinking]'.

Everybody in the party contributes to buy the drink, which can cost Rp 75,000-100,000 for 15-20 bottles every night. The money comes from cycling pedicabs during the day. I estimate each person spends Rp 5,000-10,000, or 20-50% of their daily income, to buy the drink. I am concerned about these drinking habits, in particular the amount of money some of these men spend, considering the miserable life of their families.

The routine drinking parties lead to routine bottle selling the following morning: 15-20 bottles are sold to a vendor of used goods every day. I do not know precisely how much money comes from the bottle selling and what the money is for, but I know vendors of used goods pay very little for the goods they buy, including drink bottles. When I was cleaning my house and sold 20-25 bottles made from glass, as are the wine bottles, I received less than Rp 5,000.

The Thamrin family reflects the general situation of pre-prosperous families in Cicadas. The men work as pedicab drivers, well diggers, factory workers or construction workers, while the women work as domestic helpers, washerwomen, or factory workers. Tenten is a pedicab driver, although on many occasions I found him just relaxing in his house during working hours. His wife is a washerwoman. Tenten's sister, Yati, the sixth of Thamrin's children, works as a domestic helper too, while her husband Emil is a pedicab driver.

The children's occupations generally follow that of their parents'. The sons follow their fathers for example in the case of Tenten and Yati, whose sons are also working as pedicab drivers. For the daughters, when they are single they work as factory workers; when they are married, particularly when their children grow up, they become domestic helpers following their mothers. Domestic work compatible with motherhood, as they have flexibility to decide how long and how much work to do. Domestic helpers normally work with families in the kota, for few hours a week each. They can decide with how many families they would like to work.

The Thamrin family reflects the situation of the poor, where women's work is relatively more reliable for providing a living than the men's. This is due to the fact that in Cicadas, domestic helpers, washerwomen, and factory workers have a more reliable income than pedicab drivers, well diggers and construction workers. Two factors contribute to this situation; job continuity and the workers' attitude. For instance, Yati is working as a domestic helper in a family who live in the kota area of Cicadas, with whom she works every Friday, washing their clothes manually, and ironing on Saturdays. Occasionally she also does the cleaning for them. The family employs Yati on a regular basis and pays her Rp 75,000 per month, which is considered the main regular income for Yati's family. In addition she also works with other families, but on irregular basis, and is paid Rp 10,000-30,000 per day depending on the work load. Thamrin's other daughters and granddaughters also work as domestic helpers and washerwomen and are in substantially the same situation as Yati.

Yati's husband works as a pedicab driver, which gives him a daily income of Rp 10,000-25,000 for 7-10 hours work. He has to spend Rp 2,500 from his daily income for pedicab rental. Their son-in-law Yudi also works as a pedicab driver. He spends Rp 2,500 a day to repay the credit (*cicilan*) for his own pedicab. He is buying the pedicab for Rp 350,000, of which he has already repaid half. The length of the credit is 4-5 months. Yudi receives the credit from the *juragan* (boss), a local resident who owns, sells, and hires out pedicabs.

Jellinek (1991:59) writes 'In the 1950s and 1960s, *becak* [pedicab] driving was one of the easiest occupations to enter for a young man just arrived in the city [Jakarta]. No overhead capital, equipment or skills were required. The technique could be learned in half an hour'. Over time pedicab driving has become a more difficult occupation to enter in Jakarta. As the Jakarta government now applies a 'pedicab free' (*daerah bebas becak*) policy in most parts of the city. Pedicabs in Bandung in the 1970s were in a similar situation to Jakarta in the 1950s and 1960s. A 'pedicab free' policy is not yet applied in Bandung, but pedicabs are forbidden in the mains streets across the city.

While men working as pedicab drivers seem to offer a regular income, it is not as reliable as the women's work as domestic helpers. One of the reasons is the physical fitness of the pedicab drivers. For instance Emil who is nearly 50 years old, is in ill health and therefore very rarely brings home Rp 25,000 a day. Another factor is the men's attitude. As some locals said, they are 'not good at handling money'. Despite their chronic poverty, the fact that they use some of their money to buy alcohol confirms this notion. Wolf (1992:65) quotes Mather (1985) who wrote 'Men's contribution to the households, though believed primary and obligatory according to Islam and secular law, is in practice discretionary and according to many women [she] interviewed, not to be relied upon'.

There is also a tendency for men to consider that their income is for their own needs first, in contrast to women, whose income more likely goes to their family first, while their own needs come second. This is the case of Yati's son and son-in-law, of whom she commented: 'Their money is for themselves. They recently bought themselves shoes and jackets. I never ask [for their financial contribution], it depends on them how much they are going to give me'.

Yati is currently living with her husband, her three unmarried children, including the pedicab driver son, and her eldest married daughter with her young child whose husband is also a pedicab driver. Yati said that the sons contribute some money for buying water. In one day, Yati's family spends Rp 3,000-4,000 for water, which is about 20-30% of the entire family's daily income. Yati's husband

also gives his income, regardless of the amount, to her. She comments on her husband's income 'what can I do [with that amount], cycling a pedicab requires a lot of money, the pedicab's rental and his meals'. She does not explicitly mention her husband spending some of his income for alcohol, but people in the neighbourhood confirm that her husband is one of the regulars at the drinking parties. This situation leads to pressure on Yati to make ends meet. She just receives whatever her husband and sons give her, and deals with the rest with whatever she can to make ends meet.

How does the Thamrin family's poverty relate to warung? To a significant extent, the Thamrin family relies on warung to fulfil their daily needs. Yati confirms that she rarely cooks for the family's daily meals. At first she said this was because of lack of time. She later gave the reason that cooking at home incurs a higher cost than buying ready-to-eat meals at nearby warung. She particularly points out the money she has to spend for water and kerosene. She only cooks steamed rice, while other side dishes are bought from warung¹⁷. She said: 'The most important thing for me is [having] rice, the side dishes are whatever is available [at warung]. I rarely cook, there are [many] warung here. My grandson loves vegetable soup, chicken, and soy bean cakes sold at the warung'. She said that she can buy proper side dishes at warung for Rp 2,000-3,000 a day for the whole family.

Thamrin's daughters also prefer to buy ready-to-eat meals at warung for their families. Lack of time is a common reason put forward for buying the meals at warung, rather than cooking on their own. All of Thamrin's daughters are working women. They are busy fulfilling calls from the kota people to do various domestic chores. The cheap price of warung dishes is another reason. However this situation applies to Cicadas kampung area only¹⁸. From the warung customers' point of view, 'cheap' should be understood in a context where basic

¹⁷ Yati's family consumption pattern is similar to most Indonesians who have rice as their staple food. Common meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner are steamed rice and various kinds of side dishes made from vegetables, fish, meat, and chicken.

¹⁸ As I have discussed elsewhere very few, if any, warung or restaurants in the kota area in Cicadas or in Bandung provide dishes as cheap as in Cicadas kampung. Therefore, for kota people, going to warung or restaurants for their daily meals would be too costly. As I have shown, warung owners are able to provide cheap dishes because they buy the raw materials from the Cicadas dawn market, which offers prices 20-30% lower than markets operated during normal working hours.

needs such as water and kerosene are relatively expensive. Practicality is also a reason to explain people's preference to buy their meals at warung in Cicadas kampung. As I regularly visited the Thamrin family, I was able to observe the daily activity of buying and delivering water both by adult male and female members of the family. In order to save money, they prefer to collect the water on their own using water containers hanging on a bamboo yoke. Having the water delivered to the door would cost the buyer Rp 500 per container of 20-25 litres of piped water, which is double the cost of bringing home the water themselves. The distance between the water seller and Thamrin's house is about 100-150 metres. All of Thamrin's family rely on buying water from a neighbour, since they have no access to a well nor to piped water. Therefore, buying and delivering water is time consuming and hard work for the Thamrin's family. Cooking their own meals would lead to a higher cost since they would have to buy more water and spend more labour and time collecting the water. Therefore they prefer to buy ready-to-eat meals at warung.

Within this context, the warung play an important role in fulfilling daily needs. The existence of warung in the neighbourhood has indeed helped the family to survive by providing affordable services, though this is not the intention of warung owners when they establish their business. This case is substantially similar to Kebun Kacang kampung in Jakarta where 'The restricted budgets, transport, storage, and refrigeration facilities of the poor meant that they continued to buy minute quantities daily from the petty trader, but they could not afford to pay higher prices (Jellinek, 1991:78).

Ibu Eti

Ibu Eti is another of the 12 pre-prosperous families in Cicadas. She is a 71 year old woman, currently living alone in her *rumah petak*, a small room of approximately 6 m² with no window, which means she needs a 10 watt light to be turned on all the time. Inside her house, there are clothes hanging around the room, a single bed, a kerosene stove, two chairs, and two small tables for kitchen utensils. Ibu Eti gradually built her house in the 1970s using savings from her previous job as a domestic helper. A shared well is located in front of her house,

with a shared bathroom and a toilet. The well was there when she first arrived in the 1970s, but she and others who live nearby, together gradually built the bathroom and the toilet. As compared to other pre-prosperous families in Cicadas, Ibu Eti and her close neighbours can be considered fairly ‘lucky’ since they have access to free well water.

Ibu Eti lives in a *benteng*, literally meaning fortress. A concrete *benteng* wall two metres high serves to physically separate the kumuh and the kampung areas, as shown in Plate 6.2. The alley and houses shown in the picture is of the kampung area. The *benteng* area consists of 194 households scattered in three sub-neighbourhood wards (RT). People living within the *benteng* are called ‘*benteng* people’, a label which connotes poor, slum, and of lower status than the kampung people.



Plate 6.2. *Benteng* wall on the left which separates the kumuh and the kampung area.

Benteng people in Cicadas have some similarities with what John Sullivan (1992) calls ‘registered inferior’ in his study of urban kampung in Yogyakarta. ‘[This category] comprises *wong cilik* [little people] who inhabit a neighbourhood without being neighbours. [They] are registered members of the *rukun warga* (RW), can be identified as a definite out-group but do not constitute a distinct group in the view of the kampung.’ According to John Sullivan (1992), most of the registered inferior are Javanese; they include: kampung people from other

towns or wards, recent arrivals from rural areas—from hamlets, *rukun warga*, and communities—not unlike those of Central Yogyakarta. Unlike John Sullivan’s case, most of the *benteng* people in Cicadas are not new arrivals. Nor do they come from other areas. In fact many of them have been living in the *benteng* for a long time, even for generations.

Only three *benteng* families are formally classified within the pre-prosperous group. Bapak Iyus and Ibu Gandi are community organizers who disagree with this classification, which is based on the BKKBN prosperous family survey in their area. Bapak Iyus is an RT head in the *kampung* near the *benteng*, and Ibu Gandi is a Posyandu coordinator at the RW where the *benteng* is located, but neither of them are *benteng* people. They said ‘there are many *benteng* people who need help. Probably nearly all of them are actually within the pre-prosperous category’.

They said the *benteng* wall was originally built to demarcate land in dispute between the *benteng* people and the armed forces. According to Bapak Iyus, the *benteng* area officially belongs to the armed forces. Geographically, the area is located in one of the *kumuh* areas, on the border of Cicadas *kampung* and the kota military housing complex¹⁹. Over time, homeless people squatted and built houses on the land, and had children, grandchildren and even great grandchildren there. Currently there are approximately 3,000 people living on the land, none of whom are willing to move without compensation. Initially the wall was built by the armed forces to mark the land which belonged to them, now it also symbolizes the separation between the *kumuh* and the *kampung* area. Even now the armed forces claim that the land is legally theirs, which explains why the wall is still there. Bapak Iyus said that the conflict over the land has been going on since 1965, with no clear sign of when it will be resolved.

Substantially similar cases of land conflict occur in many big cities in Java. Part of the reason is rapid urbanization which is not followed by any increase in space and housing to accommodate the fast growing population. It is often the case that

¹⁹ See Map 1.2. in chapter 1.

state owned land or even privately owned land, which is not used (*tanah kosong*)—there are no building[s] on the land or it is uncultivated—is gradually squatted on by homeless people. Tampubolon (1998:171) quotes Suparlan (1991) who wrote ‘The emergence of illegal settlements begins when migrants who have low socioeconomic conditions illegally occupy the vacant land in a city which belongs to the state or other private agencies’.

Theoretically there should not be a problem if right from the beginning the land owners firmly stated that nobody else can use the land, to avoid future problems such as the *benteng* case, where not just one or two people are involved. Thousands of people now live there, and it is not possible to just ask them to leave. After tens of years the persons who first squatted on the land may no longer be alive, only their offspring are there, which makes the problem more complicated. On the part of the squatters they may claim that unless they receive compensation, they refuse to leave because they have spent a lot of money to build their houses, regardless of the fact that they built the houses on land which is not theirs.

In practice, even when the land owners, right from the beginning, are firm about their land, without regular supervision there are always people who try to make use of vacant land. Some owners build fences around their land, but even these, when not supervised, are vandalized. Some others give up; either they build something on the land to avoid squatters, or sell it.

In the past Ibu Eti worked as a domestic helper, watercress picker, and a warung owner. She said ‘I am a kampung woman, I can do whatever is available’. She was employed for 14 years as a domestic helper in Medan, North Sumatra, where she was allowed to bring her two children to stay with her at the family’s house where she worked.

In the early 1970s Ibu Eti returned to Bandung with her children, and worked as a watercress picker in the field which has since become the military housing kota area of Cicadas²⁰. She lost her job as a watercress picker when the field turned

²⁰ For more details see Chapters 1 and 2.

into a housing area. She then established a warung to support her and the two children, mainly selling *lotek* vegetable salad and *rujak* fruit salad. She continued to run the warung until the children grew up and become independent.

Currently Ibu Eti lives on people's pity and a small allowance she receives from a local church. When there is no money and no food left, she has to sell whatever is available such as her old dining plates and clothes. In the morning on the day when I visited her, she said that she had just sold clothes for Rp 2,000 to buy food. Some mobile traders specialize in buying and selling used goods, and regularly hang around in the neighbourhood. Ibu Eti often has to save money by reducing the frequency of eating, from 2-3 times a day to once a day only. She said 'at least I can eat and I am not starving'.

Ibu Eti receives a Rp 50,000 monthly allowance from a local church where she regularly attends mass. She was a Muslim but in the last few years has converted to Christianity. Some neighbours commented that her conversion was primarily for economic reasons, to give her access to the monthly allowance and other assistance from the church. According to Bapak Iyus, her conversion to Christianity is the reason why her son, who lives not too far away from her, very rarely visits her, and no longer supports her. The son strongly disagrees with, and gets upset at, his mother's conversion to Christianity. Ibu Eti however, told me that the son's behavioural change is because his wife is very stingy. Only a moment later she corrected what she had said, 'Perhaps because he has six children and everything is expensive. Food is expensive, children's education is expensive, therefore it is hard for him to give me money. I try to think positively, otherwise I will get depressed and my blood pressure will get higher'. Bapak Iyus expressed his disagreement with the son's behaviour. He said 'let religion be one's own business, but a mother is a mother forever'. He referred to the Islamic teaching of the Prophet Muhammad who said three times that people should give precedence to their mother over their father.

Already feeling depressed because of her son's attitude, Ibu Eti feels worse since she has also lost contact with her daughter, who is a widower with three children. She currently lives in Cicalengka, a small town about 60 km East of Bandung.

While the distance from Bandung to Cicalengka is not too far, the two of them hardly see each other. Ibu Eti is no longer able to travel too far for financial and physical reasons. Travelling from Bandung to Cicalengka may cost Rp 10,000-15,000 return. For Ibu Eti, who has to sell clothes for Rp 2,000 for meals, the cost is hardly affordable. Even when she has some money, she will not be able to travel to Cicalengka on her own due to physical constraints. It is also not possible for them to telephone each other because they cannot access a telephone. I do not know why the daughter no longer visits her mother.

An illustration of how frail Ibu Eti is physically can be seen from her description of going to a local health clinic (*puskesmas*) to see a doctor. It takes about one hour for Ibu Eti to walk from her house to the clinic via a short cut. While using public transport such as a pedicab is too expensive for her, walking to the clinic requires a great effort. She has to stop every 4-5 steps because of a headache and sometimes loss of sight. I asked if there is a neighbour who may be willing to accompany her to the clinic. She replied 'neighbours always ask for money'. While Ibu Eti seems cynical about her neighbours, I would think their behaviour is largely a result of the impact of poverty faced by nearly everybody in the neighbourhood, not necessarily because of their individualism. On average, seeing a doctor at the clinic requires more than half a day. Since there is no telephone appointment system, one has to register in person between 8-10 am. The doctors' consultation starts at 9 am. As the clinic serves about 200-250 people per day, there is a long queue. A patient who registers at 9 am may see a doctor at 11 am or noon, then proceed to queue again to buy the medicine. The overall process may finish at 12-1 pm or even later. This means that Ibu Eti has to leave home at 8 am to register at 9 am, and will arrive at home at 1 pm if she has been seen by the doctor at noon. The half day required to access the health service at the clinic is very valuable time for the neighbours, who are busy with their own business of earning a living. Even for the better off, it is a long time, and probably too much to accompany Ibu Eti, who is neither their family nor a relative, to go to the clinic. It is understandable that they should ask for money to compensate for the half day work they miss. For certain people, such as factory workers, it may also lead to the loss of a full working day.

Apart from the allowance from the parish, Ibu Eti relies on warung in her neighbourhood to fulfil her needs. Being a frail, ill, poor, old woman living on her own, unless it is urgent, there is no point for her to travel too far away while there are so many warung around. She just goes to one of the warung located few metres away from her house whenever she needs to buy something. She tries to pay in cash for whatever she buys, and unless it is a very urgent need she tries to avoid credit. She was traumatized in the past when she was forced to pay an accumulated credit at one warung for up to Rp 150,000.

She mainly visits the warung to buy kerosene, toiletries, and cooking ingredients. As for food, nearly every day there are people giving her something to eat. She particularly refers to the local church she attends: 'every month the priest gives me Rp 50,000 and there are always people from the parish who give me rice and instant noodles'. Other gifts include sweet potato and soy bean cake (*tempe*). Some staff from the village (*kelurahan*) office also visit her regularly to give her a coupon to buy government's subsidized rice (RASKIN), a health care card, or other assistance available for the pre-prosperous group. Ibu Eti said that although she is eligible to have access to five kg of subsidized rice for Rp 1,250 per kg distributed every month, she cannot always use the opportunity. She said '[when] I have no money, I cannot use it [the coupon]', meaning that she often has no money left on the designated rice distribution days, which are scheduled once a month. As noted in the previous section of this chapter, the government's subsidized rice program does not distribute rice for free, rather it is an opportunity for the poor to buy rice at a lower price. Moreover, since the rice is already subsidized, this program does not allow the poor to buy on credit. For her, warung offer more flexibility to buy whatever she needs, either for cash or on credit, rather than the government's RASKIN program. For Ibu Eti, warung in her neighbourhood help her to access valuable services. She said she has not been to a shop (*toko*) for a long time, due to lack of money and the physical difficulty of travelling too far.

Apart from contacts with warung, Ibu Eti does not socialize much with her neighbours. She said 'neighbours have no money, [they are] just like me'. She is

more attached to the church people rather than the people in her community, or her own two children.

Ibu Reno

Ibu Reno and her family are not formally classified within the pre-prosperous group, although I consider her eligible to be included in this category. I would think that one of the reasons for her higher classification is that she is able to meet indicator number four of BKKBN's classification since the largest part of the floor of the house is not made from soil. I saw she has a cement floor covered by a plastic carpet.

Ibu Reno is a single mother of nine children aged between five and 30 years old, whose details are as follows:

- 1st child: a woman, 2nd grade junior high school graduate, married with a child, lives separately.
- 2nd child: a woman, primary school graduate, divorced with a child, lives with Ibu Reno.
- 3rd child: a woman, primary school graduate, married, lives separately.
- 4th child: a man, unmarried, primary school graduate, well digger, lives with Ibu Reno.
- 5th child: a man, unmarried, primary school graduate, pedicab driver, lives with Ibu Reno.
- 6th child: a man, unmarried, primary school graduate, newspaper street trader, lives with Ibu Reno
- 7th child: a boy, fifth grade primary school student, lives with Ibu Reno.
- 8th child: a boy, third grade primary school student, lives with Ibu Reno.
- 9th child: a boy, five years old, lives with Ibu Reno.

This means there are nine people of three generations living in her house of approximately 7.5 m², meaning that each person has only 0.83 m² of space. There are no room divisions, except that the house is divided into two floors of 3 m² on the ground floor and 4.5 m² on the first floor. This area does not include the communal bathroom, toilet, and kitchen which are shared with two other

neighbours. Both floors are 'multi purpose', however the top floor is allocated for sleeping where every body, including adult children of both sexes, sleep.

Ibu Reno has to rely on a shared well which provides poor quality dark brown coloured water which is used for laundry, washing the dishes and bathing. As for drinking water, the family relies on Ibu Reno's sister living nearby who 'subsidizes' them with piped water for free. Ibu Reno and her family can be considered as 'fairly lucky', since some families have no access to either well or piped water, and they rely heavily on buying piped water from neighbours.

To make a living Ibu Reno sells clotted blood (*marus*) at Ujung Berung dawn market, located in Ujung Berung suburb approximately 10 km towards the East of Cicadas. She gets the blood from butchers in the market. Although blood is forbidden (*haram*) to eat for Muslims, some people regularly eat the clotted blood, as a cheap source of protein.

She works seven days a week, leaves home at 12 midnight and arrives back at 7 am. As soon as Ibu Reno gets home, she is occupied by household chores such as washing and cooking. Such tasks are laborious and require a lengthy time due to lack of supporting equipment and unfair division of labour among family members. Water has to be drawn manually from the well. Washing the whole family's clothes is hard work since it has to be done manually. Cooking requires a long time because there is only one old kerosene stove available, which she says works poorly. Interruptions are unavoidable because the well, the bathroom, the toilet, the kitchen, and a hen's cage, all located in a room of approximately 3 m² with no windows, so the 10 watt light is on all the time, is shared with two other neighbours (see Plates 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5).

The situation is made worse for Ibu Reno since very few of her family members give a hand with the domestic tasks. I saw a pile of dirty men's jeans and T-shirts in the bathroom, as pictured in Plate 6.3. She complained 'I have many children, but they are only making me work and work. They are always having fun. Even when they work, they use the income for themselves'. She particularly complains about her adult sons. Only the divorced daughter helps Ibu Reno with household

chores, but she is occupied by her baby and cannot be relied on for other tasks. So Ibu Reno does most of the domestic tasks as soon as she arrives home from work at 7 am and finishes at 1-2 pm, which allows her to have lunch and some rest. At night she goes to bed at 7-8 pm, to wake up at 12 midnight and re-start the routine. The over work and the fatigue often make her bad tempered and fill her days with complaints and anger.



Plate 6.3. A pile of unwashed clothes in the bathroom and kitchen

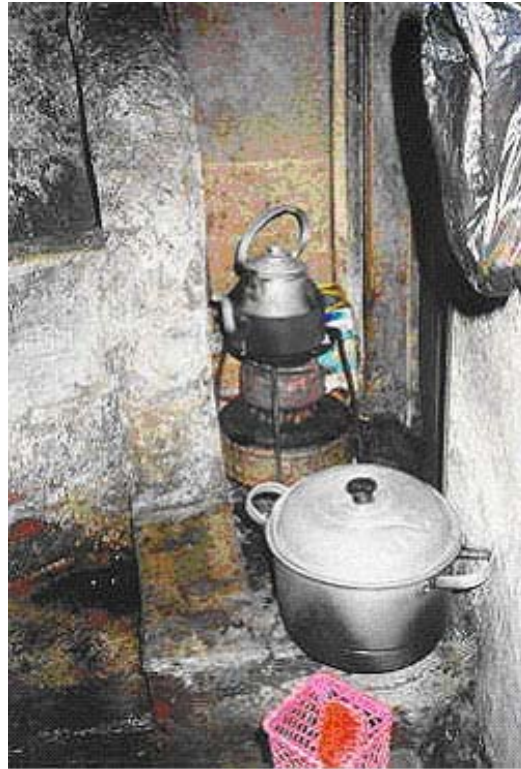


Plate 6.4. An old kerosene stove in the bathroom and kitchen, next to a well



Plate 6.5. A chicken cage in the bathroom and kitchen

Selling clotted blood at the dawn market gives Ibu Reno a daily income of Rp 20,000 to feed herself, the seven children, and a grandson. Ibu Reno comments on her income as ‘[it] always finishes’, meaning nothing is left for secondary needs. Therefore, it is not possible for her to have some days off unless in very special circumstances, otherwise there is nothing to eat.

Another family member with whom I interacted intensively was Ibu Reno's 1st child, Ati, who lives in Cintaasih kampung, located about three km to the South of Cicadas. She is married with a four months old baby boy. Her husband is a newspaper seller, who gets on and off Bandung's city buses to sell the paper and earns Rp 5,000-10,000 a day, from 6 am to 8 pm.

Ati's family relies on this single income, which she admits is not enough to live on. She previously worked as a domestic helper, but was unable to continue her job due to child care demands. At one time she had to sell three of her six pieces of batik cloth, which she normally used to carry her baby for Rp 30,000, just to buy food to eat. This seemed to be the worst time, until I found that she was forced to return to her mother's house because, as she said 'I can no longer bear to fast for more than three days'. She had eaten nothing for those three days, only drinking water, due to lack of money. As a result of the 'fasting' she could no longer breastfeed her baby, who for three days only drank water mixed with coconut sugar. She had to walk from her house to her mother's carrying her baby, stopping every five steps due to a headache, unable to use public transportation due to lack of money. She said the three days 'fasting' were not because her husband was not working, but the only money they had went to pay for house rent of Rp 50,000 a month. I asked her 'Why didn't you ask for credit at a warung to buy some food?' She replied that she had just moved to her new house and is not yet able to ask for credit from warung in her new kampung (she previously lived in Cicadas). I visited Cintaasih kampung where she lives and got the impression that it is more or less similar to Cicadas kampung with many warung scattered across the neighbourhood. Although credit is widely available at warung in Cicadas and Cintaasih kampung, in both places warung owners provide credit only to people they know and trust. This phenomenon is also found in *rumah susun* (walk up flats) in Pulogadung, Jakarta, where warung owners only gave credit 'Of small amounts and only to those they really knew well or close neighbours' (Tampubolon 1998:126). Therefore a newcomer such as Ibu Ati is not yet 'eligible' for credit, and will need some time before she earns the trust of warung owners and from other people in her new neighbourhood.

I had the opportunity to visit Ati's *rumah petak* in Cintaasih kampung, which I found to be bamboo walled room of 3 m², with no windows, with a 5 watt light. Many sheets of newspaper and cardboard are attached to the leaking roof and walls to protect them from cold weather. Ati said 'when there are heavy rains the roof leaks'. A dry toilet and bathroom are shared with some neighbours, each user being responsible for providing his or her own water.

Every day Ati buys three water containers at Rp 1,000 each for drinking, bathing, washing and sometimes for cooking for the whole family. In total she spends Rp 3,000 a day for water, which is 30-60% of the family's total daily income of Rp 5,000-10,000. She reveals 'it [the three containers of water] has to be adequate no matter what'. One evening I found Ati was not able to have a bath because her husband had not yet arrived, and she had no money left to buy water. The water problem is one of the reasons why she prefers to buy ready-to-eat meals at nearby warung, rather than cooking her own. Like many other kampung residents, cooking is costly since it requires more money to buy water and kerosene. I would view this phenomenon as a rational choice in such circumstances, where water is not just expensive, but also a luxury. There is no point for Ati to spend more money for water to cook, in a situation where she already spends up to 60% of the family's total income on water for basic needs such as drinking, bathing, and washing. It is much better to spend the remaining 40% of their income on ready-to-eat meals at nearby warung.

At the end of my fieldwork in December 2002, I found Ati cleaning a sack of chicken bones to sell to her neighbours. She said that she got the bones from a neighbour, but it was not clear which neighbour and what he/she had been doing to be able give a lot of bones to Ati. It was only two days before the end of the Ramadhan fasting month, the days when people are preparing to celebrate the Lebaran feast, when Ati walked around her kampung to sell the bones, carrying her baby on her chest and a sack of chicken bones on her back. She earned Rp 20,000 net profit from these two days selling. However, such an activity is only short term and cannot be relied on for living.

Selling chicken bones reflects the situation of the poor neighbourhood where Ati lives. As mentioned previously, Lebaran is a very special day in Indonesia, celebrated by special dishes, including meat. Even those who normally do not include meat in their menu will make every effort to buy meat, which is relatively expensive at any time but becomes even more expensive closer to Lebaran day due to the higher demand. For some poor people, chicken bones are enough; they are cheap whereas chicken meat is not affordable. For the Lebaran dishes, the bones are for the curry, which is supposed to contain chicken or beef meat, not just the bones, to eat with *ketupat*²¹.

The three generations of Ibu Reno, her daughter Ati, and her grandson illustrate the reproduction of poverty which is likely to continue unless they receive external assistance to help remove them from the poverty chain. This could be done by providing them access to better paid jobs, affordable or even free education and health support, and better housing, and by improving their awareness of nutrition, hygiene, and sanitation. Without such assistance, the younger generation is likely to follow their predecessors' path, unable to have higher education and with poor nutrition at a young age, they are likely to fall into low-paid jobs. While the real situation may not be that simple, and there is no guarantee that the assistance will free them from poverty, at least such assistance can give them the possibility of improving their lives.

6.3. Conclusion

This chapter provides an insight into how the government classifies prosperous families and how poverty alleviation programs are implemented at the grassroots level. I have indicated the problems with the indicators of prosperity that are used in Cicadas and the weaknesses in the technical aspects of how the surveys are conducted. Both problems contribute to the fact that the classification does not reflect the real situation. As a result, poverty alleviation programs do not always reach the targeted subjects. For example, the RASKIN program has to be

²¹ *Ketupat* is 'rice-cake snack cooked in a small container of woven young coconut leaves' (Stevens and Schmidgall-Tellings, 2004:497). It is a customary tradition that Indonesian people eat *ketupat* on Lebaran day.

modified in order to meet community pressure. People who are not eligible to receive the rice are in fact receiving it, which leads to the poor receiving less rice than they are supposed to. The TAKESRA and KUKESRA programs which assist the poorest to access financial assistance are also unable to free them from their chronic poverty.

On the other hand, the warung in Cicadas, though not established to help the poor, have in one way and another assisted them to survive by providing affordable services. Moreover, warung allow the poor to access goods which are available in an industrialised economy. The cases of the Thamrin family, Ibu Eti, and Ibu Reno, who represent the poorest of Cicadas, shows how they rely on warung to fulfil their daily needs. They benefit from the existence of warung in their neighbourhood which provide services which match their specific circumstances, such as providing small quantities of goods which are in accordance with their purchasing power, and allowing things to be bought on credit.