

Women's Worlds 2005

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Panel on “ Young Forum: The Rise of ”Young” Feminist’s Power in Asia
Women, beyond ‘Family line’, toward Feminist’s line”

The PKK and "Housewife Volunteers" in Indonesia:
"Women's Role" in Development Policy and Daily Practices

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In this presentation, I will examine how, through the family welfare movement called *Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga (PKK)* in Indonesian, the imaginations of nationalism of Indonesian housewives were incorporated to construct “national femininity.” The positioning of “housewives” in the state development policy is always contradictory. They are gendered and domesticized, at the same time, demanded to take an active role.

I focus on the *Kader*, the women volunteers to clear the process of the making of Indonesian housewives as agents in the state’s development policy. They are predominantly housewives, working at the community level in the PKK organization structure. According to my fieldwork in Jakarta, most of the *Kader* mentioned their involvement in the PKK as social activities (*Kerja Sosial*), which means that they get knowledge (*ilmu*), experience (*pengalaman*), and friends (*teman*).

It is clear that through the PKK activities the role of housewives was reinforced. Consequently, it is better to avoid overestimating that the *Kader* can get new social capitals from the PKK. However, at least, they are able to extend their roles as housewives to negotiate within their families or communities. From the perspective of agency, I argue that they subvert the role of housewives through their daily practices.