



Whoever thinks of Indonesia often thinks Bali but behind every bright side always hides a dark side.

In Indonesia, this dark spot takes the form of sex trafficking of underage girls, juvenile prostitution!

In 2017, I made my first photo documentary on this subject where I discovered a world where despair reigns supreme, unscrupulous people, pimps, traffickers of human beings, clients-abusers and even parents, profit from the lack of choice in which extreme poverty plunges the women and girls of Indonesia.

In this series of 4 interviews carried out on the island of Java, in the district of Indramayu, you will be able to see that on paper, Indonesia is adorned with virtues but that these are quickly drowned in the lack of means allocated to fight against this scourge as well as in a sea of generalized corruption, and this, although the country ranks 89th among the most corrupt countries.

For example, for 3 of the 4 people interviewed, it was necessary to pay them each \$40 CAD, approximately 500,000 Indonesian rupees. You will find out why, by reading the series of articles, one of the 4 people refused to be paid.

Each of the interviews consisted of a series of questions/answers which you can read and form your own idea of the situation.

Good reading !



Interview no. 1: M. Suliman, pimp and trafficker

Q1. Before becoming a pimp and trafficker, what was your job?

I was a truck driver.

Q2. For how long have you been a trafficker and a pimp ?

Six or seven years.

Q3. Are you married ? Do you have children?

I am married and have a daughter and a son. They are married. My family lives in Jakarta.

Q4. What's your level of education ?

I completed my high school.

Q5. What did you do after you finished your studies?

I was selling vegetables in Bekasi, a suburb of Jakarta. I then drove trucks and now I am a trafficker and pimp.

Q6. Why did you become a trafficker and pimp? Still, it's an unusual "job."

I worked in Bekasi and the company I worked for, PKB, sent me here (understand the brothels where the interview took place).

PKB is an organization whose goal is to provide access to school for poor families and to provide information for the prevention of AIDS.

Q7. And is that what led you to become a trafficker and pimp? Can you elaborate?

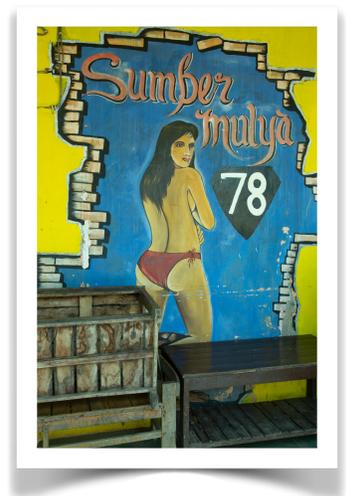
By living close to brothels, the owners began to trust me for their management. Since then, I have worked for this man.

Q8. Do you personally recruit girls?

No, prostitutes come here of their own free will. Usually, it is their boyfriends who bring them to brothels.

Q9. Are there underage girls <working> in these brothels?

No, the girls working here are between 25 and 30 years old, more or less.





A prostitute in a brothel

Q10. Why this particular age group?

Because at this age, girls are still <fresh> and <productive>. Girls over 30 are no longer attractive.



Q1 1. In light of your answers, am I to understand that you define yourself more as a brothel manager and a pimp than a trafficker?

I see myself as a supervisor in charge of welcoming women and men coming to the brothel. When a man <orders> a woman, I prepare the room.

Q1 2. So you don't have prostitutes working specifically for you?

I have girls working for me, I get 50,000 rupees (IDR) per room and 3000 IDR per bottle of alcohol.

Q1 3. How much does it cost for full sex? How much does the wife receive?

It costs IDR 300,000 (rupees) for full sex. The woman gets IDR 250,000 (about CAD \$20) and I get IDR 50,000.

Q1 4. What about the police? Are they coming here? Do they know what you are doing here?

The police know that I am a pimp and the supervisor of this brothel. They know what's going on there and the last time the police came here was to check on the sale of alcohol. They do nothing about prostitution.

Q15. Did you pay the police to turn a blind eye?

No, but I have to supply them with cigarettes.

Q16. If a girl wants to leave and stop working as a prostitute, is she free to leave?

The girls are free to leave provided they are no longer in debt to me or the brothel. They must have completely repaid their debts in order to leave.

Q17. Does it happen regularly that customers are violent with women and that you have to intervene?

It happens that some customers who are dissatisfied and under the influence of alcohol are violent. We must then intervene to protect the girls.

For example, it happened that a dissatisfied client was violent during the relationship and the girl then left the room to ask us for help.

Q18. Prostitution, human trafficking and pimping are illegal in Indonesia. Aren't you afraid of being arrested and put in jail?

Yes, I'm afraid of that because I know this business is illegal. For this reason, I do not plan to do this work for a long time.

Q19. Considering that your activities constitute a crime, does that make you a criminal?

No, because I do not harm anyone because I only violate certain regulations. All I do is provide the rooms and the alcohol. So I don't see myself as a criminal.

Q20. Yet you said you have girls working for you. Doesn't that make you a pimp?

Yes but that's what it is but I don't bind girls with binding rules. It is the girls who decide how much income they want to earn from their activity. I mainly take care of providing the rooms and the alcohol.

Q21. Finally, if pimping, running a brothel and trafficking are crimes in Indonesia, and you have admitted to being a pimp a few times, how can you claim not to be a criminal?

This question is not intended to judge you but to understand your way of thinking.

For me, a criminal is someone who causes loss, harm to another person. All I do is greet the girls, provide the alcohol and the rooms.

Q22. So you are not a trafficker but girls work for you, right?

Yes, the girls pay me and I have to send some of the money to the brothel owner. I also make sure that the girls are adults, otherwise there is a crime committed. It is against the law.

Q23. Where does your boss live?

Far from here, he is not involved in business management. He only receives the money generated by the brothel. The owner does not want to know what happens, all he wants is to receive the money.

Q24. Do you think it is proper for a woman to prostitute herself? Explain.

Personally, I do not believe that it is a good thing for a woman to prostitute herself because it is against religion and the law. This contributes to the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. But I can't tell women what to do because I have no other options for them.

Q25. Does your daughter know how to bring you money home? How does she feel about that?

Yes, she knows, but she doesn't want to talk about it.

Q26. Do you believe that customers should be punished by law when they buy the sexual services of a prostitute?

I believe it concerns the authorities but if the customers are penalized, how will we be able to support ourselves?