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Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative

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Endah, Indonesia

Multidimensional Poverty Index Profile



Fifty-five year old Endah lives with her ninety-year-old mother and her two sons outside the city of Sragen in Indonesia. Abandoned by her husband, Endah collects dry grass to trade as animal food in return for money and rice. She earns about Rp 50,000 (USD 21) and 6kgs of rice per week in this way.

Every day, Endah wakes at 4am in order to visit the mosque, cook, wash clothes, and clean up cow dung left by her neighbours' cows before six. She must then shower and feed her nine-year-old

son, Dimas, who is severely disabled, before going to work. While Endah is collecting grass, Dimas is cared for by his grandmother as he is unable to move on his own and needs constant supervision. When Dimas was a baby, Endah would tie him on her back and make an exhausting 8km ride twice a week by bicycle to see a doctor. Though she still prays for his recovery, they stopped going to the doctor a long time ago.

Endah's seventeen-year-old son Agus, who loves to joke around with his mother, also collects dry grass with her. Agus left school in second grade, even though his teacher tried to persuade him to stay in school by regularly bringing him eggs. He says he does not want to go back to school because he was mocked by other students. He does not know what he wants to be when he is older or what his hopes and dreams are. Endah seems to have little hope for his future since he lacks an education.



At lunchtime, Agus and his mother usually return home to eat the food prepared that morning. Their diet consists of rice, vegetables, eggs, soybean cakes, and tofu. Kunthi has remained at home to look after Dimas, only leaving the house to visit the well, which is shared with three other families. Kunthi says she would like to change her life and wishes for a better house. After working for a total of nine to ten hours, Endah goes home, where she will be greeted by a smiling and laughing Dimas. Endah bathes Dimas, feeds him, and

then prays twice before going to bed.

Although Endah holds a poor family card making her eligible for some rice, free health care, and free education (up to 9 years), the government does not provide any extra help or money for disabled children. The family has only received a small amount beyond her entitlement from the government to buy milk for Dimas. Even this, however, was not a permanent program but a charitable contribution. She is eager for any help from the government or any other non-governmental body, saying that "it can help Dimas to buy milk and medication...I am hopeful only to God to grant this."



Endah is unstinting in her parental care and her spiritual obligations, insisting that "family relationship is very important and praying has the highest priority." She also reports that she is happy with her community because she feels everyone helps each other and that she is never neglected by her neighbours. She told her interviewers that she wants others to know that giving help and attention to others is important.

Endah's household is poor according to the MPI and according to the local measure, Jamkesmas. The shaded boxes of the figure below show the deprivations that her household faces.

