

Dear Friends,

I have just returned to Indonesia from a trip to the United States. It was so clear to me on this trip how interconnected the whole world is. Stores in the US are stocked with goods made all over the developing world. The wealth of the first world is so intertwined with the poverty of the third world. I was also amazed on this trip by how many trees there are in America and how much protected land. I couldn't help being aware though that those trees stand only because wood can be cheaply imported from places like Indonesia. When your goods come from so far away it is easier to turn a blind eye to the conditions of the workers or the ecological destruction that occurred to produce the things we enjoy in the first world.

I was also struck by how sad and disillusioned most of my friends seemed. This is understandable as most American's (and most of the world) are very upset about the actions of the current government. However, I think people in the US forget just how powerful they are. For better or worse, the US really does have the most power in the world and we have a huge impact on what the rest of the world does. If America values fairness, peace, justice, and preserving our environment, this guides the rest of the world in that direction. I really think American's do not realize how much influence they have. For example, all the way on the other side of the world we hear about protests in the US.

Thus I want to encourage all my friends in America that the work you do at the "center" really helps us at the "periphery". The projects you support, the things you buy, the things you do, the way you think, and the way you vote really do have worldwide implications. Do not fool yourselves that you do not have an impact. The US consumes more than 30% of the world's resources so even small changes can have a huge impact (the US, Japan and Europe together consume 86% of the worlds resources although they are only 20% of the world population).

In terms of our work with Health In Harmony, my trip went very well. I was so touched by how many people were interested in and excited about this work. So many people generously gave time, money, medical equipment, eyeglasses and encouragement. I came back into Indonesia with over 240 lbs of medical equipment including dental equipment, surgical instruments, a doppler, lab equipment, oxygen saturation monitor, suture, sterile gloves and much more. I was also given 22 pairs of eyeglasses to give out. I find it so much fun to be able to instantaneously help people who cannot see. One pair has already found a very grateful home with a poor neighborhood friend of mine. She has had trouble seeing for the last 15 years but has never owned a pair of glasses. Thank you to everyone who was so kind and helpful on this last trip.



Right before coming to the US I also made a quick trip to Bali to finalize our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with INI RADEF. INI RADEF (Indonesian international rural agricultural development foundation) is a wonderful local non-profit that has helped develop eco-tourism in Indonesia, does local community development work, and conservation. They have made a new health branch and by partnering with them, I know we will be much more effective in Indonesia. They already have a fully functional (and corruption free!) organization that has been very successful. INI RADEF has wonderfully agreed to do all the accounting, taxes, government reporting and assistance with permits, etc. for a small fee of only 3%. We will also have access to legal services and they are assisting me with a long-term resident visa. We feel so blessed that this excellent relationship has been developed.

Over the next few months I will be working on choosing a location. As I believe has been clear from my previous emails, finding a location has been quite difficult because there is so little lowland forest left to save in Indonesia. It is also amazing how poorly information flows in Indonesia. The only way to find out about a place is to go there. We have still not visited Halmahera and we have a plan to go to Waigeo Island (off the bird's head of West Papua) with the head of the biology department at the Indonesian Institute of the Sciences. I will also be visiting an area in Southern Sumatera where INI RADEF is considering starting a new Elephant Eco-Lodge. I am considering Gunung Palung, as well, which is where I first studied orangutans 13 years ago in West Kalimantan. Back then this was a garden of Eden stretching to the horizon but since then there has been extensive illegal logging and the community of international and Indonesian researchers who had worked there feared all the forest was gone. However, my husband, Cam, was able to visit Gunung Palung a few months ago and was amazed to find that there is still a small area of uncut forest where the previous research site was. This is because of wonderful work by the local forestry department who decided to crack down on the illegal logging largely due to international pressure. I am looking forward to going back there and praising the local officials and discussing possibilities for partnering with them.

Now that we have finalized a relationship with INI RADEF, I will begin to have a small salary. Up until now I have been volunteering my time although it has been wonderful that we have had enough support to be able to pay for all my expenses when evaluating sites. Thank you all for your continued financial support and support in so many other ways. I am very grateful that there have been enough donations that I can now make a small amount of money. Just recently your donations helped pay for overweight to get so much medical equipment and textbooks here. Donations will also pay for equipment and supplies so that we can be better prepared to respond rapidly to disasters (these seem to be shockingly frequent in Indonesia).

As always, please feel free to write or even visit. Thank you all again for your interest, encouragement and support. With work on all sides, I know we can make a big difference in the world.

With best wishes,  
Kinari

The mission of Health in Harmony is to join with rural Indonesian communities in improving the health of people and the natural environment by providing improved access to medical care, sharing empowering knowledge, and advocating for the inherent value of all life.