

5 Email interview with Lucia Donda Hutagalung, Founder & CEO of PT Anugraha Wening Caranadwaya (ANWECA)

JS: Could you please briefly introduce your company – your business, background history, and so forth?

Hutagalung: PT Anugraha Wening Caranadwaya (ANWECA) began in 1992 and started as a simple garment business consisting of basic stitching for such items as linen, pants, suits, and office uniforms. In 1998 we upgraded our capacity and ventured into more functional uniforms, including flame-resistant coveralls, and safety vests and jackets for oil and gas companies. With the help of the Indonesian government, ANWECA was able to be the first company to be appraised and acknowledged as a producer of flame-resistant clothing in Indonesia.

JS: How do you think your company has made a particular contribution to the interests of women, such as by creating job opportunities for them?

Hutagalung: We provide equal opportunities for women to be part of the company. We offer a three-month probationary period for women with limited capabilities by providing training for them to perform the expected tasks. After these three months, the company expects them to be able to do their job without direct supervision. At the end of the probationary period, if the potential employee has proven her capabilities in performing the tasks, then the company would proceed with an offer of a permanent position.

JS: What do you think about the social status of women in Indonesia? Do you think Indonesia has achieved equality between women and men?

Hutagalung: Indonesia still adopts the traditional gender roles where women are expected to take care of the home and do household activities instead of having a regular job. This creates unequal

opportunities for women who actually have the ability to work outside the house.

JS: Do you think your company will be instrumental in raising the social status of Indonesian women?

Hutagalung: I think my company could be one of the companies that encourage women to raise their social status. I really hope that what I have done to reach this point will give confidence to Indonesian women to believe in their capability to work and be appreciated for who they are.

JS: What do you think about the role of women in your country's economy?

Hutagalung: I think women in Indonesia are gradually expanding



Lucia Donda Hutagalung, Founder & CEO of PT Anugraha Wening Caranadwaya (ANWECA) (center) and her daughters



Products of PT Anugraha Wening Cavanadwaya (ANWECA)

their role in getting involved with the economy in the country. Nowadays women are being revealed as the people behind many successful companies. This shows an increase in the credibility of women to manage and to handle the enormous responsibility of balancing their work and family.

JS: In Indonesia, can working women continue their career after having children? In Japan, many women give up working after having children, since our daycare facilities for working women are not well developed.

Hutagalung: It is usual in Indonesia for women to continue working after they have children since working is the only way for most of women, especially single mothers, to fulfill their children's daily needs. It is common to let other members of the family (mother, mother-in-law or sister-in-law) take care of the children while the mothers are working during the day.

JS: Can your company's working mothers continue their career after having a child. If so, how can they continue?

Hutagalung: Yes, it is one of the company's goals in the long term to develop day care. In the meantime, our company provides a comfortable place for the employees' children to play, sleep and eat while they are waiting for their mothers.

JS: What do you think about women's entrepreneurship? In certain areas like the garment industry or service industry, women's creativity seems to be incredibly effective. With their start-up businesses in those sectors, our economy could be revitalized. What do you think about this? Do you

think women are good entrepreneurs not only in those specific sectors but in all sectors?

Hutagalung: Women have to be able to balance their time between work and their main role as mother of their children. Pursuing their passions will give women an advantage in performing their jobs easily while they continue with their main role and observe the development of their kids. It is tough being a woman entrepreneur, and I personally had difficulty in splitting my focus between my children and the company. For me the development and the future of my children are more important than anything in this world. Back in 2006 I decided to pay more attention to my children's activities and as a result of my decision the company's performance declined.

JS: Could you tell us about your company's future strategy?

Hutagalung: One of the company's goals in the long term is to develop a local school for the children of the employees that will be located inside our ground. The purpose of this school is to ensure the children have good education, are safe and get enough nutrition while their mothers are working during the day. The school will provide an education until the children are ready to join the Free Elementary School which is run by the Indonesian government. The company will also provide scholarships for the children to continue their education to university level.

JS: I would like to ask you how you are planning to encourage Indonesian women's social activities or role in the economy.

Hutagalung: I would encourage women to think and act outside the box. This means it is possible for them to be involved in any social activity or in the workforce because women have the capability to perform the same jobs as men. It is important for women to realize that they are as strong and smart as any men who are involved in social activities or the workforce.

JS: Asia is now the locomotive of the global economy, as you know. In particular, Asian women will play an important role in achieving Asian economic prosperity. In this regard, do you think APEC should reinforce its measures to encourage women into the workforce and entrepreneurship?

Hutagalung: I think if APEC could further encourage women into the workforce it will give confidence to women with talent who would like to think and act outside their comfort zone. Such encouragement is important to increase equal opportunities for Asian women in the workforce, since most Asian countries still cling to traditional gender roles which limit the chances for women to have an occupation. **JS**