



# INVISIBLE PEOPLE

POVERTY AND EMPOWERMENT  
IN INDONESIA

presented by PNPM Mandiri —  
Indonesia's National Program for Community Empowerment

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Bengkala, North Bali

## WHERE EVERYONE SPEAKS DEAF TALK

Bengkala is a small village in North Bali. For more than a century, around 2% of the babies here have been born profoundly deaf. In 2008, out of a total population of 2450, there were 46 profoundly deaf people, known in the village as *kolok*. People who can hear are known as *inget*. Almost everyone here, both *kolok* and *inget*, can speak a sign language known as Kata Kolok, or Deaf Talk.

Kata Kolok is a rich and developed language. Like all developed sign languages, it uses visually transmitted sign patterns to convey meaning. These sign patterns usually involve a combination of hand signals; movements of the hands, arms, or body; and facial expressions. Kata Kolok is not dependent on or derived from Balinese, the spoken language of the village, or any other spoken language. It is only slightly influenced by Indonesian Sign Language. It is a distinct, unique language that has a complex grammar of its own.

Kata Kolok is as expressive and complex as spoken Balinese. It can be used to discuss any topic that anyone in the village would discuss, from the simple and concrete to the highly abstract. *Kolok* and *inget* can engage in lucid, lengthy, complicated discussions on subjects such as agricultural production, market transactions, family life, religious ceremonies, and village affairs. In discussions involving mixed groups of *kolok* and *inget*, the deaf are virtually no social or communicational disadvantage. The *kolok* often take the lead in storytelling and joking.

Ketut Kanta is a volunteer schoolteacher in Bengkala and an advocate for the *kolok* community. He compares the way the *kolok* take part in community life here with the situation in nearby villages where indigenous sign languages are less widely used: "In Suwug, a village about twenty kilometers from Bengkala, the general community doesn't sign. There are three or four deaf people there. They are shy and keep to themselves. They don't take part in village affairs."

At the primary school where Ketut Kanta teaches, Kata Kolok is now used as a medium for instruction. Since 1997, the government has classified the school as an "inclusive school," which means that it serves children of differing abilities, including both deaf and hearing children. When the Indonesian education department suggested that the school accept deaf children from the village, Ketut Kanta and Connie de Vos, a Dutch researcher completing her PhD in linguistics at the Max Planck Institute, lobbied for the use of Kata Kolok as a medium of instruction.

Ketut Kanta said, "First, the children of the village are already fluent in Kata Kolok. That makes it a more effective tool for communication. Second, using Kata Kolok at school will help to preserve the language in the village and keep it alive." Elsewhere, Signed Indonesian is used to teach deaf children, and the Directorate General for Special Education has developed a range of teaching materials that use this language. While the Directorate General insisted that deaf children in Bengkala be taught signed Indonesian as well, they were supportive of the idea of using Kata Kolok.

In the Soeharto era, the educational curriculum was decided at the national level. Very little local variation was permitted. Since the implementation of a policy of regional autonomy, individual schools have much greater freedom to establish their own curriculum. As a result, the school was able to use this unique local language in the classroom.

In 1994, the Indonesian Department of Health estimated that there were up to 600,000 children in Indonesia who were either deaf or significantly hearing-impaired. At the time, there was no broadly accepted Indonesian sign language.

**"In a village with a large number of deaf people, the schoolteacher says: 'Kata Kolok is what keeps us together as a single community. In Bengkala, being deaf is not something carried by the *kolok* alone. It's something that belongs to the entire community.'"**

With the high cost and lack of awareness of tools such as hearing aids and cochlear implants, as few as 10% of these children attended school. In 1994, in order to facilitate educational opportunities for these children, the Indonesian Department of Education began to develop a standardized sign language that could be used to express Indonesian.

Unlike Kata Kolok, Indonesian Sign Language, or Sistem Isyarat Bahasa Indonesia (SIBI), is a manually coded language, created to serve as a word-for-word representation of the spoken language. Each sign represents an Indonesian word, with phrases expressed in the same word order as spoken or written Indonesian. It was created from an amalgam of American Sign Language, existing Indonesian sign languages, and newly created signs.

SIBI is used to teach deaf children at Special Schools (Sekolah Luar Biasa), where all students are deaf or significantly hearing-impaired, or Inclusive Schools (Sekolah Inklusi), where most students have unimpaired hearing but there are special facilities for teaching the deaf. The Department of Education has developed a comprehensive Indonesian Sign Language dictionary using the vocabulary of the Indonesian language syllabus for elementary schools.

The Indonesian Movement for Deaf People's Welfare (GERKATIN, Gerakan untuk Kesejahteraan Tunarungu Indonesia), an umbrella organization that claims 1.8 million members throughout the country, has lobbied to achieve a greater awareness and understanding of Signed Indonesian among deaf people, their families, educators, and the general public. They successfully lobbied for the integration of an interpreter to sign the news simultaneously with the news broadcast on TVRI, the national television station. As a result, the general public has become much more aware of the existence of SIBI.



Like other members of the Bengkulu community, most *kolok* earn a living either as day laborers or by tending gardens and raising livestock.

## Kolok Getar

Everyone in Bengkulu speaks Kata Kolok, except for a few newcomers. People who come from outside the village sometimes learn a bit if they deal with the *kolok* a lot, but they don't speak it as well as the people who are born here. Some of the schoolteachers who come from outside the village use it a bit, because they deal with *kolok* children. People who deal with the *kolok* usually pick up some of it. But some of the *inget* use Kata Kolok just as well as the *kolok* themselves, particularly if someone in their immediate family is a *kolok*. There are *kolok* in every single clan in the village, so everyone is related to at least one deaf person.

A *kolok* child could be born in any family, even if both his or her parents are *inget*. A lot of times, a *kolok* man gets married to a *kolok* woman, but not always. There are lots of *kolok* who get married to *inget*, too. If both the parents are deaf, the children are nearly always deaf, too. My wife was *kolok*. We had five children, and they were all deaf. My wife is dead now and so are two of my children. I've still got three children left. They are all grown up and married now, but they still live in Bengkulu.

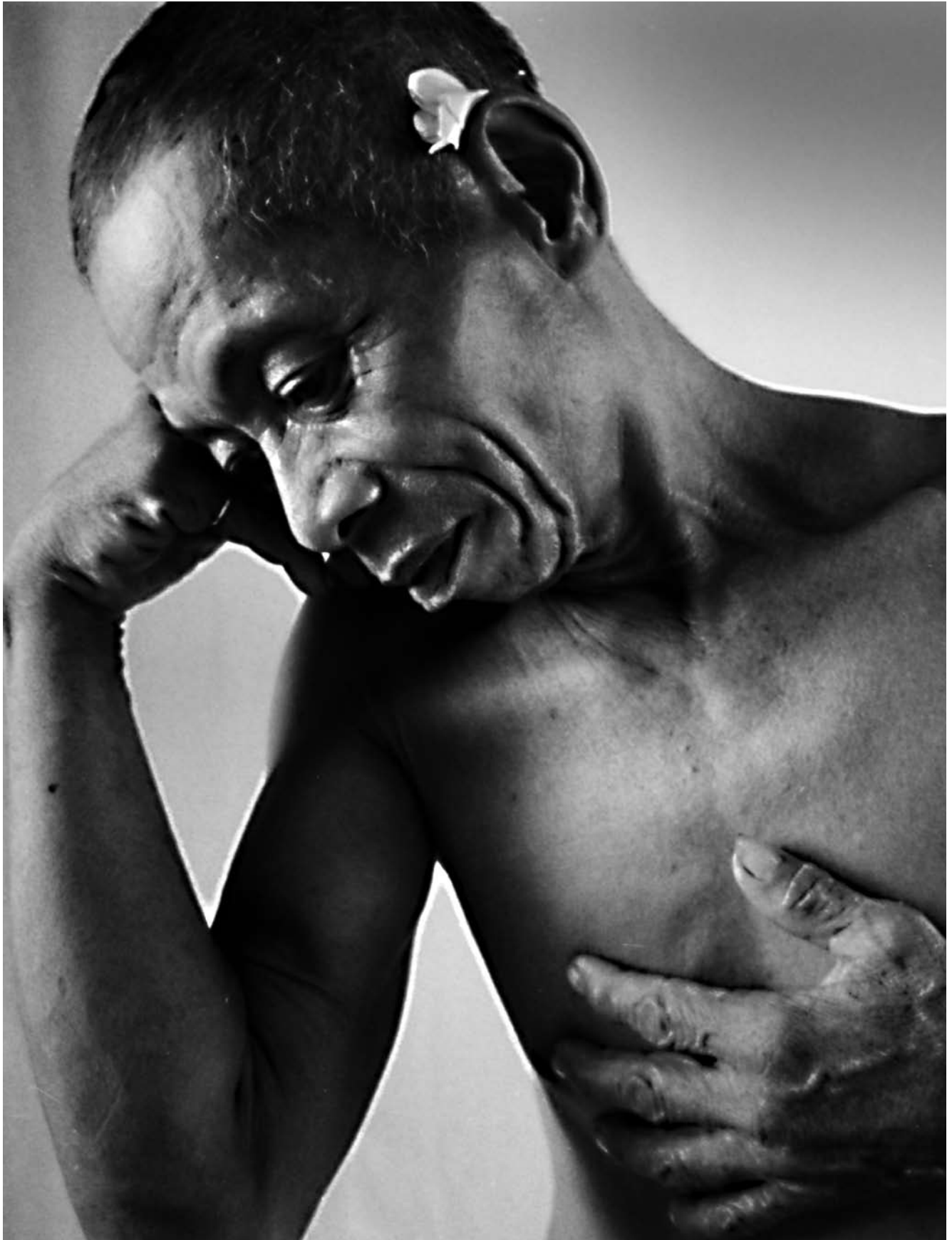
One of my boys died in a motorbike accident. He really wanted a motorbike, so I sold some of the land I inherited from my father. I was the only boy in the family, so I inherited the entire holding. If there's a family with both hearing and deaf boys, though, they both inherit an equal share of the land. There's no legal difference between *kolok* and *inget*.

I didn't really want to sell my land. I told my son, if I sell our land to buy you a bike, what about tomorrow? What is the family going to eat? But my boy thought he'd get a better job if he had a bike. Then he went and got drunk and had a crash and killed himself. I used to own thirty *are* of land. I sold half of it to buy my boy his bike and to fix up our house. Then when my boy killed himself, I had to sell even more land to pay for his cremation and the ceremonies. I've got five *are* left. I grow bananas on it and someone grazes his cow on my land. I feed the cow and look after it for him. When the cow bears calves, we take turns: he keeps the first one, I get the second one.

But I can't survive just by farming my own land. I work as a laborer as well. I do all sorts of work. I get paid exactly the same as an *inget* doing the same kind of work. Everyone around here knows I work hard and I'm reliable. For most jobs, I get paid Rp 25,000 per day. I also look after the village's water system. I get paid a bit more for that, Rp 30,000 per day. It's a very important position: the whole village depends on the piped water. I'm proud of the job I do. The whole village depends on me. The water is piped in from a spring about twelve kilometers away. If the water stops flowing, I track down the problem. It's hard work. The pipes run through all sorts of rough ground. Sometimes they are buried a meter under the sand. Sometimes monkeys break open pipes to get at the water. Sometimes people in neighboring villages do that too. I understand that they need water: I just tell them that if they break the pipe open, they have to seal it up again afterwards. Most of the time they understand. I avoid confrontations. Even if they don't listen, I never hit anyone or go looking for trouble. I try to avoid violence. But people in the area know that you can't mess with a *kolok*.

When I was younger, I was well known as martial artist. Everyone was a bit scared of me. People treated me with respect. At temple festivals and other events, I often served as a *pecalang* [religious security guard]. When the guys get drunk, they can get a bit out of hand. But I always tried to talk to them gently to get them to behave. I didn't usually have to hit anyone. It's not a good thing to hit

**"I think it's much better if deaf children go to school in Bengkulu. The kids still learn Kata Kolok, so they can talk to everyone here."**



people. Still, sometimes you have to be firm. I remember once at a cockfight, the guy who lost was drunk and wouldn't pay up. I had to follow him and pressure him into paying. The guy who had the money coming to him gave me Rp 50,000 to thank me for making the other guy pay up.

When I was much younger, I used to go around Bali performing martial arts in public for money. I could insert long nails right down my nostrils and pull them out again without hurting myself. People in the crowds gave me money. They didn't give much, just loose change, but I went all over the island. Sometimes I met other deaf people in other places around Bali. I can't communicate very well with them: they don't use Kata Kolok, they use some other type of sign language. Usually, no one else can use it except them and their families, so they can't talk to anyone else. It's different from Bengkala.

In Bengkala, *kolok* are just the same as *inget*. Well, there are a few differences. It's part of the village law that the deaf don't have to pay contributions for festivals and temple ceremonies. It's always been like that. Some of the *inget* are no better off than the *kolok*, but it's part of the village tradition that we don't pay contributions. We still take part in all the religious ceremonies. We have the same rights as the *inget*. When the offerings are divided up, each head of a household gets a share: it's the same whether he's *kolok* or *inget*. The *kolok* often help clean up or with preparing the food and everything else. We contribute that way.

I don't usually go to village meetings unless they have something to do with the water system. But when I do go, no one translates what's being said into Kata Kolok, unless somebody wants to tell me something or ask about the pipes. Usually, after the meeting is over, I ask someone what it was all about, and they tell me. I can't really participate myself. But I think everyone at the meeting is fair, so I don't mind. I think the village authorities look after the *kolok*. If we ask, they always tell us afterwards what decisions were made at the meetings.

*Kolok* can go to the village school now. When I was young, there was no way a *kolok* could have gone to school! I never even thought about it. No one did back



Kolok Getar and his brother-in-law.





**Kolok Getar describing the death of his son and the loss of his land using Kata Kolok, the regional sign language. In this image, he is making the sign for "dead."**

then. I taught myself how to write my name, but I never went to school. One or two people from the village went to the school for deaf people in Singaraja, but they don't use Kata Kolok there, they use some other system. You can't talk to anyone in the village with that system. I think it's much better if deaf children go to school in Bengkulu. Here, the kids still learn Kata Kolok, so they can talk to everyone here. Most families can't afford to send a kid to Singaraja. Even if the government pays for them, it means they can't work in the fields after school. And when they come back, they use a different sign system. No one in the village is going to bother learning a different sign system. Everyone here speaks Kata Kolok, not that system they teach in the schools in Singaraja.



## Kolok Subentar

I have a sign-language name, a Kata Kolok name. I've spoken Kata Kolok since I was a child. I just started learning Indonesian Sign Language at primary school.

I'm sixteen years old. I'm in the third grade in primary school. I'm quite old to still be in primary school. When I was younger, the local primary school wasn't an Inclusive School. It only became an Inclusive School in 2007. That means that the deaf children in Bengkulu can study there now. Before that, if *kolok* children wanted to go to school, they had to go to Singaraja, to the Special School for the Deaf. I always wanted to go to school, but I couldn't afford to go. My parents don't have any money.

It's a long way to Singaraja. It takes more than an hour by public transport. It costs Rp 18,000 to get there and back. It's very expensive to live there, too. A boarding house in Singaraja costs at least Rp 100,000 a month. When I was younger, you still had to pay school fees for primary school and junior secondary schools. You don't have to pay fees now. The regional government provides the books you need free of charge, too. You have to pay for your own uniform.

Before I went to school, I learned how to read and write with Pak Ketut Kanta. He used to invite *kolok* children to his house for reading classes twice or three times a week. My house is quite far from his house. He often used to come and pick me up on his motorbike.

I leave for school at six in the morning. I study until one in the afternoon. After that, I often work cutting timber. The timber is used to make door frames and window frames for buildings. When I don't go to school, I often work the whole day. If I work a whole day, I get paid Rp 25,000, and I get a plate of rice and tea. I give the money to my mother. She's *kolok*, too. I speak in Kata Kolok with her. She can't spell her name in Indonesian. She never went to school. Her first husband was a hearing person. He died when he fell out of a coconut tree. My older brother can hear. My father was my mother's second husband. He was *kolok*, too.

At school, *kolok* and *inget* children are in the same classes. At first, we had separate classes, but *kolok* and *inget* children wanted to have classes together. *Inget* children like learning Kata Kolok. They think it's good fun. Not all the teachers speak Kata Kolok well. Only Pak Ketut Kanta speaks it really well. The math teacher isn't bad at it. He knows enough to be able to show us how to do sums in Kata Kolok. The history teacher is hopeless. I just sit there and wait for her to write on the whiteboard.

After I graduate from primary school, I want to go to junior high school. If I can, I want to go to senior high school. I'll have to go to Singaraja for that. I don't want to live in Singaraja. If I lived in Singaraja, I wouldn't be able to work after school. I want a motorbike so I can go to school and come home each day. If I graduate from high school, I want to get a job as a driver. I want to drive tourists around the island. They can just write down where they want to go on a piece of paper and I'll take them there. The only problem is that I can't speak English. But I could learn. I'd soon pick it up if I was working with foreigners all the time.

**"I'm quite old to still be in primary school. When I was younger, the primary school wasn't an Inclusive School. I always wanted to go to school, but I couldn't afford to go."**





## Sukrada

**“Only the *kolok* are brave enough to go to the cemetery. The *inget* are scared of ghosts and evil spirits. I’m not scared of dead bodies.”**

All the gravediggers in Bengkala are *kolok*. In Bengkala, when someone dies they are buried in a temporary grave near the Pura Dalem temple on the edge of the village. When the family has enough money, they dig the body up and hold a cremation ceremony. It usually takes at least four years after the person has died before the family holds the cremation.

Only the *kolok* are brave enough to go to the cemetery. The *inget* are scared of ghosts and evil spirits. I’m not scared of evil spirits. When you dig the graves, you often come across skull and bones. Sometimes they still have rotting flesh on them. I’m not scared of dead bodies. If I killed someone, I’d be scared of the cemetery, because the ghost would want to take revenge. But I’ve never killed anyone, so I’m not scared. It’s always been the *kolok* who are the gravediggers here. My grandfather said that when he was young, he used to dig the graves for the villagers too. It’s always been that way.

We have our own club or organization. For digging a grave, we get paid Rp 75,000. We don’t divide the money up immediately. We put it all into the club kitty. We save it all year long. Then, at the Galungan ceremony, we use it to buy a big, fat pig. We kill the pig and divide it up among the families of the gravediggers. Everyone gets an equal share. We weigh the pig carefully and make sure everyone gets an equal share of the good bits, the intestines, the skin, the liver, and other offal. Each man takes home four or five kilos of meat. The family eats most of it at the celebrations. They dry some of it to eat later.

If members of the club are sick or if they have some real emergency, they can borrow money from the kitty. But they must pay it back before Galungan. People don’t like borrowing money from the club. It’s not really meant for that. Even if someone is sick, they try to find the money from other sources first. They fear they won’t be able to pay it back. The club is really just to make sure that we can celebrate the holiday. Even though most *kolok* don’t have much money, we can eat pork and enjoy the celebrations like everyone else.

## Ketut Kanta

I was born in Bengkulu. I'm *inget*. That means I can hear. When I was young, no one in my immediate family was *kolok*. Even so, I grew up speaking Kata Kolok. Practically everyone in Bengkulu speaks at least some Kata Kolok. Of course, the *kolok* themselves speak it better than anyone. Their immediate family, their parents and brothers and sisters usually speak it very well too. But everyone can speak it at least a little bit.

My first close contact with the *kolok* community in the village was through Kolok Getar's father. Back then, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, there were no wells and no water pipe systems. Kolok Getar's father went around the village carrying barrels of water on his back, selling a whole barrel for a few old Chinese coins. I was always amazed at how strong he was, how he never seemed tired or unhappy. I always used to sit down and talk with him when he delivered water. Of course, we spoke in Kata Kolok. Through my chats with the water-seller, I came to know his son, Kolok Getar. I admired him, too, for his prowess in martial arts. In the end, I came to be quite good friends with their extended families, most of whom were *kolok*.

I remember when my father was rebuilding the family house, all the *kolok* men came and helped do the work. They did it to help, without being paid: my father just gave them rice and coffee. The *kolok* are like that: if they like you and trust you, they will help you and be loyal.

When I grew older, I moved away from the village for many years. After graduating from college, I worked as a building contractor and then in the tourist industry in the south of Bali. I learned to speak Italian and English quite well.

In 1992, when I was in my forties, my health started declining. I decided to come back to Bengkulu to raise chickens. I renewed my friendships with the members of the *kolok* community. I often used to employ them in my poultry business. For a while, my business prospered. Then a disease wiped out my entire flock. At about that time, in 1994, I was appointed as the *kepala dusun*, the position below the village head in the administration. Because I was friends with so many of the *kolok* community, they often came to me with questions related to bureaucratic procedure. I became something of an advocate for them in the village administration.

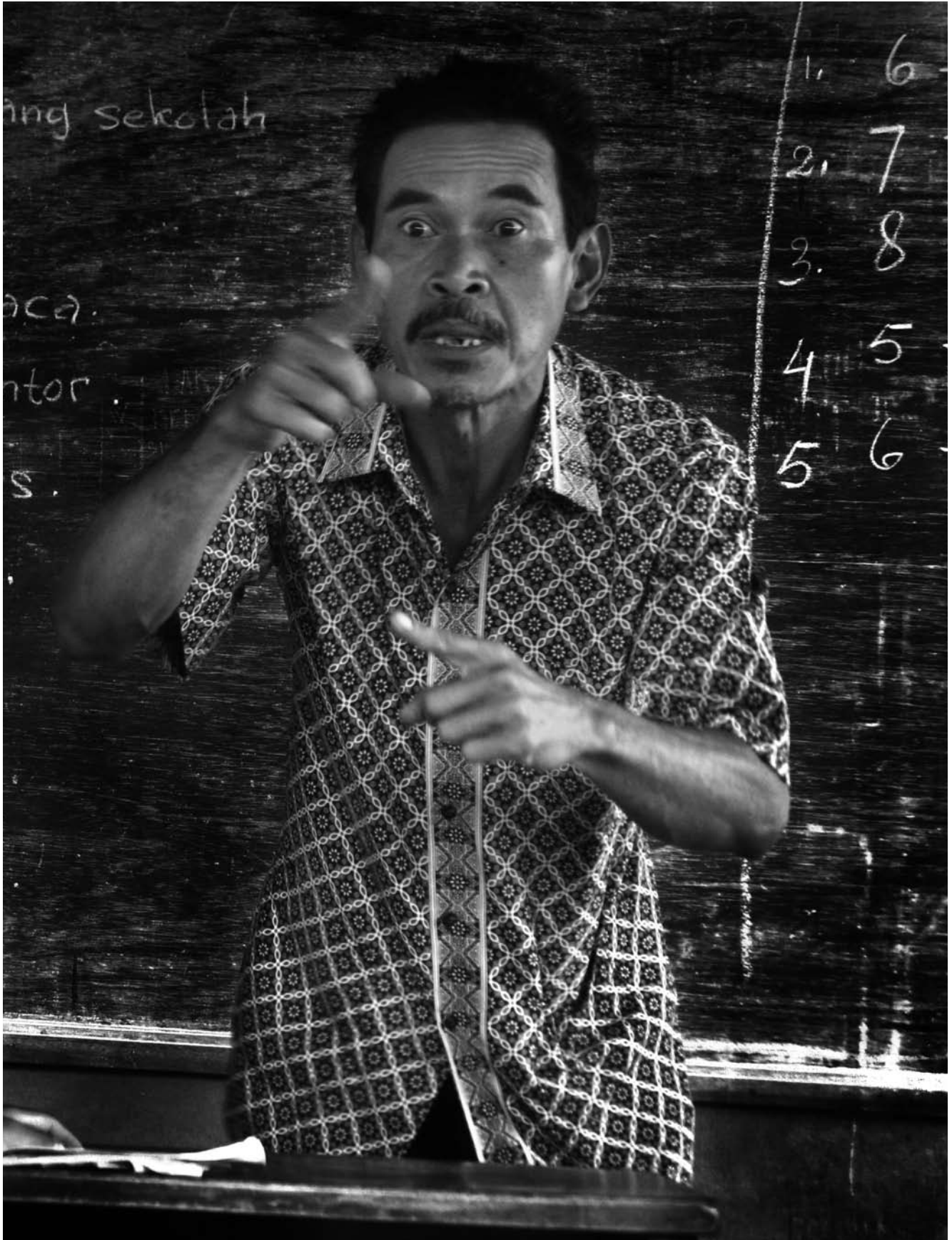
There has always been some interest in the *kolok* community by researchers from across Indonesia and even from overseas. Because I could speak a bit of English and because I was involved with the *kolok* community and could speak Kata Kolok, I was often asked to help foreign researchers. In 1993, James Eiser, a geneticist, came to conduct research to establish the genetic basis for the deafness in the community. In the same year, John Hinnant, an anthropologist and linguist, came on several occasions.

Later, in 2003, an Indonesian researcher, Gedé Marsaja, suggested that I might like to go to Holland to work with the Max Planck Institute as an informant for research into Kata Kolok. Four months before I went, I was provided with a video camera to record the *kolok* while they spoke with each other and while they interacted with the *inget* in the village.

I was in Holland at Max Planck from November 2004 until March 2006. For much of that time, I went through the recordings that I'd made to make a lexicon of the sign codes of Kata Kolok. I worked with members of the Sign Language Group at the Institute. The group included informants from Turkey, Japan, China, India, Korea, Germany, and Holland. Almost all of the informants were deaf: I was one of a handful who wasn't. Twice a week, I took part in International Sign Language classes, so that I could communicate with other members of the group.

In Holland, I met Connie de Vos, who was a research assistant to a professor at the institute named Ulrike Zezhan. Connie was interested in doing research into the *kolok* community for her PhD. She was planning to come to Bengkulu for intensive field visits beginning in 2006, after I returned to Bengkulu. I agreed

**"I taught the *kolok* the alphabet in International Sign Language so that they could learn how to read and write. I taught them the correspondence between the sign alphabet and the arithmetic symbols for addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication."**



to act as her assistant and facilitator with the *kolok* community. She came and stayed at my family's house for long periods over the next few years. It's funny: her Indonesian is only passable, but she speaks very good Kata Kolok now.

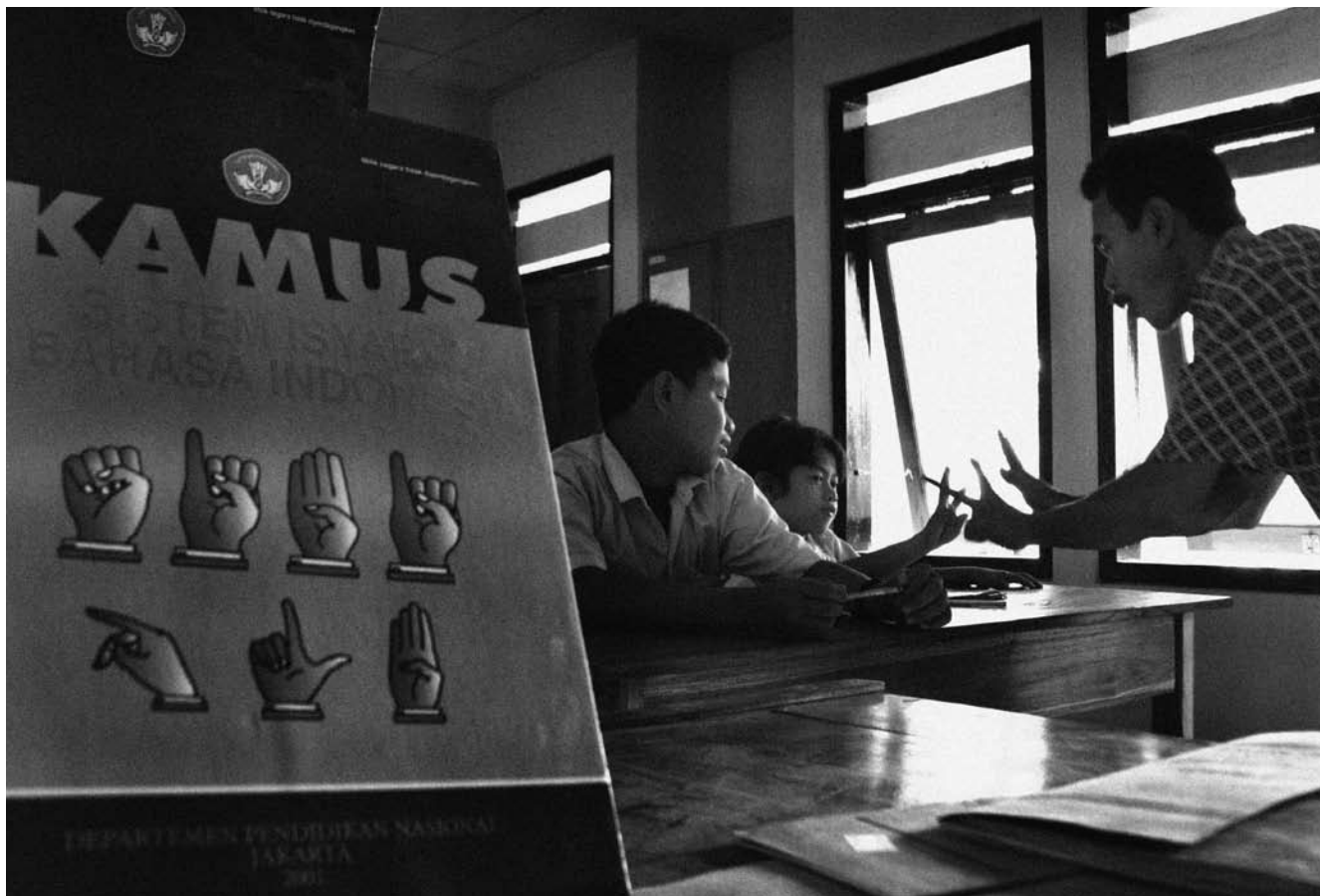
In 2006, with Connie's encouragement, I set up an informal class at my house for the younger *kolok* in the village. I wanted at least to teach them to read and write, as well as arithmetic. Connie provided some funds to buy whiteboards, pens, paper, and a few books.

I taught the *kolok* the alphabet in International Sign Language so that I could teach them to read and write. I taught them the correspondence between the sign alphabet and the written alphabet and the arithmetic symbols for addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication. To teach them to read, I made a sign code in Kata Kolok, then got them to spell it out using Sign.

I never had any contact with the local school, but in 2007 the headmaster of the local primary school did some training on disability issues and inclusive schools. He wanted to write a proposal to have the school classified as an Inclusive School, offering classes to the *kolok*. His idea was to bring in a teacher from the Special School in Bengkulu a few times a week to teach the children Indonesian Sign Language. He held a town hall meeting with members of the *kolok* community. He can't speak Kata Kolok himself. He's not from here. He explained his ideas through the current *kepala dusun*, who is a local and who can speak Kata Kolok.

The *kolok* told the headmaster that I was already teaching the deaf children how to read and write. That was the first he'd heard of it. The *kolok* suggested that Connie and I be invited to attend the meeting. We tried to explain the difference between Kata Kolok and Indonesian Sign Language. The *kolok* said

**Ketut Kanta teaching deaf children arithmetic using Signed Indonesia, a sign language developed to assist the teaching of deaf children across Indonesia.**





they wanted to go on using Kata Kolok, so that the young people would speak the same language as their parents. I volunteered to go on teaching the *kolok* at the school instead of in my house. I was receiving a small stipend from Connie for acting as her assistant, so I said I'd be prepared to do it as a volunteer. The headmaster agreed, although he also wanted to bring in a qualified teacher from the Special School in Singaraja. In the end that never happened: there were no funds to pay the transportation costs for a teacher to come to the village. It costs Rp 18,000 per day to travel back and forth from Singaraja.

There are five *kolok* students in the school now. They are doing quite well. Usually, *kolok* children attend special classes that I teach to prepare them for their studies. Like before, I teach them how to read and write, using the Sign alphabet, then they attend the general classes. Some of the teachers are better than others when it comes to paying special attention to the *kolok* students. It's easier for the *kolok* to learn arithmetic than other subjects, because the number of symbols in arithmetic are quite limited. One of the *kolok* students, Subentar, is in the top rank in arithmetic.

It's harder with a subject like history. It's hard, but it's not impossible. For example, I tried to explain to them about Diponegoro and the Java Wars. They know the Kata Kolok sign for "boss," so I explain that Diponegoro was a big boss from Java. I compare Diponegoro to the village head: I say the village head is a little boss and Diponegoro was the big boss. They know the Kata Kolok sign for "tourist," so I explain that the big boss in Java had a fight with the tourists from Holland who made everyone work in the fields without getting paid a long time ago. They get the basic idea. Still, arithmetic is easier.

I do special classes for the *kolok* students on Saturdays, as part of an extracurricular program at school. That's when I concentrate on teaching them how to spell Kata Kolok words in Indonesian. Originally these classes were just for the *kolok* students, but now almost all the students and teachers at the school come too. The *kolok* students use them to improve their Indonesian. The *inget* students think it's fun, but the teachers from outside use the sessions to improve their ability to communicate with the *kolok* students through Sign and Kata Kolok.

I'm glad the other teachers are interested. Perhaps it's because they are dedicated teachers. It's also because they see that foreigners and researchers are interested in the *kolok* community. The *kolok* are what make Bengkala special: no one in the outside world would be interested in this village if it wasn't for the *kolok*. The teachers know that, so they are motivated to learn how to communicate with the *kolok* too.

I'm 52 years old. There's no way that I'll be appointed as a civil servant at this age. I don't receive a salary as a research assistant anymore, but I want to go on teaching at the school even though I don't get paid for it. I'm supposed to get an allowance of Rp 50,000 per month, but it often doesn't come through.

I'm training one of the young teachers at the school, Putu Ratniarsih, to take over from me when I can't go on. She's only 24 and comes from Bengkala herself, so her Kata Kolok is quite good. She has already been appointed as an official teacher, so she'll get a real salary. I hope she keeps up the program for the *kolok* children.

If deaf children go to primary school in Singaraja and study Signed Indonesian, they'll lose their knowledge of Kata Kolok. The *inget* won't learn Signed Indonesian. Kata Kolok is what keeps the *inget* and the *kolok* together as a single community. Everyone in Bengkala carries the gene for deafness. Our own children could be born deaf. In Bengkala, being deaf is not something that is carried by the *kolok* alone. It's something that belongs to the entire community.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND CREDITS

This book was sponsored by the PNPM Mandiri program. The goal of PNPM Mandiri, Indonesia's National Program for Community Empowerment, is to reduce poverty. PNPM Mandiri was established by the Indonesian government in 2007 to act as an umbrella for a number of pre-existing community-driven development programs, including the Urban Poverty Program and the Kecamatan Development Program, as well as a number of other community-based programs that were managed by nineteen technical ministries. By 2009, PNPM Mandiri was operating in every subdistrict in Indonesia.

PNPM Mandiri is committed to increasing the participation of all community members in the development process, including the poor, women's groups, indigenous communities, and other groups that have not been fully involved in the development process. *Invisible People* is one way that PNPM Mandiri can reflect on ways to better include marginalized and excluded groups in development.

Bilateral and multilateral assistance for the PNPM Mandiri program has been forthcoming from a number of donor agencies. The PNPM Support Facility (PSF) was established by the Indonesian government as a means of facilitating the contributions of international donors that support PNPM Mandiri. Contributors to the PSF currently include Australia, Denmark, the European Community, Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. PSF provided financial and other support for the publication of *Invisible People*, in order to raise awareness of the special needs and aspirations of marginalized and excluded groups.

We would like to thank the people who sat down to tell their stories and put their lives on public display for the publication of this book. Across the country, the people who were approached were amazingly open about the most personal details of their lives, their problems, their hopes, and their aspirations.

When they collected these stories, Irfan Kortschak and Poriaman Sitanggang explained the purpose of the project and sought the consent of all subjects. The subjects told their stories, often over several days and during several meetings, after which Irfan attempted to recreate their words in a first-person account that conveyed the individual's ideas, feelings, and voice. In a few cases, subjects wrote their own stories in their own words, which were then edited with the subject and translated. When possible, Irfan provided a written account to the subject so that he or she could check and reconfirm that the account was an accurate representation. Otherwise, he discussed it with them. Subjects were reminded that their accounts would be published and asked to be certain that they had no objection to this. Irfan apologizes if despite this process, inaccuracies or misrepresentations have slipped into the text.

A vast array of people helped facilitate interviews and

meetings and provided all sorts of other assistance. A partial list of these people includes Marjorie, Mateo, Marwan and all the staff of Handicap International in Banda Aceh and Takengon; Ricco Sinaga from the Puskesmas (Community Health Center) in Cikini, Jakarta; Imam B. Prasadjo and the staff of Yayasan Nurani Dunia; the members of the band Cisleng and the young guys and women who hang out in Proklamasi; Kamala Chandrakirana, sociologist, author and former Chairwoman of Komnas Perempuan (the National Commission on Violence against Women); Kodar Wusana and Nani Zulminarni of PEKKA (the Women Headed Household Empowerment Program) in Jakarta and the PEKKA field facilitator in Lingsar, West Lombok, Sitti Zamraini Alauthi; Fenny Purnawan, writer, editor and mother of Gana, Smita, Anggita and Oorvi. Agas Bene of the Dinas Kesehatan (Health Agency) in Belu, West Timor; Maria K'lau, an outstandingly dedicated midwife in Belu; Antonia Godelpia Lau, the manager of the Panti Rawat Gizi and all the doctors, midwives, staff and workers at the Puskesmas in Belu; Anne Vincent, Fajar, and Anton Susanto of UNICEF in Jakarta; Nelden Djakababa and Vitria Lazzarini, psychologists from Yayasan Pulih; Piet Pattiwaelapia of the Maluku Refugees' Coalition (Koalisi Pengungsi Maluku); Nelke Huliselan, a community worker in Ambon; Enrina Diah, a plastic surgeon; Julia Suryakusuma; Richard Oh, novelist and crewcut; Rebekka Harsono, an activist from LADI (the Indonesian Anti-Discrimination League); Pephy Nengsi Golo Yosep and Adi Yosep, activists for the rights of people affected by leprosy in Jongaya, Makassar; Kerstin Beise of Netherlands Leprosy Relief (NLR); Dede Oetomo and friends from GAYa Nusantara (a gay and transgendered rights organization in Surabaya); Irma Soebechi and friends from Perwakos (transgendered rights organization); Nig and friends from US Community (a gay and lesbian rights organization in Surabaya); Ayi Na, previously at UNICEF in Mangkowari, Papua; the indefatigable Sister Zita Kuswati at Yayasan Saint Augustina in Sorong, Papua; Connie de Vos, a linguist and specialist in sign languages; Thomas J. Conners, a linguist at Max-Planck-Gesellschaft; Josh Estey, photographer and crewcut; Dian Estey, journalist; Maya Satrini, community worker and friend of the sex workers in Singkawang; Rina, Dewi, Adhe and Yuyun and other sex workers in Jakarta; psychologist Jeanette Murad of the University of Indonesia; Alexander Sriwijono, consultant; Mustamin, of the Bajau community in Mola Selatan, Wakatobi; the Forkani environmental protection group on Palau Dupa; Veda and Rili Djohani of The Nature Conservancy; Ani Himawati in Jogja; Ayu Sastrosusilo; all of the people from Humana, an organization advocating for the rights of street children in Jogja; Muhammad Zamzam Fauzanafi, visual anthropologist; Mbak Diah, an activist filmmaker, and all the other people at Kampung Halaman in Jogja.

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and *Picturing Indonesia, Village Views of Development* (2005).

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Poriaman Sitanggang has worked as a freelance photographer since 1985. He has held a number of photo exhibits, including *Indonesia - Famous People* (1993), *Batak Faces* (1994), *Dani: The Forgotten People* (1997), *Manila: The City of Contrasts* (1999), *The Song of Arini: The Eastern Indonesia People* (2001), and *Burning Borneo* (1998-1999). His work has appeared in a number of magazines and books, including *Kain untuk Suami* (A Cloth for My Husband) (2004),

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