

## **Polygamy film by Robert Lemelson, Elemental Productions**

In November 2013, LBH APIK had the opportunity to work with a documentary film production company from the United States, Elemental Productions. Cooperation was utilized in the screenings of the documentary film directed by Robert Lemelson, which highlights the lives of three families polygamous families in Bali. The screening aims to educate the public about polygamous marriages because many people have difficulty understanding the Marriage Act and the regulations/requirements attached to the practice of polygamy.

This process began with the movie playing in front of Bali DPRD members in a Parliament Office in the area of Wantilan Renon, Dnepasar on November 30, 2013 during an Anti-Violence campaign event. The responses were very positive since the screening highlighted important aspects of the practice of polygamy and Marriage Laws governing marriage, contributing to a deeper understanding of it's effects on everyday life.

On January 12, 2013 the screening of the film was held in the village of Kintamani Kedisan, followed by similar events in the village of Kekeran Rijasa, Tabanana on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of February respectively. The film was then screened on the University Campus Ganesha (Undiksha) Singaraja on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014, then in Jembrana with the Community Cultural Paper on March 21, 2014 and later in an event open to the public in Dauh Tukah Tenganan, Karangasem on March 23, 2014.

From the screenings and proceeding dialogues with the public, it was revealed that there are cases of infidelity, "memitra ngalang," (*cheating*) and polygamy in many villages. In fact, the respective families and the community often accept these phenomena since the husband's paramour is already pregnant and the women demand the accountability of the man especially since they became involved in polygamous marriages while they are still teenagers.

Indeed, polygamous relationships are still highly prevalent but considered invalid in many villages. According to prajuru many weddings are not attended by the Prajuru, this is due to the absence of written consent from the first wife, this is what causes the polygamous marriage to be invalid in terms of Tri Upasaksi (three witnesses in marriage). However, local people can not take any action to prevent the occurrence of polygamous marriage because given pregnant women without marriage can bring *cuntake* (polluted) traditional villages, as well as a sense of pity for children who require a candidate recognition/legal status.

With the positive response of the community towards this film about polygamy, LBH APIK plans to show the film in several other villages in Karangasem, Bali, the village Budakeling, Jembrana, and Buleleing.