

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The problem of foreign domestic workers will never stop and somehow will increase time by time. The Singapore and Indonesia' government are tended to take this issue not as a big issue and needs long time to solve the issue. However, it will never decrease and remain the same if there are no current actions or direct regulations to protect their rights from both governments. Indonesian foreign domestic workers in Singapore experience some issues and problems during their work with their employer and still the stakeholders from Indonesia and Singapore tend to be late to protect their rights. The grim reality shows that many foreign domestic workers in Singapore face exploitation, discrimination, and unjust treatment, from their recruitment process in the home country to their job placement. In fact, the issues faced by foreign domestic workers globally are old cases and often intertwined which most of them faced such as hefty recruitment fees, absence of a proper contract, withholding of personal documents, low or unpaid wages or salaries, no day off, lack of rest, access to healthcare, physical and psychological abuse – all of those are common issues faced by the migrant workers. It is inevitable that the HOME, TWC2, AWARE, and *Viva Wanita* as NGOs are still take a role in handling this issue as the advocacy supporting actor who is also try to advocate and fulfill what the domestic workers deserve to receive as a worker.

Most of the problems or issues faced by Indonesian foreign domestic workers in Singapore is considered as violence both physical and verbal abuse, high workload with no sufficient break, no mandatory day off, difficult and dangerous

job, insufficient food, lack of association, and their limitation to communicate and socialize outside the home of their employer. Foreign domestic worker in Singapore are under the protection of Employment of Foreign Manpower Act which means that it is not under the Employment Act. Thus, there are some discriminations appeared between the local workers and the foreign domestic workers. In this case, some NGOs such as HOME and TWC2 have been conducting negotiating and lobbying session with the Singapore government to put the foreign domestic worker under the protection of Employment Act too.

Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics as the main advocacy actor tries to advocate and help the Indonesian foreign domestic workers in Singapore with the assistance from other local NGOs in Indonesia and Singapore. HOME has a close partnership in dividing each duty to advocate and protect the foreign domestic workers to get their rights fulfilled. HOME and Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2) seek the domestic workers who need help and the ones who run to seek a protection as need their service regarding the issue or problem they faced with their employers. In accordance to the problem or the issue, HOME and TWC2 also stand for the NGOs to change, revise, and add some policies related with domestic worker whenever possible to meet the need of the domestic workers.

On the other hand, TWC2 also becomes a good partner for HOME in conducting their action to formalize their advocacy goals and achievement in case of Indonesian foreign domestic workers in Singapore. TWC2 has put efforts to make the Indonesian foreign domestic workers meet their need and give protection to them the issue and problem they faced during their work with the employer. As

a local NGOs based in Singapore, TWC2 also has succeeded in making the policy of MOM to create and realize a day off policy as a written policy in accordance with the common problem of Indonesian foreign domestic workers in Singapore who experienced high workload and insufficient break – even no weekly day off for them. TWC2 and HOME also often conduct some mediation to the employer, worker, and the agent to solve the domestic worker problem related to them. In addition, there is one additional NGOs who plays an important role in the advocacy activity towards the foreign domestic workers' problem which is Association of Women for Action and Research (AWARE). AWARE focuses more on creating an equality for the domestic workers in Singapore. AWARE stands as an NGOs who is concerning to the women in briefly that they faced some kind of discrimination during their work in Singapore and other discrimination relating to that. Despite the role of AWARE as to make all the workers, especially women are equal, AWARE also proposed some recommendation to the amendments related to the regulations or law that seems discriminate the women. Some researches and campaigns was also conducted successfully by AWARE in regards with this matter.

Despite the role of each NGOs in Singapore, there is one foundation in collaborating with HOME called *Viva Wanita* which based in Batam, Indonesia. *Viva Wanita* stands as a foundation to rescue and protect the Indonesian foreign domestic workers who are being exploited and being victims of human trafficking. Besides that, *Viva Wanita* also provide a service for the domestic workers who are being repatriated from Singapore and let them stay in their shelter while waiting for their repatriated to their origin. *Viva Wanita* and HOME also work closely in

lobbying the Singapore Government to ensure that the repatriation of the Indonesian foreign domestic workers by the employers or the agents must be directly to their home origin. In fact, most of the workers were still sent to Batam as the nearest area from Singapore in which this case leads them to the prostitution activity and even they become the victims of human trafficking. Thus, by the establishment of *Viva Wanita*, hopefully it can help and improve as well as strengthen the role of *Viva Wanita* to protect the domestic workers and to provide what they need where necessary. In accordance with the problems and issues faced by the Indonesian foreign domestic workers in Singapore, there were several action realizing by the NGOs as the advocacy actor as doing lobby, negotiate, mediate, and collaborate to realize the policy changing that related with the problem of the foreign domestic workers.

On the other hand, Indonesia and Singapore government also have to take part in handling this issue and to put more attention to decrease the amount of the victim in the future. Evaluation and more concern from both stakeholders are needed to list what kind of action that both government should formalize to realize the real protection towards the domestic workers in Singapore. The government should not ignore and only take one side benefit from the domestic worker which in fact domestic workers are helping and contributing much to the origin country as well as to the destination country in regards with the economic matter. Meanwhile, the fact that the government still refuse their rights and protection for them as the one who give its contribution to them. Thus, in responding to the case, the Indonesian government as the sending country has to support the advocacy activity

through the diplomatic instrument by maximizing the role of NGOs to realize the protection of the Indonesian foreign domestic workers in Singapore. Since Indonesia government has enforced the Singapore government to realize some ratifications on some conventions relating with domestic workers, it means that the Indonesia government can do further in partnership with civil society and International Organization to implement legal and social awareness for Indonesian foreign domestic workers in Singapore.

The Singapore Government then can take action to maximize their role to protect the foreign domestic workers by ratify some conventions that has not yet ratify especially the one related with the foreign domestic workers. The Singapore Government also should give their attention and concern toward the issues and problems that have been arise and have to conduct a real action to solve the issue through the research and some advocacies done by the NGOs in Singapore that are involved such as HOME, TWC2, AWARE, and the civil society who contribute to realize the protection of the foreign domestic workers' rights.