



# FOOD WASTE IN MODERN INDONESIAN WEDDINGS

Modern-day, *i.e.* untraditional weddings have become largely popular in Indonesia. Nonetheless, the core essence of the Indonesian wedding remains the same; the couple invites their family and acquaintances to enjoy a feast together. Often with over 500 guests, Indonesian weddings are events where plenty of food is prepared, consumed, and eventually wasted.

Food waste at weddings is one of the biggest problems in Indonesia. 1.74 million people get married each year in Indonesia, with an average of 500 guests, each typically serving \$300 or more worth of food at the table, complete or not. People spend thousands of dollars on food at weddings, but about 20-25% of the food prepared is wasted when the number of dishes exceeds the number of guests invited to the wedding. Knowing that in Indonesia where thousands of people have no food to eat, it is absurd so much food is thrown away. Wedding guests waste food because of different reasons: they mostly worry about not getting enough food, they lack sense of how much they can eat or they are eager to try new cuisine that they eventually dislike. Doing so, guests don't often realise that if they leave food on their plate, it could become food waste.

A married couple, a soon-to-be-married couple, a wedding organiser and a wedding salesperson were interviewed to obtain an idea about the size of the problem in Indonesia. All of the interviewees admitted to acknowledging the food waste problem as something that should be worked on. According to the answers, food waste is something that can be expected at weddings. Collectively, there seems to be a difference between the food consumption habits between Indonesia and other countries, e.g. Australia, where people are more calculating and generally steer away from waste by

## *Stakeholders involved*

- *The couple*
- *The family*
- *The wedding planner*

## *Main products wasted*

- *The hot and cold food prepared for the tables for the guests' self-service*



controlling the budget. The two Indonesian couples admitted to either having food leftover, or anticipating the amount of food higher than necessary. However, the menu and the amount of food are often ordered and regulated by the family, especially the mother.