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Achieving Inclusive Development: Bridging Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in Indonesia's Rural and Urban Communities

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Abstract: *This article explores the challenges and strategies for achieving inclusive development in Indonesia, focusing on the integration of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) principles in rural and urban areas. It examines the disparity in development indicators across regions and the effectiveness of policies like the Desa Ramah Perempuan dan Peduli Anak (DRPPA) program. The study highlights the role of government and community in fostering equitable growth and addresses the impact of gender stereotypes and social exclusion on development efforts. By analyzing current policies and their implementation, the article provides insights into improving GESI integration for sustainable and inclusive development in Indonesia.*

Keyword: *Gender Mainstreaming, Social Inclusion, DRPPA, Gender Mainstreaming Policy, Development.*

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980s, development strategies in many countries, particularly developing ones, have emphasized economic growth. However, this focus has often led to issues like poverty, inequality, and social exclusion. Social exclusion occurs when individuals or groups lack access to social resources and are marginalized from societal activities, resulting in limited living conditions. This approach has faced criticism for prioritizing economic indicators like GDP while neglecting non-economic factors essential for comprehensive development.

In Indonesia, development efforts have shown significant progress in education, health, and income. However, challenges such as unemployment, poverty, and regional disparities persist. President Jokowi's directives stress the importance of human development, social inclusion, and gender equality as reflected in Indonesia's Human Development Index (HDI) and Gender Development Index (GDI). Despite improvements, women, especially in rural

areas, often face stereotypes, marginalization, and violence, which hinder their participation in development.

The Indonesian government has committed to gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) through policies like the ratification of CEDAW and the Presidential Instruction No. 9/2000 on Gender Mainstreaming. However, consistent implementation remains a challenge. GESI aims to ensure that all individuals, regardless of gender or social background, have equal opportunities in development. This approach aligns with global standards like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5 on gender equality.

Programs like the Desa Ramah Perempuan dan Peduli Anak (DRPPA) aim to promote gender-sensitive and inclusive development at the village level. Despite regulatory delays, these initiatives are crucial for achieving sustainable and equitable development in Indonesia. This article explores the integration of GESI principles in Indonesian development policies and their impact on rural and urban communities.

METOD

Simangunsong (2017:178) explains research methods as a scientific approach used to obtain data for specific purposes and benefits. To investigate the application of GESI principles in national development policies, using the DRPPA Program as a case study, we chose a qualitative research method to gather in-depth, meaningful data that accurately represents the phenomenon or issue being studied. Sugiyono (2013:3) describes qualitative research methods as those used to obtain data rich in meaning. In this context, meaning refers to the values hidden behind the visible data, emphasizing the understanding of these values. This research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive exposition. Descriptive exposition means the research results will be presented in a narrative form since the data and facts collected are in the form of words or images, not numbers. Additionally, this type of research is phenomenological, aiming to provide a clear picture of the issues studied based on the experiences of the informants.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS:

Identifying Target Groups in the DRPPA Program

In Indonesia, vulnerable groups are recognized in Law No. 39/1999 on Human Rights and the National Action Plan on Human Rights 2015-2019. These groups include persons with disabilities, the elderly, the impoverished, women, children, refugees, indigenous peoples, and migrant workers. The Ministry of Social Affairs also includes individuals facing significant barriers in their social roles, defined as Social Welfare Service Recipients.

The DRPPA (Desa Ramah Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak) program specifically targets women and children, reflecting principles that require the inclusion of all community members regardless of identity or social status. This focus is critical as it addresses layered vulnerabilities such as those faced by poor or disabled women. The program aligns with broader inclusion goals and emphasizes the need to address and prevent marginalization.

While DRPPA primarily targets women and children, it inherently supports other vulnerable groups by focusing on these primary demographics. This approach ensures that policies are inclusive and responsive to a wide range of needs. Additionally, DRPPA works in conjunction with the Desa Inklusi program, which enhances coordination and avoids overlap, creating a more integrated and effective support system.

By concentrating on women and children, the DRPPA program provides a model for inclusive policy-making, demonstrating how targeted approaches can address broader issues of vulnerability. This model encourages integration across various programs and policies, fostering a more comprehensive and synergistic approach to supporting vulnerable populations and advancing social and economic development.

Program Design Process for DRPPA

Before developing a project, it is crucial to understand the roles, resource access, and decision-making authority of potential beneficiaries. Stakeholder analysis ensures that all relevant institutions, groups, and individuals are considered, particularly those involved in Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI).

The planning process must include input from target groups, such as women, the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized populations. This includes informal conversations, organizational consultations, and workshops at various levels to identify and address barriers to access. The program design should detail components like social mobilization, empowerment, and strategies to tackle discriminatory practices, including gender-based violence.

In Indonesia, the DRPPA program was designed through a collaborative agreement between the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection (Kemenpppa) and the Ministry of Village, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration (Kemendes PDTT). This agreement outlines responsibilities for technical assistance, training, advocacy, and policy integration related to gender.

The design process involved discussions with NGOs like KAPAL Perempuan, which has experience with grassroots women's empowerment through initiatives like the Sekolah Perempuan program. This program, running since 2000, focuses on developing women's leadership and gender awareness in villages.

KAPAL Perempuan's role in DRPPA included providing critical education on gender issues and helping to shape the program's approach. They emphasized that vulnerable groups must be actively involved, not just as recipients of aid but as active participants in development. The DRPPA design began with agreements formalized in 2019 and 2020, and model areas were designated in 2021. National facilitators were appointed in 2023, and comprehensive guidelines were issued the same year. However, the extended time between decisions has led to challenges such as diminished local enthusiasm and potential confusion regarding program implementation. Effective policy design should consider the impact on women and marginalized groups and ensure that these groups can benefit fully from the program. Clear and comprehensive guidelines are essential for effective field implementation. Gaps in regulations or guidelines can significantly affect the program's effectiveness and impact.

DRPPA Program Implementation

Implementation is critical to the success of a program, involving various management and oversight activities. Program management ensures activities proceed as planned, considering the beneficiaries' diverse capabilities, interests, and needs based on gender, caste, ethnicity, and location. A key component of policy implementation is Human Resource Management (HRM). Effective HRM is crucial for program success and smooth execution, involving a team selected based on their capacity to implement the program. Clearly defining roles and responsibilities ensures that each team member understands their tasks, contributing to the program's success.

The "Desa Ramah Perempuan dan Peduli Anak" (DRPPA) initiative is overseen by the village head, with a mandate from the SDGs. The central government, through the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (Kemenpppa) and the Ministry of Village, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration (Kemendes-PDTT), provides guidelines for implementing DRPPA, as outlined in Joint Decree No. 329/2023 and No. 1/2023. National Facilitators (Fasnas) play a crucial role in supporting DRPPA by developing models, designing programs, and creating implementation guidelines. They also handle monitoring and evaluation.

Fasnas ensure that gender equality and social inclusion principles are integrated into the program. Ignatius Praptohardjo, PhD, explains that the DRPPA module consists of three main parts:

1. Implementation: Focuses on technical skills for effective DRPPA execution, including outreach and networking.
2. Management: Covers administrative aspects like financial management, recruitment, and volunteer training.
3. Reference: Provides additional guidance based on various stages of DRPPA activities.

These modules are designed to ensure that all volunteers can effectively participate in DRPPA training, fostering inclusivity and effective principle internalization.

However, online training has posed challenges, including reduced effectiveness and participant engagement issues. Despite this, the village of Waringin in North Maluku remains committed to DRPPA. The village has independently developed gender-responsive programs, focusing on women's involvement, skill enhancement, public facilities, and creating a safe environment. The local government has also committed to establishing a special unit for women's protection.

In North Maluku, beyond the central government's two model areas, three additional regions are also developing DRPPA initiatives. This broad effort underscores a collective commitment to gender equality and social inclusion at the village level, emphasizing both technical and administrative aspects of implementation.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the DRPPA Program

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) program should focus on three key areas: 1) Community impact, asset/income changes, human development outcomes, access to services, and changes in voice and influence must be measured using both quantitative and qualitative data. 2) Changes in systems, including informal behaviors, policies, and formal structures, should be documented. It is crucial that all M&E activities are disaggregated by factors such as poverty, gender, caste, ethnicity, and location to ensure inclusivity and representativeness of women.

As of 2022, the DRPPA program covered 138 villages across 131 sub-districts and 71 cities/counties. There are 198 trained Local Facilitators (Fasda) and 1,420 SAPA volunteers playing key roles in implementing the program and collecting data for M&E.

The first M&E requirement aligns with DRPPA indicators, particularly those focusing on substance, such as indicators 6-10. The second requirement addresses changes in systems and institutions, crucial for creating supportive and equitable environments. Monitoring these changes helps assess progress in policy and organizational practices, as well as social norms.

Data from 136 of 138 model villages in 2023 shows a high achievement rate of 98.55%, with full completion in 2022. Despite this, challenges remain, such as low female participation in village councils, child labor, and high child marriage rates. These challenges highlight the need for continued focus and tailored strategies.

Rini Handayani from Kemenpppa emphasizes the importance of Fasda in supporting DRPPA activities. However, Fasda often face limitations integrating DRPPA with their regular duties and dealing with budget constraints, especially in remote areas. This impacts the quality of training and support for SAPA volunteers.

In summary, while the DRPPA program has made significant progress in human development and service access, the monitoring and evaluation process must address persistent issues and ensure the inclusion of women's perspectives. The data shows positive trends but also indicates areas needing improvement and increased support for effective implementation.

Adjustments and Learnings from the Ongoing Evaluation of the DRPPA Program

The Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) evaluation provides valuable insights for improving and revising the DRPPA program. Rini Handayani from Kemenpppa highlights the need for stronger legal frameworks, noting that current regulations, such as MoUs and joint decrees, lack robust legal backing. Additionally, despite existing ministerial regulations for village budgets aimed at women and children, there is still skepticism among local communities regarding specific budget allocations. National Facilitator Chair Ignatius Praptohardjo emphasizes that while creating new programs is straightforward, ensuring their sustainability poses a significant challenge. He suggests that regular coordination meetings, even without additional budget, can help maintain volunteer motivation and program continuity. Although Kemenpppa conducts biannual evaluations, there is a call for more frequent and structured assessments to ensure the program's long-term effectiveness. Misiyah from KAPAL Perempuan underscores the need for continuous adjustment, focusing on integrating women's issues into development planning and budgeting. Initiatives such as "women's planning discussions" at the village and county levels aim to address these issues effectively.

In Morotai, key lessons include:

1. Enhanced Inclusive Education: Ensuring that all individuals, including those with special needs, receive quality education.
2. Awareness of Disability Rights: Addressing stigma and discrimination against people with disabilities.
3. Creating Safe Spaces for Women and Children: Ensuring physical, emotional, and psychological safety.
4. Community and Village Government Involvement: Engaging all community members and local government in planning, implementing, and monitoring the program.

These comprehensive approaches aim to make the DRPPA program more inclusive and impactful, particularly for improving the welfare of women and children. Collaborative efforts reflect a commitment to achieving the program's goals and ensuring broad community benefits.

CONCLUSIONS

The ongoing evaluation of the DRPPA program underscores the critical need for strong legal frameworks and continuous refinement to ensure program effectiveness and sustainability. Despite significant progress in areas such as inclusive education, disability rights, and safety for women and children, challenges remain. The need for more robust legal backing and clearer budget allocations for women and children, along with more frequent and structured evaluations, is evident.

Key lessons from the program highlight the importance of regular coordination, community involvement, and tailored approaches to meet the needs of diverse groups. Successful integration of women's issues into development planning and the active participation of all community members are crucial for achieving the program's goals.

Overall, these insights and adjustments aim to enhance the DRPPA program's inclusivity and impact, ensuring it continues to contribute positively to the welfare of women and children and to the broader development objectives.

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