

Grassroots Women's Leadership: Voice, Solidarity, and Justice in Development

Editorial

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Articles

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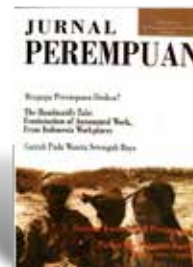
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Grassroots Women's Leadership: Voice, Solidarity, and Justice in Development

The 119th issue of *Jurnal Perempuan* features eight articles that highlight grassroots women's leadership in Indonesia – from *sekolah perempuan*, the National Women Deliberation for Development Planning, cooperatives and credit unions, fishing communities, to advocacy for women with disabilities. These articles are all based on the experiences of women, especially those who are marginalised socially, economically, and politically, and who still face structural barriers to participating in the public sphere. In fact, as Margaret A. McLaren (2017) reminds us, women's participation and leadership are important not only to enrich the decision-making process but also as a foundation for a more just and inclusive socio-political transformation.

Feminist ideas are strongly woven throughout this edition. In 'Women's Leadership Participation: From the Margin to the Centre', Yusnaningsi Kasim and Indri Sri Sembadra emphasise the importance of KAPAL Perempuan's *Sekolah Perempuan* in fostering agency and critical awareness through the GEDSI framework, thereby empowering women to engage in public policy. Similarly, 'From the Margins to the Mainstream' by Misiyah, Endah Trista Agustiana, and Budhis Utami recounts how the National Women Deliberation for Development Planning successfully promoted social inclusion in the 2025–2045 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJPN). These two articles demonstrate how women's local experiences can be transformed into a national agenda through collective efforts across communities and organisations.

The economic dimension is present in both 'Women's Credit Unions as an Economic-Political Vehicle for Grassroots Women', by Dina Lumbantobing, Ramida Katharina Sinaga, and Ikhaputri Widiyanti; and 'The Efforts of Benteng Chinese Women to Break Free from the Trap of Poverty and Marginalisation' by Tracy Pasaribu, Arif Nurdiansah, and Iqbal Yusti. Both articles emphasise that community economic strategies, such as credit unions and cooperatives, provide a means of achieving not only financial independence, but also political awareness and social recognition. From a feminist economic perspective, community empowerment shows that collective economic practices can transcend patriarchal capitalist market logic and

create alternative political spaces based on solidarity and structural advocacy.

Furthermore, ecological issues are highlighted in 'Understanding Vulnerability, Promoting Leadership, and Seeking Justice' by Andi Misbahul Pratiwi, Masnu'ah, Nadia Himmatul Ulya, and Andi Thoifatul Misbach, as well as in 'Collective Action of Puspita Bahari Fisherwomen on the Demak Coast' by Amalia Risti Atikah, Mia Siscawati, and Shelly Adelina. A feminist analysis of climate adaptation documents in Central Java and Demak reveals a lack of institutional representation and an absence of local women's knowledge in climate adaptation policies. However, Puspita Bahari's experience shows that the collective action of coastal women has emerged as a new political force from everyday care practices. This is a concrete example of Carol Gilligan's (1982) ethics of care and contributes to the increasingly urgent discourse on feminist climate justice.

In addition to community practices, this edition also offers theoretical insights into 'Women's Leadership at the Grassroots Level and Democratic Resilience' by Nur Iman Subono, exploring their interconnectedness. As Iris Marion Young (1990) emphasises, justice cannot be separated from the recognition of the intersection of women's identities and their concrete experiences, which are often absent from mainstream political theory.

This edition concludes with the research 'Beyond the Promise of Inclusion: Violence, Exclusion, and Collective Political Responsibility towards Women with Disabilities' by Tri Wahyuni Suci Wulandari, Ninik, Abby Gina Boang Manalu, and Nada Salsabila. Despite the existence of a national legal framework, this article shows how gender-based violence and structural exclusion are still experienced by women with disabilities. Building on Iris Marion Young's (2007) model of social responsibility, the authors emphasise the importance of collective political responsibility and inclusive governance. This approach recognises women with disabilities as both subjects of knowledge and agents of justice.

The eight articles are linked by the common theme of how women's leadership emerges from concrete experiences, community solidarity, and care practices.

All of these factors are intertwined with the struggle against the intersection of identities relating to gender, class, ethnicity, and disability. In line with Manalu's (2021) concept of feminist social justice, this struggle requires us to acknowledge vulnerability and social connectedness as the basis for collective accountability. Social justice requires the fair distribution of resources and the recognition of the voices and agency of marginalised women.

This edition showcases grassroots leadership, demonstrating how feminist social justice, embodied in women's personal experiences as the basis for structural

advocacy and community solidarity, can transform into political power and inclusion as ethical principles that reshape development.

This edition not only documents feminist practices in Indonesia, but also invites us to reconsider the politics of development. This is an important contribution of JP119: Grassroots Women's Leadership: Voice, Solidarity, and Justice in Development. This journal shows that fair and inclusive politics depend on the leadership of marginalised women. A more equitable and sustainable society is only possible through meaningful involvement (Abby Gina Boang Manalu).

Abstracts

Yusnaningsi Kasim & Indri Sri Sembadra
KAPAL Perempuan Institute

Women's Leadership Participation: From the Margin to the Centre. A Case Study of *Sekolah Perempuan* in Enhancing Women's Role in Formulating Equitable Public Policy

Manuscript Code: DDC 305

Jurnal Perempuan Vol. 29 No. 3, 2024, pp. 147–164, 1 table, 3 images, 23 bibliographies

Women remain on the margins of public decision-making, especially in development planning and budgeting forums where their voices and interests are ignored. An equitable development, however, requires the active participation of marginalised groups, including poor women, female heads of households, survivors of violence, ethnic minorities, indigenous women, those in remote or disaster-affected areas, gender minorities and individuals with disabilities. These groups face systemic barriers to participation, as men are often perceived to represent the collective voice of their communities. Therefore, women's leadership needs to be established. To overcome this marginalisation, women's leadership must be actively developed. Based on KAPAL Perempuan's experience in empowering women through *Sekolah Perempuan*, this paper explores how grassroots organizing and critical education-with the approach of the Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) framework-enhances women's agency, critical consciousness, and leadership. Data collection for this paper utilised interview methodology and literature review. By developing a GEDSI perspective, marginalised women can influence public policies to become more gender equitable and inclusive, ultimately bridging the gap in their participation in development planning and decision-making. Recommendations include integrating the GEDSI approach in local development policies and supporting capacity building for women's participation and community-based empowerment to reach more marginalised groups.

Keywords: Women's Participation and Leadership, *Sekolah Perempuan*, KAPAL Perempuan, GEDSI, gender equality, critical education

Misiyah, Endah Trista Agustiana, & Budhis Utami
KAPAL Perempuan Institute

Women's From the Margins to the Mainstream: Meaningful Participation, Voices, and Advocacy of Women and Marginalised Groups in the Fight for Gender Equality, Persons with Disabilities, and Social Inclusion in Indonesia's National Policies: RPJPN 2025-2045 and RPJMN 2025-2029

Manuscript Code: DDC 305

Jurnal Perempuan Vol. 29 No. 3, 2024, pp. 165–179, 2 images, 24 bibliographies

The participation of grassroots women and marginalised groups in national development planning remains critically low, at only around 10–20 percent. The current mechanism, *Musrenbang* (Development Planning Forums), has yet to accommodate their voices in a meaningful way. In response, KAPAL Perempuan, together with INKLUSI partners, initiated the National Women's Deliberation for Development Planning

(*Munas Perempuan*) in 2023 and 2024 as a collective action to enhance meaningful participation and ensure the integration of the needs, rights, and aspirations of women, persons with disabilities, and marginalised groups in development agendas. This research presents a case study of the advocacy surrounding *Munas Perempuan* and its role in influencing the formulation of the 2025-2045 National Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPN). It focuses on three main aspects: (1) the structural causes of low participation among women and marginalised groups; (2) the effectiveness of *Munas Perempuan* as a model of grassroots advocacy; and (3) the implications of this advocacy for long-term development policy. Data were drawn from field studies in 206 districts/cities, interviews, and over a decade of documentation from civil society organizations. Findings show that limited participation leads to the exclusion of key issues affecting women and marginalised communities. *Munas Perempuan* has emerged as a strategic breakthrough by integrating nine key agendas into the RPJPN. Furthermore, it has contributed to a paradigmatic shift in national development—moving from Gender Mainstreaming (PUG) to Gender and Social Inclusion Mainstreaming (PUGIS), now formally adopted in Law No. 59 of 2024 on the 2025-2045 RPJPN.

Keywords: Women's Leadership, women's participation, disability, Marginalised Groups, Gender and Social Inclusion Mainstreaming

Dina Lumbantobing & Ramida Katharina Sinaga, Ikhaputri Widiyanti
PESADA, University of Indonesia

Women's Credit Unions as an Economic-Political Vehicle for Grassroots Women: PESADA's Experience in Building Grassroots Women's Political Power through Women's Credit Unions in North Sumatra and Sumatra

Manuscript Code: DDC 305

Jurnal Perempuan Vol. 29 No. 3, 2024, pp. 181–193, 4 images, 13 bibliographies

Grassroots women in Indonesia face limitations in economic access due to the patriarchal capitalist system, which places them in a vulnerable position. A paradigm shift is necessary to strengthen women's economic empowerment as a means of eradicating their systemic impoverishment across various social and political institutions. Such initiative has been developed by PESADA since 2006 through the women's Credit Union (CU). Women CU takes a different perspective from the mainstream economic approaches by fostering financial independence while simultaneously cultivating political awareness through conscientization and active participation in the public sphere. This article adopts the feminist economics framework and conscientization theory as implemented by PESADA in North Sumatra. The study employs a case study methodology, incorporating document analysis, participant interviews, and field observations. The findings in this article demonstrate that women's CU not only enhances women's economic independence but also strengthens their political participation—notably through SPUK (Suara Perempuan untuk Keadilan - Women's Voices for Justice). Women CU proves that community-based economic models with a feminist perspective can serve as an effective strategy for social transformation of grassroots women.

Keywords: Women's Credit Union, community-based economy, conscientization, economic independence, feminist economics theory

**Andi Misbahul Pratiwi, Masnu'ah, Nadia Himmatul Ulya,
& Andi Thoifatul Misbach**

University of Leeds, Puspita Bahari, Monash University,
& Jurnal Perempuan

**Understanding Vulnerability, Promoting Leadership,
and Seeking Justice: A Feminist Policy Analysis of the
Climate Adaptation Action Plan in Central Java and
Demak District**

Manuscript Code: DDC 305

Jurnal Perempuan Vol. 29 No. 3, 2024, pp. 205–214, 68 bibliographies

In Indonesia's climate policy discourse, gender has become an increasingly prominent keyword, from the National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation (2014) to the National Gender and Climate Change Action Plan (2024). This paper analyses gender representation in the Climate Adaptation Action Plans of Central Java (2023) and Demak Regency (2024), two coastal areas highly vulnerable to both climate crises and gender inequality. Using a feminist policy analysis framework and drawing on the concept of Gender Transformative Adaptation (GTA), the analysis focuses on three key aspects: representation, knowledge and power, and leadership. The findings reveal that gender justice remains a marginal concern. Women are predominantly framed as vulnerable groups in need of empowerment, rather than as agents of change with equal knowledge and capacities. The policy documents reflect a top-down, technocratic approach that overlooks local knowledge and the experiences of grassroots women. Moreover, the absence of women's organizations as strategic actors signals weak institutional recognition of women's leadership in climate adaptation. This paper argues for more participatory, intersectional, and transformative approaches to local climate adaptation policymaking to ensure greater justice, inclusivity, and contextual relevance.

Keywords: coastal women leadership, climate adaptation, Central Java Province, Demak Regency, intersectionality, feminist policy analysis

Tracy Pasaribu & Arif Nurdiansah, Iqbal Yusti

KEMITRAAN Partnership for Governance Reform, PPSW Jakarta

**The Effects of *Benteng* Chinese Women to Break Free
from the Trap of Poverty and Marginalisation:
A Case Study in Belimbing Village, Kosambi District,
Tangerang Regency, Banten Province**

Manuscript Code: DDC 305

Jurnal Perempuan Vol. 29 No. 3, 2024, pp. 215–225, 1 table, 23 bibliographies

As part of an ethnic minority, the *Benteng* Chinese women (Ciben) in Belimbing Village, Kosambi District, Tangerang Regency, face exclusion due to multiple factors, including poverty, stigma, and gender inequality. This study explores the efforts of Ciben women to escape the traps of poverty and marginalisation through cooperatives. The research employs a qualitative approach with a feminist perspective, analysing empowerment in the context of development through Jo Rowlands' three dimensions of power: power to, power within, and power with. Data were gathered through a desk review of program reports and in-depth interviews with seven purposively selected respondents involved in the cooperative. The findings indicate that the cooperative not only provided an alternative solution to economic problems but also increased the recognition of Ciben women, both within their communities at the village level and by the local government. This recognition led to better access to public services and greater involvement of Ciben women in the development planning process through the *Musrenbangdes* (village development planning forum).

Keywords: women's empowerment, marginalised *Benteng* Chinese women, poverty, savings and loan cooperative

Amalia Risti Atikah, Mia Siscawati, & Shelly Adelina

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Studies, University of Indonesia Central Jakarta, Indonesia

**Collective Action of Puspita Bahari Fisherwomen on the
Demak Coast: Building Solidarity for Social Transformation**

Manuscript Code: DDC 305

Jurnal Perempuan Vol. 29 No. 3, 2024, pp. 195–204, 2 images, 24 bibliographies

Fisherwomen on the coast of Demak face various gender injustices amidst environmental crises and public policies that lack gender responsiveness. The Puspita Bahari community serves as a platform for fostering solidarity, advocacy, and grassroots leadership among these women fishers. This study was conducted in three villages supported by Puspita Bahari-Morodemak, Margolinduk, and Purworejo-located in the Bonang sub-district of Demak. By integrating the analysis of spatial, temporal, and violence dimensions (STV) within the feminist everyday political economy framework (Elias & Rai 2018) with the theoretical lens of collective action (Kabeer 2020), this paper examines how Puspita Bahari's collective action resists marginalisation and simultaneously promotes social transformation in the daily lives of coastal women. The research underscores the importance of recognising fisherwomen as agents of change, endowed with local knowledge and collective strength, in realising gender-just development. Incorporating their voices into policymaking processes is crucial for meaningful and sustainable social transformation.

Keywords: coastal communities, gender injustice, fisherwomen, collective action, social transformation

Nur Iman Subono

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**Women's Leadership at the Grassroots Level and
Democratic Resilience: A Conceptual and Theoretical Study**

Manuscript Code: DDC 305

Jurnal Perempuan Vol. 29 No. 3, 2024, pp. 227–237, 1 table, 35 bibliographies

Women have long played a crucial role in social and political development around the world, including in Indonesia, although their contributions are often overlooked or insufficiently recognized. In this context, women's leadership at the grassroots level becomes particularly important. The grassroots serves as the foundation for larger social and political structures, and active participation by women at this level can strengthen the foundation of a more inclusive and participatory "democratic resilience." A country's democratic resilience is not only determined by elite or high-level political leaders but also by the extent to which marginalized groups, including women, are involved in the political process. This paper aims to explore the deep relationship between women's leadership at the grassroots level and democratic resilience. By examining how women in various communities influence local socio-political dynamics, we can gain insight into their role in strengthening democratic resilience. Furthermore, the paper addresses the challenges and obstacles that women face in attaining leadership positions at the grassroots level.

Keywords: women's leadership, grassroots, democratic resilience

**Tri Wahyuni Suci Wulandari, Ninik,
Abby Gina Boang Manalu & Nada Salsabila**
YAKKUM Rehabilitation Centre, SIGAB, Jurnal Perempuan

**Beyond the Promise of Inclusion: Violence, Exclusion,
and Collective Political Responsibility towards
Women with Disabilities**

Manuscript Code: DDC 305

Jurnal Perempuan Vol. 29 No. 3, 2024, pp. 239–250, 1 table, 32
bibliographies

Despite Indonesia's ratification of the CRPD and the enactment of Law No. 8/2016, women with disabilities continue to experience widespread gender-based violence. This article analyses the structural causes of such violence through an intersectional feminist lens, drawing primarily on Iris Marion Young's Social Connection Model of political responsibility. Employing a feminist perspective grounded in the advocacy experiences of civil society organizations (Pusat Rehabilitasi YAKKUM and SIGAB), as well as data from the 2024 National Assembly of Women with Disabilities, this article argues that such violence is rooted in systemic exclusion and the failure of state and society to transform unjust structures. The findings call for collective political responsibility and inclusive governance that centres the knowledge, voice, and agency of women with disabilities—not as passive beneficiaries, but as active political subjects.

Keywords: gender-based violence, women with disabilities, political responsibility, intersectionality, inclusive governance

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Jurnal Perempuan (JP) is a quarterly interdisciplinary publication in the English language that aims to circulate **original ideas in gender studies**. JP invites critical reflection on the theory and practice of feminism in the social, political, and economic context of Indonesian society. We are committed to exploring gender in its multiple forms and interrelationships.

The journal encourages practical, theoretically sound, and (when relevant) empirically rigorous manuscripts that address real-world implications of the gender gap in Indonesian contexts. Topics related to feminism can include (but are not limited to): sexuality, queer, trafficking, ecology, public policy, sustainability and environment, human and labor rights/ issues, governance, accountability and transparency, globalization, as well as ethics, and specific issues related to gender study, such as diversity, poverty, and education.

JP welcomes contributions from researchers, academia, activists, and practitioners involved in gender advocacy in any of the areas mentioned above. Manuscripts should be written so that they are comprehensible to an intelligent reader, avoiding jargon, formulas and extensive methodological treatises wherever possible. They should use examples and illustrations to highlight the ideas, concepts and practical implications of the ideas being presented. Feminist theory is important and necessary; but theory — with the empirical research and conceptual work that supports theory — needs to be balanced by integration into practices to stand the tests of time and usefulness. We want the journal to be read as much by stakeholders as by academics seeking sound research and scholarship in women's study.

JP appears annually and the contents of each issue include: editorials, peer-reviewed papers by leading writers; reviews, short stories, and poetry. A key feature of the journal is appreciation of the value of literature, fiction, and the visual narrative (works of art, such as paintings and drawings) in the study of women's issues

Submissions

To discuss ideas for contributions, please contact the Chief Editor: Anita Dhewy via anitadhewy@jurnalperempuan.com. Research papers should be between 5000-10000 words. Please make sure to include in your submission pack an **abstract outlining the title, purpose, methodology and main findings**. It is worth considering that, as your paper will be located and read online, the quality of your abstract will determine whether readers go on to access your full paper. We recommend you place particular focus on the impact of your research on further research, practice or society. What does your paper contribute? In addition, please provide up to **six descriptive keywords**.

Formatting your paper

Headings should be short and in bold text, with a clear and consistent hierarchy. Please identify **Notes or Endnotes** with consecutive numbers, enclosed in square brackets and listed at the end of the article. **Figures** and other images should be submitted as .jpeg (.jpg) or .tif files of a high quality. Please number them consecutively with Arabic numerals and mark their intended location within the body of the text clearly. If images are not the original work of the author, it is the author's responsibility to obtain written consent from the copyright holder before using them. Authors will be asked to confirm the status of images, tables and figures in the journal submission pack. Images which are neither the authors' own work, nor are accompanied by the necessary permission, will not be published.

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