

Women and Peatlands

Editorial

Women and Peatlands

Articles

Manifesting Ecofeminism in Peatland Restoration: Policies, Actions, and Challenges
Myrna Asnawati Safitri

Women Fighting Peatland Fire: Rural Women's Experiences in Central Kalimantan and Riau Provinces
Catharina Indirastuti

Being Away from Purun: Women's Experiences in Peatland Area of Hulu Sungai Utara, South Kalimantan
Enik Maslahah

Purun and The Bitter Realities of Women's Struggle in Peatland Areas
Taqiyuddin Ibnu Syihab, Yustina Ambarini Murdiningrum, Lukas Rumboko Wibowo

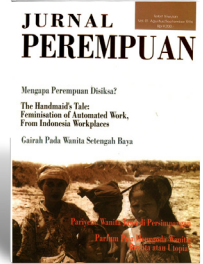
Women Village Facilitator Action on Economic Revitalization of the Women's Group: A Case Study in 3 Peatland Villages, Central Kalimantan
Nur Iman Subono, Andi Misbahul Pratiwi & Abby Gina Boangmanalu

Published by:

YAYASAN
YJP
JURNAL
PEREMPUAN

Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan
Accreditation Number: 36/E/KPT/2019

Speak Up for the Indonesian Women through Your Support of Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan (YJP)!



While YJP has achieved much over the last two decades, contemporary Indonesia, facing many economic, social, political and cultural challenges continues to need us. Indonesian migrant workers are being discriminated against, illiteracy is still high among women, leadership positions are uncommonly filled by women, and women increasingly face extremism over issues of abortion, dress code, sex education, lesbianism, marital rape and inter-religious marriage. Your support is absolutely crucial in making a real difference in the lives of Indonesian women and gender minorities. Please read more below to see how you can support us – because, our unity is our strength – and you are needed!

Become Friends of Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan!

You can support us through our Indonesian language based *Sahabat Jurnal Perempuan* (SJP) and the English based *International Friends of Jurnal Perempuan* (SJP-International) membership programs offering you many benefits, such as receiving our newsletters and journals, invitations to workshops and networking events.

SJP Membership

Benefits:

- up to 4 editions of *Jurnal Perempuan* (JP) delivered to your doorstep annually
- invitations to SJP gatherings
- weekly newsletter on JP engagement delivered to your email
- possibility to speak/present during our networking and educational events
- space to voice your opinions on gender issues in our online blog

Annual Costs:

Individual Platinum : 1 000 000 IDR

Individual Gold : 500 000 IDR

Individual Silver : 300 000 IDR

Bachelor Level Student : 150 000 IDR

Corporate Sponsorship : 10 000 000 IDR

SJP-International Membership

Benefits:

- Indonesian Feminist Journal (IFJ) delivered to your doorstep or digitally to your email if living outside of Indonesia
- invitations to SJP-International gatherings
- monthly newsletter on JP engagement delivered to your email
- possibility to speak/present during our networking and educational events
- space to voice your opinions on gender issues in our online blog

Annual Cost:

Individual: 50 USD

Other Ways to Support Us

There are many other ways you can support our diligent work in the field of gender issues in Indonesia. You can volunteer or complete an internship with us. You can donate us money through PayPal or bank account. We also always need office equipment and other in-kind gifts. You can offer us your home or office as venues for our events. As an organization you can also sponsor us or collaborate with us on joint projects.

Payment Data

Bank Account:

Bank Mandiri Branch Jatipadang, No. Rek: 127-00-2507969-8

p.p. Indonesia Women's Journal Foundation (Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan Indonesia)

PayPal:

www.jurnalperempuan.org

www.indonesianfeministjournal.org

Contact

Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan

Email: yjp@jurnalperempuan.com

Websites:

www.jurnalperempuan.org

www.indonesianfeministjournal.org

Sincerely,

Gadis Arivia

YJP Founder



ISSN 1410-153X

FOUNDERS

Dr. Gadis Arivia
Prof. Dr. Toeti Heraty Noerhadi-Roosseno
Ratna Syafrida Dhanny
Asikin Arif (Alm.)

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Dr. Gadis Arivia
Prof. Dr. Toeti Heraty Noerhadi-Roosseno
Mari Elka Pangestu, Ph.D.
Svida Alisjahbana

DIRECTOR & EDITOR IN CHIEF

Dr. Atnike Nova Sigiroy

EDITORIAL BOARD

Prof. Dr. Sulistyowati Irianto (Feminist Legal Anthropology, Universitas Indonesia)
Prof. Sylvia Tiwon (Gender Anthropology, University California at Berkeley)
Prof. Saskia Wieringa (Women's History & Queer, Universitaet van Amsterdam)
Prof. Dr. Musdah Mulia (Islamic Political Thought and Gender, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah)
Dr. Nur Iman Subono (Politics & Gender, FISIPOL Universitas Indonesia)
Mariana Amiruddin, M.Hum (National Commission on Violence Against Women)
Yacinta Kurniasih, M.A. (Literature and Women, Faculty of Arts, Monash University)
Soe Tjen Marching, Ph.D (History and Women's Politics, SOAS University of London)
Dr. Andi Achdian (History & Sociology, Universitas Nasional)

PEER REVIEWERS

Prof. Mayling Oey-Gardiner (Demography & Gender, Universitas Indonesia)
David Hulse, PhD (Politics & Gender, Former Regional Representative of Ford Foundation)
Dr. Pinky Saptandari (Politics & Gender, Universitas Airlangga)
Dr. Kristi Poerwandari (Psychology & Gender, Universitas Indonesia)
Dr. Ida Ruwaida Noor (Sociology of Gender, Universitas Indonesia)
Katharine McGregor, PhD. (Women's History, University of Melbourne)
Dr. (iur) Asmin Fransiska, SH, LLM (Law & Human Rights, Universitas Katolik Atma Jaya, Jakarta)
Dr. Irene Hadiprayitno (Human Rights & International Relations, Leiden University)
Prof. Jeffrey Winters (Politics & Gender, Northwestern University)
Ro'fah, PhD. (Religion & Gender, UIN Sunan Kalijaga)
Tracy Wright Webster, PhD. (Gender & Cultural Studies, University of Western Australia)
Prof. Kim Eun Shil (Anthropology & Gender, Korean Ewha Womens University)
Prof. Merlyna Lim (Media, Technology & Gender, Carleton University)
Prof. Claudia Derichs (Politics & Gender, Universitaet Marburg)

Sari Andajani, PhD. (Medical Anthropology, Public Health & Gender, Auckland University of Technology)
Dr. Wening Udasmoro (Culture, Language & Gender, Universitas Gajah Mada)
Prof. Ayami Nakatani (Anthropology & Gender, Okayama University)
Dr. Antarini Pratiwi Arna (Law & Gender, Indonesian Scholarship and Research Support Foundation)
Dr. Widjajanti M Santoso (Gender, Sociology & Media, Indonesian Institute of Sciences)
Dr. Lidwina Inge Nurtjahyo (Law & Gender, Universitas Indonesia)
Dr. Bagus Takwin (Psychology & Gender, Universitas Indonesia)
Ikhaputri Widiyanti, M. Si. (Philosophy and Feminism, Universitas Indonesia)
Elisabet Kuswijayanti (Ecology & Gender)
Francisca Saveria Sika Ery Seda, Ph.D. (Sociology, Gender & Poverty, Universitas Indonesia)
Ruth Indiah Rahayu, M. Fil. (History, Gender & Philosophy, Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Driyarkara)
Prof. Maria Lichtmann (Christian Theology and Feminism, Appalachian State University, USA)
Assoc. Prof. Muhamad Ali (Religion & Gender, University California, Riverside)
Assoc. Prof. Mun'im Sirry (Islamic Theology & Gender, University of Notre Dame)
Assoc. Prof. Paul Bijl (History, Culture & Gender, Universiteit van Amsterdam)
Assoc. Prof. Patrick Ziegenhain (Politics & Gender, Goethe University Frankfurt)
Assoc. Prof. Alexander Horstmann (Asian Studies & Gender, University of Copenhagen)

MANAGING EDITOR

Andi Misbahul Pratiwi

EDITORIAL SECRETARY

Abby Gina Boangmanalu

EDITORS

Dewi Komalasari

SECRETARIAT AND FRIENDS OF JURNAL PEREMPUAN

Himah Sholihah
Andri Wibowo

DESIGN & LAYOUT

Dina Yulianti

ADDRESS:

Jl. Karang Pola Dalam II No. 9A, Jati Padang
Pasar Minggu, Jakarta Selatan 12540
Telp./Fax (021) 2270 1689
E-mail: yjp@jurnalperempuan.com
redaksi@jurnalperempuan.com

WEBSITE:

www.jurnalperempuan.org
www.indonesianfeministjournal.org

First published in February 2020

Contents

Editorial

Women and Peatlands	iii-iv
---------------------------	--------

Articles

• Manifesting Ecofeminism in Peatland Restoration: Policies, Actions, and Challenges	1-11
<i>Myrna Asnawati Safitri</i>	
• Women Fighting Peatland Fire: Rural Women's Experiences in Central Kalimantan and Riau Provinces	13-23
<i>Catharina Indirastuti</i>	
• Being Away from Purun: Women's Experiences in Peatland Area of Hulu Sungai Utara, South Kalimantan	24-34
<i>Enik Maslahah</i>	
• <i>Purun</i> and The Bitter Realities of Women's Struggle in Peatland Areas	35-42
<i>Taqiyuddin Ibnu Syihab, Yustina Ambarini Murdiningrum, Lukas Rumboko Wibowo</i>	
• Women Village Facilitator Action on Economic Revitalization of the Women's Group: A Case Study in 3 Peatland Villages, Central Kalimantan	43-56
<i>Nur Iman Subono, Andi Misbahul Pratiwi & Abby Gina Boangmanalu</i>	

Women and the Peatland

Indonesia's peatland areas reach to 22.5 million hectares. It contributes to the 47% of the whole peatland area in the tropical region, and it is considered as a country with the widest peatland area in Southeast Asia. Therefore, the existence of peatland in Indonesia brings important meaning to the global environmental sustainability. Unfortunately, the discourse around peatland rarely surfaces except during certain situation such as during forest and land fires. The emerging discourse on peatland generally evolves around ecological and economical aspects, though its existence has such bigger dimensions, from social, cultural, political, including gender justice dimension. With such extensive peatland areas in Indonesia, it is obvious that peatland has important meaning to the lives of Indonesians, especially for people who live around the peatland area, including women.

As an environmental issue, discourse on peatland has been deliberately discussed for quite some time, at least since the adoption of *the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat* (Ramsar Convention) in the city of Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. Ramsar Convention has emphasized on the importance of prevention from destruction, prevention of the loss of wetland, and the importance of preservation of wetlands as part of sustainable development. Indonesia has already ratified Ramsar Convention since 1991. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classify peatland as a valuable earth's ecosystem due to its highly regarded function for biodiversity sustainability, as source of water, prevention of flood, and to overcome climate change.

Ecofeminism generally identifies the roots of natural destruction, and oppression of women as the result of patriarchy dominance. Inline to Karen J. Warren's view, the hierarchical and oppressive of patriarchy's point of view have oppressed both the nature and women. The destruction of peatland area in Indonesia has happened since the New Order regime, and one of the examples of this was the *Rice Mega Project* that has turned the peatland area in Kalimantan into rice fields. Aggressive development, and disasters such as forest and land fires, that have been going on for decades have accumulated and became legacy of problem to the peatland area in Indonesia that we are facing today.

The biggest land and forest fires in Indonesia in the middle of 2015 was a warning and important threatening signal to the peatland area in Indonesia. This

was then marked by the establishment of the Peatland Restoration Agency (Badan Restorasi Gambut-BRG) by the government of Indonesia in 2016. BRG is a non-structural agency that reports directly to the President that is given mandate to coordinate and facilitate peatland restoration measures in seven provinces, namely: Jambi, West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, South Kalimantan, Riau, South Sumatera and Papua. BRG's peatland restoration concept acknowledges that land/ soil restoration cannot be implemented solely in its ecological-geological dimension, but it should also consider social recovery of the community as part of the peatland ecosystem. Consequently, then women should also be both beneficiaries and agent in the restoration process.

Women have big interest for environmental sustainability. Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva, ecofeminism thinkers and activists, argue that women have big stake in environmental sustainability. It is because the gender role charged to women to do parenting and daily life management. In order to give sufficient nutrition for their children and/or family, getting clean potable water, and to meet all daily needs, women would have the interest on the availability and sustainability of natural resources such as water, air, land, and flora and fauna.

Women who live in peatland area are clear depiction of the interrelation between environmental destruction and its consequence to women. One of the local economic and cultures in peatland area in Kalimantan is *purun* weaving (*purun* is one type of grass that commonly grows in peatland area and often used as weaving material). The skill of *purun* weaving is generally done by women, and are usually done during women's spare time of their work in caregiving in their household or family. The destruction of peatland area has caused the diminishing of *purun* that previously grew wild in nature around villages. When *purun* is no longer grow around the village, the women traditional weavers have to procure *purun* from outside of their village, or have to incur extra cost to purchase *purun* for their handicraft materials.

Forest and land fires in peatland areas have cause economic loss and trauma to the community. Women are the group who experience the direct impact of land and forest fires in their daily lives such as draining of water source, destruction of farms, and the extinct of

local natural resources such as fish. Despite of that, the forest fire's prevention programs still disregard women. Though when the fire happens, women also participate in extinguishing fires whether in the farm fields or housing settlement. Women also have to find measure to address the following impacts of forest and land fires to their families. For example, women have to find ways to prevent smoke to get into their homes, or they have to take care of family members who get ill due to the smog coming from the forest and land fires.

The experience of peatland destruction and its impact to communities and women amplify ecofeminism argument such as Ynestra King. King argue that the destruction and/or oppression against human being is rooted in the hierarchal and unequal relations. Similar to the unequal power relation between men and women, the impact of peatland area destruction, forest and land fires, smog, and many others, also describe the power relation in the existing management and use of peatland areas.

Nevertheless, ecofeminism does not stop on the argument of the interrelation between the exploitation against nature and the domination towards women. Ecofeminism also views women's agency in restoring and preserving the environmental sustainability. The experience of women facilitators in the Desa Peduli Gambut (villages that involve in peatland restoration program) show the political women empowerment in finding solutions in addressing structural and cultural challenges in the peatland restoration processes. Ecofeminism offers a transformation to the human perception that act superior against of the nature, through gender justice lenses. Similar call then is also proposed through the knowledge that are presented from women's experiences, as well as their efforts in restoring and maintaining the peatland areas, in the current Jurnal Perempuan's edition. Have a great time exploring! (**Atnike Nova Sigiro**)

Abstracts Sheet

Myrna Asnawati Safitri
(Badan Restorasi Gambut dan Universitas Pancasila,
DKI Jakarta, Indonesia)

**Manifesting Ecofeminism in Peatland Restoration:
Policies, Actions, and Challenges**

Kode Naskah: DDC 305
Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 25 No. 1, Februari 2020, hal. 1-11, 24 daftar
pustaka

Degradation of peatland ecosystems occurs as a result of excessive exploitation leading to peat drainage and fires. This was influenced by a masculinity perspective in resource tenure and utilization. Ecofeminism presents a different perspective on narratives and inter-relationships of human with nature, including the place of women in them. Injustice that befalls women occur due to unequal power relations in the control and utilization of resources in the peatland ecosystem. This paper discusses the Government of Indonesia's efforts to reduce gender injustice through Peatland Restoration's policy. Two policies are discussed here, namely the Social Safety Safeguard and Peat Cares Village Program. It is concluded that women's participation must be able to resolve the imbalance of power relations among women as well as between gender. This requires sufficient time and everlasting education.

Key words: Ecofeminism, power relation, peatland, peatland restoration.

Catharina Indirastuti
(Kemitraan-Partnership for Governance Reform,
Pasar Minggu, Kota Jakarta Selatan)

**Women Fighting Peatland Fire:
Rural Women's Experiences in Central Kalimantan
and Riau Provinces**

Kode Naskah: DDC 305
Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 25 No. 1, Februari 2020, hal. 13-23, 1 grafik, 9
daftar pustaka

Forest and land fires that repeatedly burned millions of hectares of peatlands in Indonesia were the result of decades of unsustainable peatland governance and management. Rural women and men living on peatlands have different experiences of forest and land fires. Intersectionality between gender and classes, geographical locations, and ethnicity further adds nuances to these different experiences. This article explores women's experiences of fighting forest and land fires in three target villages in Central Kalimantan and Riau provinces where the Peat Care Village Program was implemented by the Peat Restoration Agency. The network of power relations that women must endure and a priori arguments on gendered roles and responsibilities have weakened women's position in fighting land and forest fires. Women do not have access to resources to prevent and fight against land and forest fires, while in reality firefighting activities require the involvement of women, particularly when they happen on their land or living space. Women's experiences of facing forest and land fires are reflected using the feminist political ecology approach to highlight the multifaceted impacts on women.

Keywords: forest and land fire, intersectionality, peat villages, women's access.

Enik Maslahah
(Badan Restorasi Gambut (BRG),
Hulu Sungai Utara, Kalimantan Selatan)

**Being Away from Purun: Women's Experiences in Peatland
Area of Hulu Sungai Utara, South Kalimantan**

Kode Naskah: DDC 305
Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 25 No. 1, Februari 2020, hal. 25-34, 4 tabel, 10
daftar pustaka

Purun is a typical plant that grow in peatland area that has important functions for people living in peatland area. The availability of *purun* is now decreasing due to changes in land management and environmental destruction. Almost all of the plantation commodities in the peatlands area, management of peatlands in the forestry, agriculture, plantation and fisheries sectors apply exploitative and pragmatic methods, while ignoring environmental sustainability. Furthermore, environmental damage also occurs due to disasters such as forest and land fires that often occur in peatland areas in Indonesia. One of the damages happen to peatland area is the damage and scarcity of *purun*. As users and beneficiaries of *purun*, women become the affected group that face the impact of peatland destruction. This paper describes the experiences and efforts of women in peatland areas to restore land and restore the existence of *purun* in their villages.

Keywords: women, peatland, *purun*, peatland restoration.

¹Taqiyuddin Ibnu Syihab, ²Yustina Ambarini Murdiningrum,
³Lukas Rumboko Wibowo
(¹²Epistema Institute, ³P3SEKPI, DKI Jakarta, Indonesia)

***Purun* and the Bitter Realities of Women's Struggle in
Peatland Areas**

Kode Naskah: DDC 305
Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 25 No. 1, Februari 2020, hal. 35-42, 2 gambar, 21
daftar pustaka

This paper aims to examine the elimination process of traditional conservation that has been built for many years by women on peatlands. This article reveals the struggle and multiple burdens of women in conservation, to do reproductive and productive work in the midst of clashing interests in peatland area. Research conducted shows that there is a shift in the mode of production from subsistence toward exploitative hegemony by capitalistic interests, as a product of modern scientific knowledge. Corporations compete for peatland areas to accumulate capital which then threatens the *purun* and the *purun* weaving community of women. This has not only led to degradation of the *purun* ecosystem but also the loss of source of life and cultural identity for the *purun* weaving community. From an ecofeminist perspective, investment policies and regimes with minimum controls have systematically destroyed peat ecosystems, resulting in economic powerlessness and impoverishment of women.

Keywords: *purun*, women and natural resources, women and peatlands.

¹Nur Iman Subono, ²Andi Misbahul Pratiwi, ²Abby Gina
(¹Departemen Ilmu Politik, Universitas Indonesia &
²Jurnal Perempuan, DKI Jakarta)

**Women Village Facilitator Action on Economic
Revitalization of the Women's Group: A Case Study in 3
Peatland Villages, Central Kalimantan**

Kode Naskah: DDC 305

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 25 No. 1, Februari 2020, hal. 43-56, 1 tabel, 2
grafik, 17 daftar pustaka

Peatlands play an important role in the ecological and economic aspects. Peatlands degradation in various regions in Indonesia brings economic issues, especially for women. The involvement of women in

the peatland restoration program as a strategy needs to be reviewed. This study focuses on the involvement of women in the peatland restoration as a village facilitator, mainly on aspects of economic revitalization. This study focuses in 3 Villages in Central Kalimantan Province, Jabiren Village, Tumbang Nusa Village, and Gandang Barat Village. The main question of this research is how are the actions, challenges, and strategies experienced by women as village facilitators in DPG program. Based on in-depth interviews with relevant actors and literature studies, this research finds, 1) the economic revitalization program conducted by women village facilitators build the economic resilience of rural women communities and changes the gender relations; 2) women village facilitators faced structural and cultural obstacles in their action; 3) the program is also the part of political actions for peatlands preservation.

Keyword: women village facilitator, peatlands restoration, economic revitalization, power.

Women Village Facilitator Action on Economic Revitalization of the Women's Group: A Case Study in 3 peatland villages, Central Kalimantan

Nur Iman Subono, Andi Misbahul Pratiwi, and Abby Gina

Department of Political Sciences, Universitas Indonesia & Jurnal Perempuan
Jalan Karang Pola Dalam II, No. 9A, Jatipadang-Pasar Minggu, South Jakarta

boni.subono@gmail.com, pratiwiandi@jurnalperempuan.com, abbygina@jurnalperempuan.com

Manuscript Chronology: received 19 April 2020, revised 21 April 2020, accepted 23 April 2020

Abstract

Peatlands play an important role in the ecological and economic aspects. Peatlands degradation in various regions in Indonesia brings economic issues, especially for women. The involvement of women in the peatland restoration program as a strategy needs to be reviewed. This study focuses on the involvement of women in the peatland restoration as a village facilitator, mainly on aspects of economic revitalization. This study focuses in 3 Villages in Central Kalimantan Province, Jabiren Village, Tumbang Nusa Village, and Gandang Barat Village. The main question of this research is how are the actions, challenges, and strategies experienced by women as village facilitators in DPG program. Based on in-depth interviews with relevant actors and literature studies, this research finds, 1) the economic revitalization program conducted by women village facilitators build the economic resilience of rural women communities and changes the gender relations; 2) women village facilitators faced structural and cultural obstacles in their action; 3) the program is also the part of political actions for peatlands preservation.

Keyword: women village facilitator, peatlands restoration, economic revitalization, power

Background

Peatland preservation in Indonesia's has become crucial not only in term of ecological aspect but also sociological aspect – community based. Indonesia has 22.5 million hectares of peatlands (Global Wetlands 2019), including the companies' concession areas. Based on Global Wetlands' data (February 2020), province with the vastest peatland area in Indonesia is Papua with areas of 6.27 million hectares, followed by Central Kalimantan

(2.69 million hectares), Riau (2.22 million hectares), West Kalimantan (1.78 million hectares), and South Sumatra (1.73 million hectares) (see Table 1). These vast peatland areas are also served as the habitat of various animals, plants, and communities who live around peatland areas. Therefore, the existence of a peatland does not only have ecological consequence towards the nature, but also consequences in term of social, economy, and even political for the society, especially those who live around peatland areas.

Table 1. Peatland Size by Province

Province	Peatland Size (ha)
Papua	6,274,046
Central Kalimantan	2,691,885
Riau	2,220,890
West Kalimantan	1,789,448
South Sumatra	1,731,766
South Kalimantan	562,401
Jambi	477,417

Source: Global Wetlands (2020)

Peatland only comprises 3% of the overall global land surface, but it they store at least twice as much carbon as all of the forest on earth (Joosten 2007; Agus & Subiksa 2008). One of its features that makes the important role of peatland for hydrology's system is its capability to function as a big sponge that could absorp water. During the rainy season, peatland could function as flood prevention, later during dry season, peatland could provide water supplies for the surrounding communities (Wahyunto et al. 2004). Peatland is a home of biodiversity, clean water, and function as a 'giant sponge' that can prevent flood and climate change (IUCN 2017). The Southeast Asia is a region that has the widest tropical peatlands in the world with its size of about 56% of the total global tropical peatland.

Indonesia contributes of about 47% of the total global tropical peatland, making it the country with the biggest peatland area in Southeast Asia (BRG 2016). However, the peatland in Indonesia is currently facing serious threats, such as fires, human-made fires, and massive land conversion. The diminished and degraded peatland are both ecological and sociological problems. Destruction of peatland in many areas in Indonesia have brought economic problems for the society. There are at least two causes of the destruction. First, the application of development policies that are biased towards nature that marked since the *mega rice project* under Soeharto era. Second, unsustainable peatland governance by the state and also the society (Indirastuti & Pratiwi 2019). According to Vandana Shiva, development should bring welfare instead of creating new hardship in the form of poverty. Development that rely on the exploitation of nature would directly affect women's livelihood (Shiva 1988).

In Indonesia, environmental preservations' actions at local level are done by state, individuals, and also collectively – in a broader concept is also known as social movement. In the context of peatland recovery in Indonesia, the peatland restoration agenda has been formally and institutionally assigned under the Peatland Restoration Body (BRG). On January 6, 2016, the President of the Republic of Indonesia issued the Presidential Regulation No. 1 year 2016 on the establishment of the

Peatland Restoration Body (*Badan Restorasi Gambut*, BRG) as a non-structural body that is responsible to the President, under the coordination of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. BRG was given mandate to coordinate and to facilitate the restoration of 2,492,523 hectares of peatlands in seven priority provinces, namely Jambi, West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, South Kalimantan, Riau, South Sumatra, and Papua until year of 2020. BRG's intervention has mapped 31 Peatland Hydrological Units (*Kesatuan Hidrologis Gambut*, KHG) in the seven provinces, those are 7 KHGs in Riau, 4 KHGs in Jambi, 5 KHGs in South Sumatra, 5 KHGs in West Kalimantan, 5 KHGs in Central Kalimantan, 4 KHGs in South Kalimantan, and 1 KHG in Papua (BRG 2019).

BRG applies peatland restoration's concept that does not only restore the land from the ecological-geological perspective, but also restore the community as a part of peatland's ecosystem. Thus, one of BRG missions is to mobilize community participation in peatland's restoration. The peatland restoration's participation model is targeted to bring social, economical, and ecological changes and benefits as well as realizing sustainable peatland's governance. In doing its mandates, BRG collaborates with partner organizations, one of which is *Kemitraan*.

In order to respond to peatland ecological as both from the ecological and social aspects, BRG, together with its partners, has established a program called Peat Care Village (*Desa Peduli Gambut/ DPG*). Through DPG program, the sustainable management of peatland at the village level is integrated into the policies. DPG is a program framework for development interventions in villages/urban villages that are situated within and around the Peatland Hydrological Units (*Kesatuan Hidrologis Gambut/ KHG*), that are included as peatland restoration's target. Until the end of 2018, 75 DPGs have been established along with their village facilitators in each of the village (BRG 2019).

A report released by BRG in 2016 mentioned that there are at least 10,465 villages located in peatland areas in Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Papua. This means there are many rural communities whose lives are depended to peatlands (see Table 2).

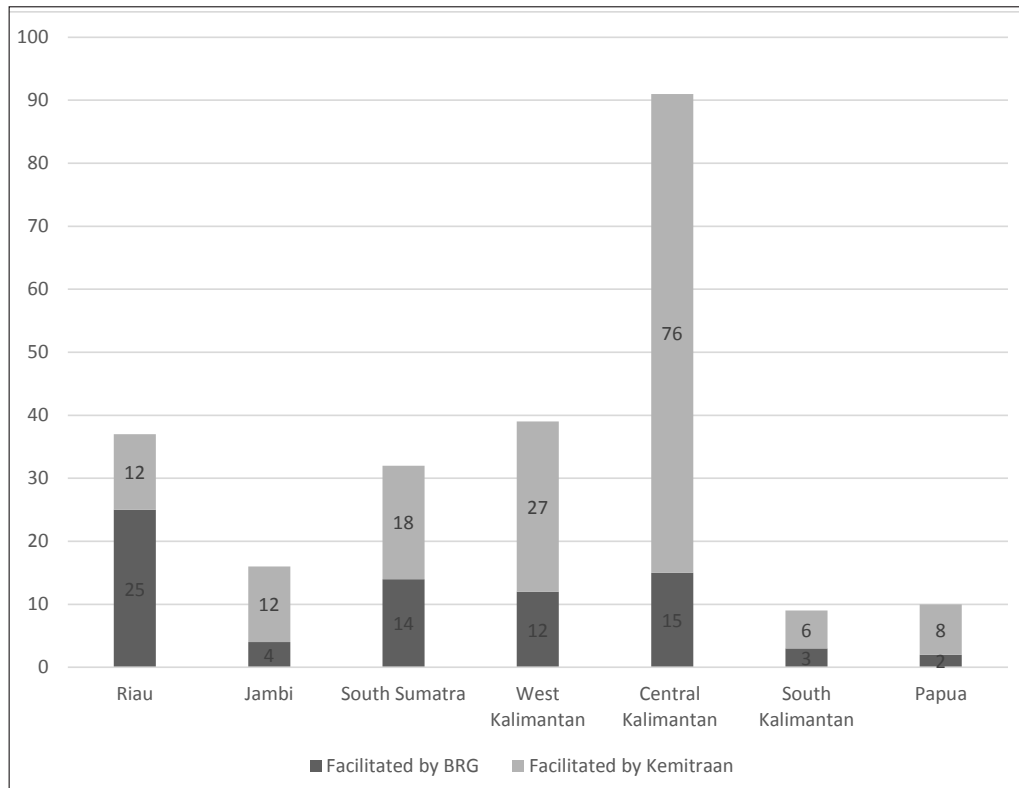
Table 2. Number of Villages in Peatland Area

Island	Peatland size (ha)	Number of villages in Peatland area
Sumatra	5,965,220	5,011
Kalimantan	5,036,164	2,990
Papua	4,931,054	2,464
Total	15,932,438	10,465

Source: BRG 2016

Furthermore, in the context of DPG program, there are 75 villages have already been under the facilitation of BRG. Since 2018, there were 109 villages have become DPG's village under the facilitation of Kemitraan. In early

2020, there were 50 additional villages have also been facilitated by Kemitraan, therefore the total villages were 159 DPG's villages.

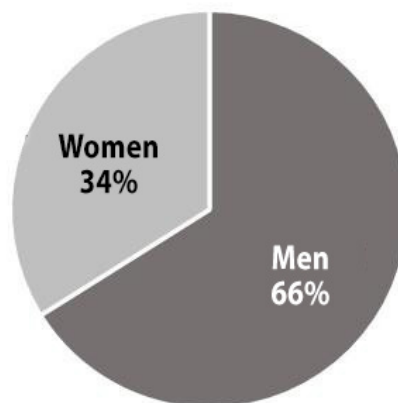


Graphic 1. Number of DPG Facilitated by BRG and Kemitraan by Province

Source: Based on BRG and Kemitraan Data Analysis (April 2020)

One of DPG's infrastructures is the village facilitators (fasdes) -- who are assigned to facilitate the rural communities during the sustainable peatland restoration process. According to their gender, there are 28 women and 48 men of village facilitators run DPG program in

BRG's facilitated villages. Meanwhile, there were total of 108 villages consist of 35 women and 73 men assigned in the villages that are facilitated by Kemitraan. Therefore, the gender ratio of village facilitators are 66.1% men to 33.9% women.



Graphic 2. DPG's Village Facilitators by Gender

Source: BRG and Kemitraan Data Analysis (April 2020).

Village facilitators act as the extension of DPG program who work at the site level. The facilitators work to facilitate, organize discussion, raise awareness, and encourage rural communities' participation in the sustainable peatland restoration's actions. DPG program approach of using the Village Law as an 'entrance', therefore before being assigned in any village, the village facilitators were equipped with knowledge about village's planning and development policy. Through the village facilitators, BRG encourages the village government and the community to integrate peatland restoration into the village planning and development policies. The tasks of the village facilitators include, among others, to facilitate formulation of Village Regulation on Protection and Management of Peatland Ecosystem (*Perlindungan dan Pengelolaan Ekosistem Gambut/ PPEG*), to strengthen the Village-owned Enterprise (BUMDes), as well as assisting Village Forum in formulating Village Government Work Plan (RKPDes).

There are 10 activities under DPG Program, those are: (1) Assisting and assigning village/urban village facilitators; (2) Social mapping and participatory mapping in the community's peatland areas; (3) Facilitating village planning process by integrating the aspects of peatland ecosystem's protection and management; (4) Facilitating of the establishment of peatland village area into the prioritized Peatland Hydrological Unit landscape for restoration; (5) Strengthening institutional capacity through facilitating the formulation of regulation at village level and peat care community group; (6) Facilitating the development of local innovation and compatible technology; (7) Economic empowerment through facilitating skill development, economic institution such as Village-owned Enterprises (BUMDes); (8) Facilitating capacity building on community's conflict resolution; (9) Facilitating community's access and legal rights through Social Forestry or Agrarian Reform; and (10) Strengthening community's peatland restoration monitoring capacity (BRG 2019).

From the percentage above, women's involvement as village facilitators in peatland villages has reached more than 30%. In the study on feminist political representation, the presence of women (referred to as village facilitators in this study) is assumed or expected to bring changes for other women. With regards to the tasks and functions of village facilitators, it is obvious that the village facilitators play a key role in the success and failure of a program. Based on this argument, this study aims to further identify

the role of women village facilitators of DPG Program for women empowerment in the peatland villages. Women village facilitators is chosen as the main focus because in many development programs and top down empowerment, the success' indicators are measured based on program's achievement while overlooking the grass roots stories as well as the experiences of struggles from the key actors such as the village facilitators. This study aims to give space for narration of the women village facilitators as one of the key actors of women's economic empowerment in peatland villages.

Methods

This is a qualitative study focusing on women village facilitators as the research's subject. This study was performed in 3 DPG villages in Central Kalimantan Province, those are: Jabiren Village, Tumbang Nusa Village, and West Gandang Village. Those villages were selected as the research location because those villages have been assisted by women village facilitators and have undergone changes where the women's economic empowerment activities in those villages have already been categorized as successful. These are the criteria used as the basis for selecting the village facilitators as the subjects in this research -- the connection between the villages and the village facilitators is inseparable.

The research further explored how the actions, challenges, and strategies were experienced by women as village facilitators in DPG Program. In this research, the actions that were studied are on economic empowerment through facilitating skills advancement and economic institutions such as BUMDes. The next question is whether women village facilitators have brought changes towards a better condition for women in peatlands. What are the challenges faced by women village facilitators as 'a woman', and what empowerment strategies have they used?

This research applied in-depth interviews and literature studies as its data collection method. In-depth interviews were conducted with 3 women village facilitators in each of the villages, 1 DPG program coordinator from Kemitraan, and 1 DPG program unit manager at the provincial level. The collected data were analyzed using feminist perspective and theories by looking at the complexity of the situations, experiences, and barriers faced by the women village facilitators in each of the villages.

Women Village Facilitators Actions: Building Economic Independence of Women in Peatland Villages

Rina Septu Ningsih has become a village facilitator for DPG program since July 2018 in Jabiren Village, Central Kalimantan. During her work to facilitate the community, Rina lives in a rented house together with other village facilitators. Being born and grew up in a transmigrant village in peatland area in Pulang Pisau Central Kalimantan, have made Rina, a graduate from major in Biology Science, interested to work as a village facilitator for peatland villages. Although she did not have any previous experience in community assistance, Rina has the willingness to improve her capacity. After almost 2 years facilitating the community in Jabiren Village, she has achieved and implemented a lot of program innovations, particularly in term of increasing women's economy.

In Jabiren Village, before burning method to clear land for farming was prohibited, the community used to burn for land clearing. The policy that prohibits burning has made the community in Jabiren Village who previously depended on agriculture for a living, considered that peatland can no longer being cultivated. The community then depended only on rubber and sego trees. Some others who were still persistent to do farming without could survive although the cost became higher than before.

Almost 70% of people in Jabiren Village are rubber tappers. Rina, as the village facilitator, explained that the circulation of money from selling rubber is relatively faster than from farming. In addition to selling rubber, some of the community members also sell rattan and local fruits such as durian and paken (Latin: *Durio kutejensis*) to get additional income. After the big forest fires in Central Kalimantan in 2015 -- that destroyed some of the community's farms -- only rubber farms that are still reliable for fulfilling life necessities.

In Jabiren Village, one of DPG program that has been running well and brought a big impact on women is the economic revitalization activity. Rina Septu, as the village facilitator, invited young women and 40 years old and above women to preserve the weaving skills that have been inherited from their ancestors for generations. These young and middle-age women exchanged weaving patterns from each other, and the younger women learned to plait from the older weaver. Rina developed sewing and weaving rattan training programs in collaboration with the Village-owned Enterprise (BUMDes). The training programs consists of 3 activities: 1) rattan weaving, 2) sewing rattan bag, and 3) weaving

training for young women in the village. In addition to improve the plaiting skills, these activities have become the space among the village women to exchange weaving patterns.

So Jabiren Village is a local village, not a transmigrant village. Women who are 40 years old and above have weaving skills. However, since the skill has not been used for quite some time, there are only several people who are still weaving. The remainings are older women of 50 years old and above, and also 70 years old, who are still actively weaving. The women here are happy with the trainings, because they find the training helpful. All of this time the fee for weaving rattan is quite high, and business of sewing rattan weaving has been existed in this village. But here we help the women to able to sew by themselves so that the production cost would be reduced. (Rina Septu 2020, interview on April 6)

Jabiren Village is one of the villages that produce woven rattan. Nevertheless, according to Rina there is only a small number of women who do this activity. Whereas the rattan could be obtained from the community's owned farms. The task of harvesting the rattan is performed by both men and women. Those who want to collect rattan has to swim across Kahayan River, that is usually done by men. Then, the women would clean the rattans, and sell them in the market or to the business of rattan weaving in the village. The production chain of this woven rattan starts from the elderly women weavers. These elderly women do not collect rattan themselves, some buy it from their neighbours, and some other have their healthy family members to get the rattan. The rattan woven with various patterns are then bought by the business people to be sewn and formed into bags, wallets, baskets, etc. These woven products were then sold with the price from IDR 100,000 to IDR 500,000, depending on the type of the product. Hence, women do not produce the rattan woven by themselves, there is a long production chain, so there is only small profit go to the village's women.

In weaving training program, the women are taught to produce their own rattan woven. Therefore, they would the production chain of rattan woven, starting from getting the raw materials, weaving, sewing, and selling. According to Rina, this program has not given a significant influence to the women women because the profit is still small and still being used as starter capital. However, for Rina, there is change in the mindset of the peatland village community on the importance of conserving the rattan weaving skill. In the past, they did not see the importance to learn about various weaving patterns. Now, they realize that the knowledge about weaving patterns could connect them to the history of

their ancestors. During the training process, Rina also has archived more than 30 weaving patterns. According to her, many of the elderly women weavers have forgotten the name, meaning, and content of the patterns. Therefore, some of them could no longer able to explain the meaning of some of these weaving patterns.

The weaving training is followed by the establishment of a business unit that is facilitated by the village government. The name of the business unit is Jawetabela. The women members of this business group agreed that 10% of the profit gained from selling the weaving products would be donated to the peatland restoration activity in the village, while the remaining profit would be managed by the business unit.

So, the village provides sewing machine for the women. They sew in the village. The village also sells other supporting materials for produce woven product such as the lining, zipperz, textiles, leather materials, buttons, and others (Rina Septu 2020, Interview on April 6)

The economic revitalization activity through the development of rattan weaving business have not only brought positive impacts to women economy and preservation of women's knowledge in the peatland village, but have also brought change in the practice of gender equality at home. Results from program monitoring performed by Rina as the village facilitator find some change in the relation between men and women at the household level.

The main activity of these women is rubber tapping in the farms with their husbands.

After finish working at the farms, they work together to harvest rattan. The husbands take the rattan. After cleaning the rattans from its thorns, the wives then drying and splitting the rattan. The husbands will help to scrub the rattan. The the wives will weave the rattan. (Rina Septu 2020, Interview on April,6)

Before the weaving training was organized, rattan processing was taken as side activity for the community because it the economic value was considered insignificant. Activities to harvest rattan were also not considered as important activities of the community, both for men and women. Now, with the trainings, the men are more eager to harvest the rattan for that would be weaved by the women. There is an awareness that rattan can have a high economic value. Here, the collaboration between men and women is visible.

Febrianti is a woman village facilitator in Tumbang Nusa Village since March 2019. Before working as the

village facilitator in DPG program, Febri has had 5 years experiences of working as a village facilitator for various development programs. During her time as a village facilitator in Tumbang Nusa Village, she has to travel the 35 km distance with travel time of about 30 minutes to go back and forth from her house to the village.

Just like Jabiren Village, Tumbang Nusa Village is a local village, not a transmigrant village. 99% of the population are Dayak ethnic. During fishing season, or when there is an abundant amount of fish, the majority of the population works to catch fish in peat swamp using traditional fishing method. Other activities that they do are collecting *purun* plants to be sold, local plant nursery, and selling local fruits. Tumbang Nusa Village has peatland areas with a thickness of more than 3 meters. 90% of the land of this village is peat swamp and mineral soil. Due to such condition, the houses in the village adopt the stilt house style.

Fires occur almost every year in Tumbang Nusa Village. Before the big forest fire in 2015, many villagers used shifting farming and use burning for land clearing. After a regulation prohibit this practice, the villagers no longer work as farmers, and only do fishing for income. Furthermore, the Farming without Fire System (*Pertanian Lahan Tanpa Bakar*, PLTB) is also not suitable to be applied in a peatland with more than 3 meters in height. The characteristics of peatland in this village prevent the villagers from planting trees. So far, they only do planting using polybags at home. It is because, during the dry season the peat swamp can be very dry, while in the rainy season the swamp is covered with tide water. Clean water is not available in this village, and the villagers use the water from Kahayan River to bathe, wash, and also for daily consumption.

The economic revitalization program developed by Febri in this village is the production of *purun* straw by women groups. Febri revealed there are 3 sectors can developed based on the environmental-based village economic potential mapping, those are: 1) fishery sector, 2) *purun* processing, 3) vegetable nursery. Febri then chose to develop *purun* processing because it specifically aims to increase women's groups economy. Moreover, there fishery and nursery sectors have been much intervened by the village government.

Most who process these *purun* products are women, with a low sale price. So, we thought, how increasing the value of these *purun* would affect the women and the activity can also be done in their neighbourhood vicinity. That was why we decided to create a program to increase the value of *purun*. (Febri 2020, Interview on April 6)

So far, according to Febri, *purun* that were collected by women from the peat swamp were only sold in its natural form without any processing. The price for one bundle of raw *purun* with a diameter of 1 meter was only IDR 4,000. This price is very low considering the process of collecting *purun* that is quite difficult as the women have to go to the field, swim in the peat swamp, and carry the *purun* back home. Collecting *purun* is considered as a non-economical work. Therefore, men are not interested to do it, and that is why so far this work are done only by women.

The program that is facilitated by the BUMdes includes the overall process of producing *purun* straw, starting from training up to selling. There were twenty women participated in this training. The program schemes to empower the women to produce *purun* straws from their houses. While the marketing is performed collectively with the village government. In 1 day, these women can produce 500-1,000 *purun* straws. The straws produced by women of Tumbang Nusa Village have gone across the islands and country. Febri mentioned that the straws have been sold in the local market and other markets outside Kalimantan, such as in Java and Bali. These straws have also been sold to Norway by reseller. The price of the straws is IDR 10,000/box (containing 25 straws). However, when buying in bulks, the price is IDR 20,000/100 pcs.

After producing *purun* straw, they (the women) can pay for the electricity and the internet. They can also have additional money for food. So, in the past, the husband lets the wife go collecting *purun* from the field. Now, the husband goes to the field, and the wife works on the production of straw. (Febri 2020, interview on April 6)

This *purun* straw production program also affects the economy of women in Tumbang Nusa Village. Moreover, the improvement of this women's economy has triggered men's participation in helping the women. Febri described that before the *purun* straw production existed, the men never helped the women to go to the farm to collect *purun*. Now, after *purun* is seen as having economic value, the men are willing to help the women to collect *purun* from the farm.

Kurnia, has been a village facilitator from Gandang Barat Village, Maluku Sub-district, Central Kalimantan, since 2018. Before working as a village facilitator for DPG program, Kurnia had been facilitating entrepreneurship for a year in Sebelimbing Village, Kotabaru District, South Kalimantan. She has worked also for the Ministry of Agriculture program in two districts, Kotabaru District and Banjar District, namely Upsus Pajale program and rubber revitalization program for rubber farmers. According to

Kurnia, working as village facilitators is more of a call from the heart. Graduated with bachelor degree in agriculture, she admitted to be interested and close to environmental issue and field works. In her work as the village facilitator, Kurnia has implemented economic revitalization actions.

The majority of community of Gandang Barat Village are transmigrants. During the 3 months of documenting village profile, Kurnia discovered that the majority of the villagers are food farmers and plantation farmers. These works have been done by the villagers since they opened the land until today. According to the village potential map, Kurnia set the focus of the economic revitalization program on the economic empowerment of coffee processing entrepreneurship. According to Kurnia, the villagers have been working on coffee farming since 1982. However, so far, they only sold the raw coffee beans without any processing and so that the selling price is low.

In Gandang Barat Village, Kurnia give facilitation to a women group consisting of 6 women. According to Kurnia this program specifically focuses on women's group. The women she works with are women ranging from 25 years old to the elderly. Two of the members are women have been actively involved in community organizations such as Posyandu (an integrated health post cadre), teaching in playgroup, and in Village Assembly Body (Badan Permusyawaratan Desa/ BPD), while the other four members are housewives. According to Kurnia, the women in is happy with the program and consistently run the program. This is because the initiative for entrepreneurship came from the aspiration of the women.

The economic revitalization program that I am currently doing indeed focuses on women...In the economic revitalization activity that I do, the six members are all women, but the husbands sometime also help during the activities. Here, I do not see any restrictions from the husbands for the women to have activities outside their homes. But, if we carefully observe the household activities up to the activities outside homes, then women have bigger portion. (...) Gender equality have influenced the family and village because they have used to have activities outside home, both in an organization and in community social activities. Therefore, from the perspective in equality, it can be said that there is an equality in the works done (by both gender). As for the village, these women have been considered as public figures in the village so that they can influence other women. (Kurnia 2020, Interview on April 18)

The activities facilitated by Kurnia have impacted on gender equality issues at the family and community levels. By joining the village women's group, the women

become used to work in organization and expressing opinions.

In the village activities, such as in BPD, more women are involved. So, right now, there are 2 men and 3 women. In the village office, the ratio is also balanced. (Kurnia 2020, Interview on April 6)

Economically, the empowerment that were conducted by Kurnia cannot yet be measured, both on the individual's and also on the family's economy. It is because there has not been any comprehensive calculation on the business earnings yet.

If we look at the post-harvest perspective that we do is showing that the profit is bigger if we sell the coffee in the form of processed product compared to the usual post-harvest form. The usual coffee harvesting, the farmers only sell the beans with fluctuating market price, but when it is managed by a group the price is fixed, the calculation is fixed, so it is better to sell it as product. (Kurnia 2020, interview on April 6)

As an illustration, Kurnia explained that a farmer can get a profit of more or less IDR 150,000/50 kg of coffee beans (this price is fluctuating, depending on the market demand) or equals to IDR 2,000 to IDR 3,000/Kg and/or a maximum of IDR 5,000/Kg. However, with further processing process, the farmers can gain more profit.



Picture 1. Febri Facilitating Community Management Area Mapping in Peatland

Source: private collection of village facilitator

The economic empowerment implemented by Kurnia is a social-based economic empowerment. This means that the economic activities are based on the environmental awareness. Some of the profit gained from this program is allocated for peatland restoration activities. 10% of the profit is allocated for peat's protection activities. The

The usual practice is the farmers' coffee beans are bought by the women's groups for further processing by cleaning up the coffee beans into clean coffee beans and to clean up the remaining coffee skin that previously was never being cleaned up before being sold to the middlemen. During the cleaning process, the group divide the beans into three parts, those are whole bean, cracked bean, and mixed beans (2 kinds of mixed beans and only to clean the skin). The selling of the beans is depended on consumers' demands. From the previous experiences, the profit from selling of 50 kg coffee beans could get IDR 100,000, - up to IDR 150,000, - with maximum profit of IDR 3,000/ kg. However, when the processing was good and proper then the selling price could be better. (Kurnia 2020, Interview on 18 April)

Beside post-harvest coffee processing, Kurnia also has developed the red coffee cherry picking program. The program also aims to improve community's economy. Currently, this program is still at socialization stage, a stage to change the mindset and practice of coffee picking. From harvesting the coffee by picking all the coffee cherries (both ripe and unripe ones), into a targeted picking only the ripe cherries. Kurnia have been trying to influence the coffee picking practice by giving price's comparison of higher price when farmers use the correct method. Even though the economic empowerment program through post-harvest coffee processing is not the main economic activity of the women's group, but they have gained benefits from the activity.



Picture 2. Kurni Facilitating Village's Community

Source: private collection of village facilitator

peat protection activities could be done in the form of coffee plant nursery and monitoring over the fire's prone areas. The economic empowerment applied by Kurnia is inseparable from activities on the conservation of peatland ecosystem. Hence, the strengthening of the women group also means the strengthening of women's

participation in managing and maintaining the peatland ecosystem in the village.

Challenges and Barriers Faced by Women Village Facilitators: Structural & Cultural

In implementing DPG program, the women village facilitators have faced challenges and barriers, both structurally and culturally. During the community empowerment's processes, the women facilitators do not only interact with the communities but also with the village government. Yesa Hardyanto, the coordinator of DPG program of Kemitraan, explained that one of the challenges faced by the young women facilitators who just graduated from university is the communication strategy with the village government. According to him, the facilitators who have experiences are relatively capable to handle communication issues.

The communication challenge has become an important issue in the work of DPG's village facilitators. Andi Kiki, the Project Management Unit (PMU) of Central Kalimantan, observed that both men and women facilitators have faced challenges in communication. According to Andi, under his supervision, there is no difference of attitude from both the village governments and the communities towards the village facilitators from different genders.

There is not any Head of Village or village government who asked for men facilitators. The only difference is the treatment. The different is how they treat the men village facilitators and how they treat women village facilitators. The different treatment for example is that women facilitators cannot be hosted in family whose members are all men. They should live in a different room. Men can sleep or gather with other men. The issue of privacy is different between women and men. (Andi 2020, Interview on April 10).

However, based on the interviews with the three women village facilitators, there are some specific challenges and barriers that are faced by the women village facilitators. The women village facilitators in the three villages have to deal with challenges and barriers that do not come from themselves but from others. The first is structural challenge, that is the weak bureaucracy of the village government, the low participation of village officers in the empowerment processes, and conflict of interest among village's elites. The second is the specific challenges that target their identity as women, such as stigma and undermining their work achievements.

Weak Support from the Village's Bureaucracy

The village facilitator of Jabiren village, Rina Septu, have experienced structural barrier due to a conflict of interest within the village's government officers that required her to work twice harder in implementing DPG program. Rina tried to explain what happened in the field as follow:

One of the examples is the village's program planning, the barrier was the low willingness of the people in the internal conflict in the village that lead to program's dependency toward one person. I, then, had to approach people who were never involved, and also approach the key person to be willing to share, and to be opened to others...That was their own conflict, not mine. (Rina Septu 2020, Interview on April 6)

The conflict between village's elites and the community has made Rina to take complicated communication paths. It is because when the village government works optimally, then program implementation's timeline -- starting from planning up to the implementation, would be measurable. If the bureaucracy of the village government is weak and undemocratic, not only that the development programs would be stuck, but no progress would happen in the village.

Similar to Rina, Kurnia also experienced challenge at the structural level. She admitted that she had been ignored and been undermined by the village government for 6 months. Both herself as a person and also any program that she offered were not given positive response.

Their rejection was started since when, let me see. At the beginning, when we did village profiling, they were still open. During the village's planning, maybe they did not like. From the information that we received, they did not like to be probed deeper. (Kurnia 2020, Interview on April 6)

Aside from experiencing rejection from the Village Government, Kurnia also experienced discrimination from the local community.

There was a negative experience, for example with our thought were not directly being accepted by the village government and the men. Maybe their way of thinking are different. The community had ever stated "if the village facilitator is a man, the acceptance would be easier than women". It seemed that they doubt my ability because I am a woman. (Kurnia 2020, Interview on April 6)

Kurnia admitted that the rejection that she experienced was not easy to deal with but the support from the women group that she facilitated has made her persistent to fight for DPG program. The discrimination that she experienced has required her to think of different communication strategy.

Febri, a village facilitator in Tumbang Nusa Village, admitted that women leadership in the village is very important. She described that in 2019 there was no woman representation among the village officers. This led to the lack of a woman's perspective in the village's development, so that there was no specific empowerment program that address women's needs. Then, in 2020, the elected Head of Village is a woman. Since then, women started to be represented in the village, and their needs started to be accommodated.

So, in 2019, the head of the village was a man, so I saw that when the head of the village was a man, there were rarely any activity for women group. Almost 100 percents of the village officers were men. Not even one woman. Let alone programs for women, even the officers, none of them was a woman. In the 2020 Village Election, a woman was elected, so the policies are different. Women started to fill the structure in the village government, and then policies related to the integrated health post (*Posyandu*) and the youth club (*Karang Taruna*), and a structure of women organization in the village was also initiated. (Febri 2020, Interview on April 6)

From the above description, we can see that the structural challenges at the village level take various forms according to the characteristics of each village. Although the challenges and barriers are different, but they are all cannot be separated from the gender dimension. Furthermore, we can see from the example of Tumbang Nusa Village, that the issue on women's participation and representation in the policy-making institutions have also become one of the factors that weaken or slowing the women empowerment activities in the village.

Vulnerability of Stigma Against Women Village Facilitators

In addition to the structural challenges, women village facilitators also experience cultural challenges at the community level. The gender-based challenge faced by women village facilitators is the negative rumors or becoming object of negative talks. The biased perspective against women is still strong in the community.

Personally, for me it is easier to join the women's group because I am also a woman. But for interaction with men, I set some limit in order to avoid gossips. In the village, we will become gossip if we cannot set limit with the men in the village. (Febri 2020, Interview on April 6)

Similar to Febri's experience, in running the DPG program, Kurnia also experienced challenge in communicating with men. The biased perspective of the community has required her to be strategic in performing facilitation works.

For me, in my work as a village facilitator, the barrier is the communication with men. Especially because I am still single, right. If I am married, maybe it will be okay. Being a single, I am afraid that it will create jealousy to the wives because we meet frequently with her husband, even though we are only talking about the program. (Kurnia 2020, Interview on April 6)

Based on the in-depth interviews with the three women village facilitators, it is clear that the patriarchal culture still influences the mind set and attitude of the community in the village. There are similarities of attitudes between the bureaucrats and the community, that both are still gender bias and doubting women's capability.

The structural and cultural challenges faced by women village facilitators are rooted in the patriarchal system, where as a system then the patriarchal perspective could be practiced by both men and women. This patriarchal system also forms a social structure where the position of women is lower than men, and that women always become the object of exploitation and oppression (Walby 1990) -- even in the simplest form like doubting the capability of the women village facilitators. In the public space, this patriarchal system is manifested in various forms, starting from stigmatization against women's body, up to to the low women representation of in the village's structure of bureaucracy.

Women Village Facilitators' Strategy: Taking Over the Space

In performing their duties, functions, and activities, the women village facilitators use certain strategies. These are seen in the various non-bureaucratic actions taken by these women village facilitators. Rina Septu understands that the existing weak bureaucracy in the village has become barrier for program implementation. To overcome this, Rina Septu studied the way of the village administration work and devised strategy to implement her program. First, Rina actively communicated with the trusted staff of the head of the village. Secondly, Rina did not involve in any conflict of interest existed in the village.

Because the head of the village was so difficult to meet, I had the strategy to approach the staff who is trusted by the Head of the Village, then, if I want to meet him at his house, I have to wait until the evening. He is usually at home after

maghrib (dusk). So, I just do the coordination with his right-hand man ... I am a facilitator, but I also do not want to intervene in their conflicts. I just let them settle it on their own. (Rina Septu 2020, Interview)

In contrast to Rina in Jabiren Village, Febrianti in Tumbang Nusa Village actively socializes and meets with women and the community outside of her formal visits. According to Febri, this step can strengthen the emotional bond between herself and the community. Therefore, Febri can understand better the culture of the community in the village.

I am a local person too, so interaction with the community is not too difficult. So, I often attend activities that are attended by women in the village. For example, we play volleyball, chat, attend weddings. (Febri 2020, Interview on April 6)

In terms of overcoming and minimizing negative comments from the community about herself, Febri tried to maintain limited interaction with married men. This mother of two children also tries to interact actively with the wives of the male colleagues across organizations.

For example, if we need to go somewhere, don't ask for help from another woman's husband. Or if we, for example, have some works to be done with the Fire Community Organization (Masyarakat Peduli Api/ MPA), whose members are mostly male, we must also be close to their wives in order to avoid suspicion. (Febri 2020, Interview on April 6)

Similar to Febri, Kurnia also uses strategy to avoid conflicts with the community, by limiting the intensity of her interactions with married men and strengthening supports from the women's group.

Since the beginning, I have put a boundary for myself. So that nothing unpleasant would happen ... my friendship at the village level is more towards women because they are more opened. So, the strategy is to strengthen the support from our fellow women, yes ... Support from the community, organizations as well. From the women group that I am assisting now. They are the reason why I have endured until now. (Kurnia 2020, Interview on April 6)

In running DPG program, Kurnia invites women to discuss and talk about village's problems and/or potentials. Kurnia rarely communicates with many people at the same time. She prefers personal communication from house to house to listen to any problems experienced by the villagers. According to her, with this strategy, she can develop a suitable program according to the needs of the community, especially for the women's group. Kurnia does not set any distance between herself with

the women in the peat village. Although they were not formal forums, but Kurnia's strategy as a village facilitator has been successful in pushing for change.

Women as the Key Actor of Empowerment: Opening Access, Seizing Power

The women village facilitator's narratives in conducting peatland restoration in DPG program through economic revitalization program, has shown the real meaning of women empowerment. Moreover, what are the meaning of these women empowerment? Is it only about increasing income, or adding more earning than before, or is it just about improving skills, creating a busy life, or establishing relationships with many people, groups, and associations? Furthermore, economic activities developed by women village facilitators have included political perspective on gender and environment.

Women empowerment actually talks about how women have access to and control over resources, and this very much connects to power. Seizing power and fierce competition in controlling, and even exploiting resources, in the form of land and forest assets, technology, communication, and human resources are often observed. This is what is interpreted as a struggle for power.

Discussion about access basically refers to the opportunity to use resources for higher profits. Access, whether directly or indirectly, would reflect the rules and norms that manage distribution or shares and exchanges in different institutional areas. On the other hand, the discussion about control or supervision is closely related to the ability to choose or to define how and for what purpose it would be used, and also to impose choices and definitions to other parties. In other words, talking about control or supervision goes hand in hand with power. The problem is that power can be both positive and negative depending on its purpose (JASS 2012).

All this time, there is a kind of myth that is commonly understood by many people, even by the majority of policymakers, academics, intellectuals, and civil society activists. What is that? It is that many efforts and policies that aiming to improve women's access to the natural resource, however the focus has only made the resources could be obtained or reached and provide "equality of opportunity" (JASS 2012). Nevertheless, has the root of the problem been addressed by understanding the myth? Unfortunately, the answer is no. It is simply because this mindset usually fails to correct or recover discrimination. It because, the community and the

community's members, particularly the men and women, are not in the same position in taking advantage from the opportunities provided, and this is closely related to the prevailing social norms, and the historically unfortunate social norms. According to Shiva's view, the ongoing development or the economic processes have specifically ignored the knowledge, experience, and participation of women and nature (Shiva 1998).

At this point, the conversation is then directed towards power. Behind all the questions about inequality, exploitation, and oppression, they are all closely related to the dynamics of power and privileges. Power itself is simply understood as the level of control over the material, human, intellectual, and financial resources used or promoted by different segments of society. In other words, power is dynamic or powerful, and it operates in the social, economic, and political relations among individuals or groups within the society and the state, and this power could be used for positive or negative purposes (Cornwall 2016).

At this point, a good reference can be made to Western feminists such as Kate Millet, Shulamith Firestone, and Marilyn French. With a rather similar explanation among them, they see that the power has been displaying a very masculine and full of negative face (Tong 2009). Why is that? Because most people understand the power in the sense of 'power over', which is the ability to control and make decisions for many people, with or without the consent of those affected by that power. The dominant characteristic is authoritative, controlling, or governing to force the will, without caring about the real situations and conditions experienced by the community, and it is usually concerned with short-term interests only. The real form of this kind of power can be destructive and oppressive, that is maintained by threats or the use of violence.

Whereas, if we refer to Jean Bethke Elshtain argument, for example, that power should appear in the format of 'power to' which is the power to carry out the common good and virtue, and here power has a positive nuance. Furthermore, power can also mean 'power within' in the sense of self and agency, and 'power with', which is the collective power or power of many people that is built based on reasons and shared solidarity (Cornwall 2016; Rowlands 1997). This shows that the presence of women village facilitators has brought changes to the other women in the peatland villages. Women village facilitator have become the key to women's collective action at the local level.

The presence of women village facilitators has bridged the economic revitalization and peatland restoration with a gender perspective. In the study of feminist politics, for example, we know the term politics of representation that drives representation agenda that aim to advance the represented groups through need-driven policies (Pitkin 1972; Phillips 1995). In the context of peatland restoration, this agenda is augmented with a just dimension to the environment. This is illustrated in the peatland restoration program carried out by the women village facilitators through economic revitalization, that is a subsistence economic model that does not reject the masculine development paradigm. The masculine development paradigm sees the environment as a mere commodity and not as an integrated part of a common living space and center of knowledge.

In Jabiren Village, weaving activities are not only about family's economic security but also the preservation of women's knowledge and cultural values that need to be preserved from generation to generation. The economic empowerment actions that were carried out by women facilitators in Jabiren Village is a political act. Rina Septu as the village facilitator has 1) invited the women to connect with the weaving knowledge from their ancestors; 2) increased the ability to produce rattan woven as to master the chain of production -- from processing raw materials, weaving, sewing the woven, and up to marketing; and 3) increasing women's bargaining power through economic independence which has an impact on changes in domestic gender relations.

In Tumbang Nusa Village, processing *purun* into straws is also a political act. In the eyes of a capitalistic market economy, *purun* plants do not have a high selling point, nor do peatlands. Not surprisingly, that the development policies on peatlands rely on the concept of monoculture agriculture, namely agriculture and palm oil plantations. In the reductionist development paradigm, plants that have no economic value are considered as waste, they are ignored and even thrown away (Shiva 1988). However, the women village facilitators were able to recognize the knowledge and needs of women in peat villages.

Ecologically, *purun* plants have the function to maintain nutrients in peatlands. *Purun* that grows in waterways is also useful for improving water quality during the dry season and absorbing toxic substances in the water, such as iron, lead, and mercury. The abundant water content in *purun* is also useful for preventing, controlling, and minimizing fires in the peatlands. The huge amount of *purun* in peatlands can also be used by

the people to make mats, bags, etc. Unfortunately, most women in Tumbang Nusa Village only collect *purun* to be sold as it is. Since they received facilitation from Febri, the women group is now empowered to process *purun* into environmentally friendly straws. This empowerment model does not only see *purun* as a commodity but also has an ecological mission, which is to reduce plastic waste. Likewise, in Gandang Barat Village with the agriculture business and coffee processing to increase the sale value of coffee commodities while contributed financially to the restoration of peatlands.

The economic revitalization activities carried by women for the women also show what Shiva called as "living off something alive" (Shiva 1998). This means that any production or commodity produced from the nature does not have to kill nature. Through processing rattan, *purun*, and coffee, women do not turn off the ecological function and biodiversity of peat hydrological units. On the contrary, they see peatlands from the sustainable ecological-economic paradigm.

Furthermore, the economic activities also carry important meaning for the rural women, namely the change of women's economic status and gender relations at the household level. The economic revitalization activity can be stated as women's economic empowerment -- that is not limited only on improving women's economic status but also their living status (Kabeer 2011). According to the empowerment framework by Naila Kabeer, empowerment is a multidimensional process of change. Women empowerment does not only change aspects within individual women, but also women's relationships with various aspects outside themselves. For example, are self-confidence, social identity, the ability to question their subordinate position, the capacity to carry out strategies, negotiate, and participate in a just social change (Kabeer 2008; 2011). The economic empowerment that is driven by women village facilitators in DPG program have brought multidimensional changes and impacts on women's economy, peatlands, and gender relations.

Conclusions

This study found that the role of women village facilitators in facilitating the activities and agenda of DPG program have brought changes to the rural women, especially from the economic aspect. The forms of economic revitalization activities are as follow: 1) training and developing rattan woven business unit in Jabiren Village, 2) training and developing *purun* straw production unit/business in Tumbang Nusa Village, and 3) nursery and developing the sustainable coffee

farming business unit in Gandang Barat Village. Those economic revitalization programs are created by and made for women. Furthermore, the three economic revitalization programs do not only aim to build economic resilience of the community through women's economic empowerment, but also work as political actions of environmental conservation -- by producing products without damaging the nature and by allocating the profits for peat restoration's actions. This situation shows that the presence of women in DPG program is important, both in their role as the village facilitators as well as the target group of the program. Empowering women also means protecting the nature.

Nevertheless, women with their status as women always face certain barriers and challenges that are definitely different from men. This study found that women village facilitators have experienced: 1) structural barriers in the form of weak bureaucracy at the village level; and 2) cultural barriers in the form of community's stigma and doubt about their capacity as facilitators because of their identity as women. This shows that as women -- in a culture of patriarchy and gender bias -- to make change, they have to work twice or even three times harder. These barriers stem from the patriarchal system that is internalized within selves (both men and women) and manifested in the community's perspective and the structure of the bureaucracy.

This study also shows the political empowered-self of women village facilitators in finding solutions to those structural and cultural challenges. The women village facilitators have performed the following empowerment strategies: 1) using informal approach to the policy stakeholders in the village in order to implement DPG program; 2) do not set distance between themselves and the empowered women group, by engaging in informal community's activities; 3) listening to the experiences and problems faced each of the rural women, from door to door, and use them as knowledge/ basis for formulating the program. It can be seen that the empowerment strategies used by the women village facilitators -- informal approach that is often being ignored and being abandoned in the process of formulation of development policies and empowerment actions in general.

Actions and strategies of women village facilitators in opening up rural women's access to natural resources and economic resource are also followed by the changes of gender bias perspective in the community. In line with this, this study also found that the economic revitalization activities taking place at the village level also have brought changes to gender relations at the

household and community levels. This means that women's leadership in women's economic empowerment in peatlands has brought multiple impacts on gender justice and environmental justice.

Bibliography

Agus, F & Subiksa 2008, *Lahan Gambut: Potensi untuk Pertanian dan Aspek Lingkungan*, Balai Penelitian Tanah dan World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), Bogor.

BRG 2016, *Mengawali Restorasi Gambut Indonesia*, BRG, Jakarta.

BRG 2016, *Rencana Strategis Badan Restorasi Gambut 2016-2020*, BRG, Jakarta.

BRG 2019, *Laporan Kinerja 2018 Badan Restorasi Gambut*, BRG, Jakarta.

Cornwall, A 2016, "Women's Empowerment: What Works?", *Journal of International Development*, pp. 342-359, 2016, Wiley Online Library, DOI: 10.1002/jid.3210.

JASS 2012, *Organizing for Women's Economic Empowerment: access to resources and principles for change*, accessed on April 15th 2020 <https://justassociates.org/en/resources/organizing-womens-economic-empowerment-access-resources-and-principles-change>

Indirastuti, C & Pratiwi A 2019, "Ketika Lahan Basah Mengering: Kajian Ekologi Politik Feminis Degradasi Ekosistem Gambut di

Kalimantan Tengah dan Selatan", *Jurnal Perempuan*, Vol. 24 No. 4, YJP Press, Jakarta.

IUCN 2017, *Peatlands And Climate Change*, accessed on March 5th 2020, <https://www.iucn.org/resources/issues-briefs/peatlands-and-climate-change>

Kabeer, N 2008, "Paid Work, Women's Empowerment and Gender Justice: Critical Pathways of Social Change", *Pathways Working Paper*, No. 3, IDS, Brighton.

Kabeer, N 2011, "Contextualising the economic pathways of women's empowerment", *Pathways Policy Paper*, Pathways of Women's Empowerment, Brighton.

Pitkin, HF 1972, *The Concept of Representation*, University of California Press, Berkeley-Los Angeles.

Phillips, A 1995, *The Politics of Presence*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Rowlands, J 1997, *Questioning Empowerment: Working with Women in Honduras*, Oxfam, Oxford.

Shiva, V 1988, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Survival in India*, KALI FOR WOMEN, New Delhi.

Tong, R 2009, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction (Third Edition)*, Westview Press, US.

Wahyunto et al. 2004, *Sebaran Gambut dan Kandungan Karbon di Sumatera dan Kalimantan*, Wetlands International, Bogor.

Walby, S 1990, *Theorizing Patriarchy*, Wiley-Blackwell.

Expression of Gratitude to Reviewers

1. Dr. Andi Achdian (Universitas Nasional)
2. Dr. Widjajanti Santoso (Indonesian Institute of Sciences)
3. Dr. Irene Hadiprayitno (Leiden University)
4. Elisabet Kuswijayanti (Indonesia)
5. Ikhaputri Widiyantini, M. Si. (Universitas Indonesia)
6. Dr. Bagus Takwin (Universitas Indonesia)

AUTHOR GUIDELINES

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.

Please Note: The wide availability of an item on the internet does not imply that it is not subject to copyright restrictions. Please supply evidence that the item is legally available to use. For example, it may be posted online with a "Creative Commons" attribution, or it may be taken from one of your earlier works, for which you hold the copyright. Please provide evidence. If you do not have permission, it must be sought as a matter of priority. Otherwise we cannot publish, and the content will have to be removed. If required, the editor will provide guidance on identifying and approaching the copyright holder. If you are currently seeking permission but are yet to receive it, please indicate this next to the relevant content in the permissions section of the journal submission pack. Please note that the process of seeking permission can take several months. **Tables** should be included as part of the manuscript, with relevant captions. **Supplementary data** can be appended to the article, using the appropriate form and should follow the same formatting rules as the main text. **References** to other publications should be complete and in Harvard style, e.g. (Jones 2011) for one author, (Jones & Smith 2011) for two authors, (Jones, Smith & Jackson 2011) for three authors, and (Jones et al. 2011) for four or more authors. A full reference list should appear at the end of the paper.

- For **books**: Surname, Initials year, *Title of Book*, Publisher, Place of publication. e.g. Author, J 2011, This is my book, Publisher, New York, NY.
- For **book chapters**: Surname, Initials year, "Chapter title", in Editor's Initials Surname (ed./eds.), *Title of Book*, Publisher, Place of publication, pages.
- For **journals**: Surname, Initials year, "Title of article", *Title of Journal*, volume, number, pages.
- For **conference proceedings**: Surname, Initials year, "Title of paper", in Initials Surname (ed.), Title of published proceeding which may include date(s) and place held, Publisher, Place of publication, Page numbers.
- For **newspaper articles**: Surname, Initials year (if an author is named), "Article title", *Newspaper*, date, pages.
- For **images**: Where image is from a printed source – as for books but with the page number on which the image appears.
- Where **image is from an online source** – Surname, Initials year, Title, Available at, Date accessed. Other images - Surname, Initials year, Title, Name of owner (person or institution) and location for viewing.

Copyright Notice

All written material, unless otherwise stated, is the copyright of the Jurnal Perempuan. Views expressed in articles and letters are those of the contributors, and not necessarily those of the publisher. If you wish to use any content appearing in JP, please contact redaksi@jurnalperempuan.com for guidance.

YAYASAN
YJP
JURNAL
PEREMPUAN

Jl. Karang Pola Dalam II No. 9A
Jati Padang, Pasar Minggu,
Jakarta Selatan 12540
INDONESIA
Phone/Fax: +62 21 22701689

