

## ► Work and Care Economy

### Editorial

Work and Care Economy

### Articles

Promoting Maternal Wellbeing: Protecting Maternity Rights through Social Insurance for Employment Programs

*Diahadi Setyonaluri & Resmi Setia Milawati*

The Lack of Industry and State Support: Care Work for Women Factory and Home-Based Workers

*Didit Saleh, Nitya Swastika, & Rizky Amalia Fatikhah*

Toxic Care: Plantation Maintenance Work and Social Reproduction on Palm Oil Monoculture Plantations

*Hariati Sinaga*

The Urgency of Protecting Domestic Workers as a Recognition of Care Work in Indonesia

*Yogi Paramitha Dewi & Y. Sari M. Widiyastuti*

Women's Work and State Policies: Contending Paid and Unpaid Care

*Sri Wiyanti Eddyono*

Supporting the Labor: The Phenomenon of Waithood and Unpaid Care Workforce in the Perspective of Social Reproduction

*Alfiatul Khairiyah & Muhammad Aminullah Thohir*

New Masculinities: The Redistribution of Care Work in Feminist Perspective

*Abby Gina Boang Manalu & Iqraa Runi Aprilia*

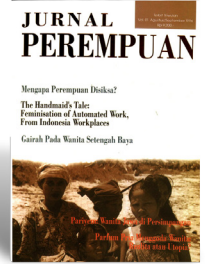
Published by:

YAYASAN  
**YJP**  
JURNAL  
PEREMPUAN

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

## Jurnal Perempuan Needs Your Support!

Jurnal Perempuan (The Indonesian Feminist Journal) is published by an independent non-profit women's organization, Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan (The Women's Foundation). Jurnal Perempuan was first published in 1996 and is the first and only feminist peer-review journal to date. Jurnal Perempuan is committed to publishing Indonesian feminist scholars' work and research on gender equity in Indonesia. Jurnal Perempuan supports and empowers women to write, research, voice, and take action against discrimination, exploitation, and violence against women. Jurnal Perempuan advocates gender issues based on research and forms alliances with community and women's groups, universities, media, local and national parliamentarians, public and private sectors to achieve gender justice in Indonesia.



### Become a friend of Jurnal Perempuan

Please support us by becoming a member of Sahabat Jurnal Perempuan (Friends of Jurnal Perempuan nationally and internationally) and making a real difference in the lives of Indonesian women and gender minorities.

The membership program will support research, publishing cost, social media content, advocacy, and public education programs. Your membership includes: 3 editions of Jurnal Perempuan (JP) annually (digital and hardcopy versions) bi-weekly newsletter on feminist news and YJP's activities space to voice feminist opinions in YJP's blog invitations to YJP events and public education.

- **Indonesian nationals membership program: 300.000 IDR/year and students Rp. 150.000 IDR/year**  
Bank Account: Bank Mandiri Branch Jatipadang, No. Rek: 127-00-2507969-8 Indonesia Women's Journal Foundation (Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan Indonesia). Please fill in the form for administration purposes here
- **International membership program 144US/year via PayPal** Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan Indonesia @IntFriendsJP or paypal.me/IntFriendsJP Please fill in the form for administration purposes here

There are many other ways you can support our work in the field of gender issues in Indonesia. For example, you can volunteer or complete an internship with us. As an organization, you can also sponsor us or collaborate with us on joint projects.

#### Contact us

Contact Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan for more inquiries:

yjp@jurnalperempuan.com

Website: [www.jurnalperempuan.org](http://www.jurnalperempuan.org)

We are grateful for your continued support.



Sincerely,

Gadis Arivia

Founder

ISSN 1410-153X

**FOUNDERS**

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

**ADVISORY BOARD**

Prof. Mari Elka Pangestu, Ph.D.  
Prof. Dr. Sulistyowati Irianto

**SUPERVISORY BOARD**

Dr. Ir. Darwin Cyril Noerhadi, M.B.A.

**EDITORIAL BOARD**

Prof. Dr. Gadis Arivia (Sosiologi, Montgomery College,  
Takoma Silver Spring, Maryland, USA)  
Prof. Dr. Sulistyowati Irianto (Antropologi Hukum  
Feminisme, Universitas Indonesia)  
Prof. Sylvia Tiwon (Antropologi Gender, University  
California at Berkeley)  
Prof. Saskia Wieringa (Sejarah Perempuan & Queer,  
Universiteit van Amsterdam)  
Prof. Dr. Musdah Mulia (Pemikiran Politik Islam & Gender,  
UIN Syarif Hidayatullah)  
Dr. Nur Iman Subono (Politik & Gender, FISIP, Universitas  
Indonesia)  
Mariana Amiruddin, M.Hum. (Komisi Nasional Anti  
Kekerasan terhadap Perempuan)  
Yacinta Kurniasih, M.A. (Sastra dan Perempuan, Faculty of  
Arts, Monash University)  
Soe Tjen Marching, Ph.D. (Sejarah dan Politik Perempuan,  
SOAS University of London)  
Dr. Andi Achdian (Sejarah & Sosiologi, Universitas  
Nasional)  
Dr. Abby Gina Boang Manalu, M.Hum.

**DIRECTOR & EDITOR IN CHIEF**

Dr. Abby Gina Boang Manalu, M.Hum.

**PEER REVIEWERS**

Prof. Mayling Oey-Gardiner, Ph.D. (Universitas Indonesia)  
Dr. Pinky Saptandari (Universitas Airlangga)  
Prof. Dr. E. Kristi Poerwandari (Universitas Indonesia)  
Dr. Ida Ruwaida Noor (Universitas Indonesia)  
Katharine McGregor, Ph.D. (University of Melbourne)  
Dr. (Iur) Asmin Fransiska, S.H., LL.M. (Universitas Katolik  
Atma Jaya)  
Dr. Irene Hadiprayitno (Leiden University)  
Prof. Jeffrey Winters (Northwestern University)  
Ro'fah, Ph.D. (UIN Sunan Kalijaga)  
Tracy Wright Webster, Ph.D. (University of Western  
Australia)  
Prof. Kim Eun Shil (Korean Ewha Womens University)  
Prof. Merlyna Lim (Carleton University)  
Prof. Claudia Derichs (Universitaet Marburg)  
Sari Andajani, Ph.D. (Auckland University of Technology)  
Prof. Dr. Wening Udasmoro (Universitas Gadjah Mada)  
Prof. Ayami Nakatani (Okayama University)

Dr. Antarini Pratiwi Arna (Indonesian Scholarship and  
Research Support Foundation)  
Prof. Dr. Widjanti M. Santoso, M.Litt. (Indonesian Institute  
of Sciences)  
Dr. Lidwina Inge Nurtjahyo (Universitas Indonesia)  
Dr. Bagus Takwin (Universitas Indonesia)  
Dr. Sri Lestari Wahyuningroem (Universitas Pembangunan  
Nasional Veteran Jakarta)  
Francisia Saveria Sika Seda, Ph.D. (Universitas Indonesia)  
Ruth Indiah Rahayu, M. Fil. (Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat  
Driyarkara)  
Mia Siscawati, Ph.D. (Universitas Indonesia)  
Dr. L.G. Saraswati Putri (Universitas Indonesia)  
Prof. Maria Lichtmann (Appalachian State University, USA)  
Assoc. Prof. Muhamad Ali (University California, Riverside)  
Assoc. Prof. Mun'im Sirry (University of Notre Dame)  
Assoc. Prof. Paul Bijl (Universiteit van Amsterdam)  
Assoc. Prof. Patrick Ziegenhain (President University)  
Assoc. Prof. Alexander Horstmann (University of  
Copenhagen)

**EDITORIAL STAFF**

Retno Daru Dewi G. S. Putri, M.A., M.Hum.  
Iqraa Runi Aprilia, S.Hum.  
Nada Salsabila, S. Hum.

**GUEST EDITOR**

Ikhaputri Widiyanti, S.Hum., M.Si.

**SECRETARIAT & FRIENDS OF JURNAL PEREMPUAN**

Himah Sholihah  
Iqraa Runi Aprilia, S.Hum.

**DESIGN & LAYOUT**

Dina Yulianti

**COSTUMER HOTLINE**

Himah Sholihah 0818 0712 4295 (SMS/WA)

**ADDRESS**

Alamanda Tower, 25<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Jalan T.B. Simatupang kavling 23-24, Jakarta Selatan  
Telepon: (+62) 21 2965 7992

E-mail: [yjp@jurnalperempuan.com](mailto:yjp@jurnalperempuan.com) redaksi@  
jurnalperempuan.com  
Twitter: @jurnalperempuan  
Facebook: Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan

**WEBSITE**

[www.jurnalperempuan.org](http://www.jurnalperempuan.org)  
[www.indonesiafeministjournal.org](http://www.indonesiafeministjournal.org)

First Edition, December 2023



**International  
Labour  
Organization**

## **Expression of Gratitude to Reviewers**

1. Prof. Dr. Gadis Arivia
2. Dr. Ida Ruwaida Noor, M.Si.
3. Yacinta Kurniasih, M.A.
4. Dr. Widjajanti Mulyono Santoso
5. Dr. Irene Hadiprayitno
6. Mariana Amiruddin, M.Hum.
7. Dr. (Iur) Asmin Fransiska, S.H., LL.M.
8. Dr. Lidwina Inge Nurtjahyo
9. Prof. Dr. Sulistyowati Irianto
10. Francisia Saveria Sika Seda, Ph.D.
11. Ruth Indiah Rahayu, M. Fil.
12. Dr. Pinky Saptandari
13. Dr. Nur Iman Subono

## Contents

### Editorial

Work and Care Economy .....	v-vi
<i>Abby Gina Boang Manalu</i>	

### Articles

• Promoting Maternal Wellbeing: Protecting Maternity Rights through Social Insurance for Employment Programs .....	175-188
<i>Diahhadi Setyonaluri &amp; Resmi Setia Milawati</i>	
• The Lack of Industry and State Support: Care Work for Women Factory and Home-Based Workers .....	189-198
<i>Didit Saleh, Nitya Swastika, &amp; Rizky Amalia Fatikhah</i>	
• Toxic Care: Plantation Maintenance Work and Social Reproduction on Palm Oil Monoculture Plantations .....	199-212
<i>Hariati Sinaga</i>	
• The Urgency of Protecting Domestic Workers as a Recognition of Care Work in Indonesia .....	213-223
<i>Yogi Paramitha Dewi &amp; Y. Sari M. Widiyastuti</i>	
• Women's Work and State Policies: Contending Paid and Unpaid Care .....	225-233
<i>Sri Wiyanti Eddyono</i>	
• Supporting the Labor: The Phenomenon of Waithood and Unpaid Care Workforce in the Perspective of Social Reproduction .....	235-245
<i>Alfiatul Khairiyah &amp; Muhammad Aminullah Thohir</i>	
• New Masculinities: The Redistribution of Care Work in Feminist Perspective .....	247-258
<i>Abby Gina Boang Manalu &amp; Iqraa Runi Aprilia</i>	



## Work and Care Economy

Care work, whether paid or unpaid, makes an important contribution to a fair, decent and secure future of work. Population growth, ageing, changing family structures, the secondary status of women in the labour market and the lack of social policies that encourage governments, employers, trade unions and citizens to engage in care work could lead to a shortage of care services and create a significant global care crisis. This also has implications for gender inequality in the world of work (ILO 2018).

The majority of care work around the world is unpaid care work, carried out predominantly by women and girls. Women around the world experience unequal care workloads (Coffey et al. 2020) due to the myth that women and men are naturally suited to different activities and that the gender division of labour is natural and fair. There is a view that women are better suited to family work and civic responsibilities. The gendered division of labour also creates an obligation for women to prioritise care work over paid work, resulting in many women being marginalised from different types of work, both formal and informal (Mason 2021). A key feminist critique of social reproduction and care work is that work associated with femininity and performed by women is often valued less than work performed by men (Mason 2021).

Despite the fact that social reproduction and care work have far-reaching implications for economic structures at family, national and global levels, the value of this work is often overlooked. ILO research (2023) on the economics of care work in Indonesia shows that investment in childcare and long-term care services could create nearly 10.4 million jobs by 2035, with nearly 4.3 million direct jobs in childcare, nearly 4.3 million direct jobs in long-term care and 1.7 million indirect jobs in the non-care sector. This means that investment in care policies could reduce the gender gap in employment levels by 5.5 percentage and increase female labour force participation from 49 per cent in 2019 to 56.8 per cent in 2035.

The work of social reproduction and care is a feminist issue. Without a feminist perspective, women's exclusion from the labour market is taken for granted, even though it is linked to gender myths and gender discriminatory social structures. Data from the World

Bank (2022) shows that women's participation in the labour force in Indonesia has remained relatively stagnant in recent years. Women who are married and have children find it difficult to enter or remain in the labour market. In addition, the lack of recognition of care work, whether paid or unpaid, creates a number of vulnerabilities for the women involved. Recognising the value of care work is therefore key to creating decent and safe work for all. Care work must therefore be understood within the framework of universal rights and as an essential element of economic and social well-being and sustainable development (ILO 2022).

The ILO's (2022) 5R framework - Recognise, Reduce, Redistribute, Represent, and Reward - provides a way for us to understand and treat care work in a way that supports gender equality in the world of work. Recognition means including care work, both paid and unpaid, in national statistics and indicators of economic progress. Recognition is also reflected in the accounting of time and unpaid care work, including its distribution within families and communities. In practice, recognition of care work is reflected in public policies and investments in this area. Reduction of care work means increasing access to infrastructure and technology that can reduce the time and effort required to carry out care work. Redistribution means that it is important for different stakeholders to invest in quality, affordable, and accessible care services. This includes the implementation of gender-responsive leave policies, the provision of supportive family policies, social protection systems that support care, as well as workplace arrangements that support families and changes in social norms related to care. Involving men and fathers in care work is also essential. Ensuring decent work for all care workers, including those in the informal economy, is a reward. This has the effect of extending social protection not only to formal workers but also to informal workers. Finally, representation gives official status to care and domestic work. This framework helps to shape more inclusive work policies and practices, recognises the value of care work, and provides appropriate rewards.

The seven articles in JP116 address the issue of work and the economics of care work through a feminist approach that emphasises the importance of different

actors to consider recognition, reduction, redistribution, reward, and representation as the basis for the struggle for gender justice in the world of work. A number of papers called for the state to invest in national care systems and to implement policies that address

gender and economic inequalities in care. This includes a commitment to intervening infrastructure, social protection, public services, and awareness of shared responsibility for care work within gender-equitable households (**Abby Gina**).

Abstracts

---

**Diahhadi Setyonaluri & Resmi Setia Milawati**  
TNP2K & Padjadjaran University

**Promoting Maternal Wellbeing: Protecting Maternity Rights through Social Insurance for Employment Programs**

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 28 No. 3, December 2023, page. 175–188, 3 tables, 5 figures, 62 bibliographies

Indonesia has a statutory paid maternity leave, however it remains restricted to the employer's liability and has not yet been integrated into the social security system within the labour sector. Prior research suggests that the availability of maternity leave remains restricted, which raises the likelihood of experiencing reduced income during leave and missing out on potential employment chances upon return. The main objective of paid maternity leave is not just to safeguard the women's needs, but also to improve the welfare of children and families, resulting in favorable economic benefit. This article advocates for the need of transitioning the prevailing perspective on maternity leave, wherein it is seen as the responsibility of the employer, to a social insurance programme that falls within the scope of employment social insurance. Implementing such a programme would guarantee that women have the ability to take time off and get financial support throughout their leave, in order to preserve their well-being, as well as that of their children and families. Additionally, it would provide reassurance for a smooth transition back to work following the completion of maternity leave.

Keywords: social insurance, maternity rights, maternity protection, women's economic participation

---

**Didit Saleh, Nitya Swastika, & Rizky Amalia Fatikhah**  
Trade Union Rights Centre

**The Lack of Industry and State Support: Care Work for Women Factory and Home-Based Workers**

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 28 No. 3, December 2023, page. 189–198, 2 figures, 32 bibliographies

This article aims to delineate the systemic challenges and discrimination faced by women workers in the footwear and home-based industries, both in terms of working conditions and caregiving responsibilities. The findings of this study were obtained through in-depth interviews with women workers in three footwear factories in Banten Province and home-based workers in North Jakarta. The experiences of these women workers were analyzed within two interrelated domains: the realm of production and social reproduction. The research reveals that women workers, both in factories and home-based settings, face a dual burden, striving to meet high production targets while also bearing the responsibilities of caregiving. Specifically, women home-based workers are more vulnerable to health risks compared to factory workers due to the lack of separation between their workplace and living spaces. The study also uncovers that women workers in both factory and home-based settings encounter economic violence, as their caregiving work goes unpaid and lacks support from the government and the industry.

Keywords: women factory workers, women home workers, care work

---

**Hariati Sinaga**

Gender Studies Programme, School of Strategic and Global Studies, University of Indonesia

**Toxic Care: Plantation Maintenance Work and Social Reproduction on Palm Oil Monoculture Plantations**

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 28 No. 3, December 2023, page. 199–212, 1 tables, 5 figures, 60 bibliographies

The expansion of palm oil plantation has drawn scholarship attention. On one hand, studies have examined how palm oil plantation development serves an important instrument for employment creation, poverty alleviation and rural development. On the other hand, there is plenty of research that shows adverse impacts of such expansion on socio-ecological conditions. This includes the recruitment of women plantation workers into maintenance work with flexible labour relations. Meanwhile, literature on palm oil plantations in Indonesia has not paid significant attention on care work. Employing feminist political economy perspective, this article attempts to understand care work in palm oil monoculture plantations, particularly in relations to maintenance work on plantation. Through the concept of social reproduction, care work is understood in a broader terms as a way to draw the entanglement between production and reproduction in palm oil monoculture plantations. This article argues that women workers participation into maintenance work on plantations show the articulation of social relations based on patriarchal system with palm oil competition in the global market. From the perspective of the women workers, participation in the maintenance work is viewed as a livelihood strategy. The strategy that involves works with risk of regular exposure to toxic chemicals is understood as toxic care.

Keyword: care work, social reproduction, palm oil plantation, women workers

---

**Yogi Paramitha Dewi & Y. Sari M. Widiyastuti**  
Faculty of Law, Atma Jaya University Yogyakarta

**The Urgency of Protecting Domestic Workers as a Recognition of Care Work in Indonesia**

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 28 No. 3, December 2023, page. 213–223, 35 bibliographies

Domestic workers (DWs) are in a very vulnerable position. However, the problems faced by domestic workers have not yet become a mainstream discourse, let alone transformed into public policies that provide legal protection for them. In the absence of a legal framework that can be used to claim their rights, domestic workers are one of the most vulnerable groups of workers to discrimination, violence, and exploitation. In Indonesia, advocacy for a law to protect domestic workers has been ongoing for almost two decades. However, to date, the law has not been materialised, even though the Indonesian government, when hosting the G20, advocated for the recognition of the care economy. This article aims to discuss the PPRT Bill using the 5 R's framework (recognition, reduction, redistribution, reward, and representation) developed by the ILO. This article assesses that the PPRT Bill is generally in line with the 5R's framework, but it still needs strengthening in several aspects, especially issues of pay, benefits, and the right to unionise.

Keywords: domestic workers, care work, PPRT Bill, gender, labour, Indonesia

---

**Sri Wiyanti Eddyono**

Centre for Law, Gender and Society Studies, Faculty of Law,  
Gadjah Mada University

**Women's Work and State Policies: Contending Paid  
and Unpaid Care**

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 28 No. 3, December 2023, page. 225–233, 1  
figure, 26 bibliographies

Paid and unpaid care work has regained prominence in national and international forums as a pivotal issue affecting the low participation of women in development. Despite being predominantly carried out by women, care work remains inadequately recognized and undervalued, especially at the policy level. This paper delves into the reasons behind the lack of attention to care work issues at the national level. It explores the extent of gender ideology implications on state policies related to care work. The research employs desk review and self-reflection based on the author's experience facilitating discussions on care work issues. The analysis reveals a policy gap in Indonesia concerning care work, influenced by the ambiguity of the state's gender ideology. Consequently, gender transformation has not been a central focus in care policies, and the legitimacy of women's roles in unpaid work tends to be reinforced.

Keywords: care work, economic care, gender ideology, gender transformation

---

**Alfiatul Khairiyah & Muhammad Aminullah Thohir**  
Department of Sociology, Gadjah Mada University

**Supporting the Labor: The Phenomenon of Waithood and  
Unpaid Care Workforce in the Perspective of  
Social Reproduction**

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 28 No. 3, December 2023, page. 235–245, 44  
bibliographies

The construction of unpaid care work as the responsibility of women has contributed to the emergence of the postponing marriage phenomenon (waithood) among youth, especially women. On the other hand, care work is an integral part of the reproductive

workforce, related to productive work. Furthermore, care work also contributes to reproducing the workforce in serving the interests of capital accumulation. The mechanization of women's roles in creating a workforce surplus makes women work excessively and hinders economic access. It argues that the financial pressures and the burden of work indirectly lead to the delayed marriage phenomenon. This financial pressure and the burden of care work indirectly contribute to the postponement of marriage. This study adopts a perspective of Social Reproduction Theory by utilizing qualitative research methods and a literature study approach. This study analyzes the relationship between capitalism, care work, and the recent phenomenon of waithood. The results indicate that women have been supporting the workforce through their care work, and this occurs systemically as a consequence of the capitalist system, which has led to the postponement of women's marriages.

Keywords: care work, capitalism, social reproduction, waithood

---

**Abby Gina Boang Manalu & Iqraa Runi Aprilia**  
Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Humanities,  
University of Indonesia & Jurnal Perempuan

**New Masculinities: Redistribution of Care Work  
in Feminist Perspective**

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 28 No. 3, December 2023, page. 247–258, 3  
tables, 46 bibliographies

Gender inequality in the workplace is rooted in patriarchal norms within families, institutions, and states. Gender roles exclude women from job opportunities, promotions, equal income, and more. Care work, associated with women, often forces them to choose between a career and family caregiving. However, the feminist perspective advocates for the redistribution of care work involving men. This research emphasizes the importance of changing men's understanding and practices in care work to achieve gender equality in the workforce. Through in-depth interviews, the study critiques and synthesizes challenges in care work redistribution, shares successful practices, and recommends practical and conceptual suggestions to ensure men's involvement in caregiving within the workplace context.

Keywords: care work, masculinity, redistribution, family-friendly policies, paternity leave

## Promoting Maternal Wellbeing: Protecting Maternity Rights through Social Insurance for Employment Programs

**Diahhadi Setyonaluri<sup>1</sup> & Resmi Setia Milawati<sup>2</sup>**

Institute for Economic and Social Research (LPEM) Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Indonesia<sup>1</sup> and National Team for the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction (TNP2K) & Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Padjadjaran University<sup>2</sup>  
LPEM FEB UI, Jalan Salemba Raya No. 4, Central Jakarta, DKI Jakarta 10430<sup>1</sup> and  
Grand Kebon Sirih, Jalan Kebon Sirih Raya No. 35, Central Jakarta, DKI Jakarta 10110<sup>2</sup>

diahhadi.s@ui.ac.id<sup>1</sup> and resmisetia@gmail.com<sup>2</sup>

Manuscript Chronology: received on 9 November 2023, revised on 18 December 2023, accepted on 23 December 2023

### Abstract

Indonesia has a statutory paid maternity leave; however, it remains restricted to the employer's liability and has not yet been integrated into the social security system within the labour sector. Prior research suggests that the availability of maternity leave remains restricted, which raises the likelihood of experiencing reduced income during leave and missing out on potential employment chances upon return. The main objective of paid maternity leave is not just to safeguard the women's needs, but also to improve the welfare of children and families, resulting in favorable economic benefit. This article advocates for the need of transitioning the prevailing perspective on maternity leave, wherein it is seen as the responsibility of the employer, to a social insurance programme that falls within the scope of employment social insurance. Implementing such a programme would guarantee that women have the ability to take time off and get financial support throughout their leave, in order to preserve their well-being, as well as that of their children and families. Additionally, it would provide reassurance for a smooth transition back to work following the completion of maternity leave.

Keywords: social insurance, maternity rights, maternity protection, women's economic participation

### Introduction

A number of studies agree on the important role of social protection in reducing poverty and vulnerability. However, social protection sometimes fails to protect women due to a lack of attention to gender aspects in policy design, particularly the structural barriers women face. Cameron et al. (2019) state that women's high participation in informal employment, women's tendency to stop working after having children, and difficult access to financial services are reasons why social protection system is insufficient to address gender inequality. Kabeer (2010) also argues that the design of social protection schemes sometimes overlooks the barriers women face to work, in particular social norms that emphasise women's primary responsibility to care for the family. This has led to the importance of a framework that addresses gender inequality in social protection (World Bank 2012; Holmes & Jones 2013; Plagerson et al. 2019; UNICEF 2020 & 2021; UNESCAP 2021).

This paper focuses primarily on maternity protection as a form of protection for women that enables them to continue working without compromising the well-being

of themselves, their children, and their families. Unlike maternity leave, maternity protection is a form of social security that goes beyond the provision of time to rest and care for children. Maternity protection protects women's own health and that of the children and family members in their care during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period. It also provides income security from pregnancy to postpartum period and ensures that women can return to work after maternity leave. Ultimately, maternity protection will help improve women's position in the labour market and, in the long term, reduce gender gaps in labour force participation, pay, informality, and social security (ILO 2016).

The provision of maternity protection is a right of workers and a responsibility of the state. This protection has been recognised in conventions, including the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Several countries, particularly developed ones, have translated these conventions into laws requiring paid maternity leave so that mothers and children have better health after

childbirth and can continue to breastfeed. International standards for maternity protection schemes as well as legislation relating to maternity protection obligations in different countries have also evolved from postpartum leave to paid maternity leave.

Various studies have proven the positive benefits of statutory maternity protection. The income and time security provided by maternity protection schemes significantly improves the health and well-being of mothers and children. Maternity leave is associated with improved infant health (Coley & Lombardi 2013; Siregar et al. 2019 & Tanaka 2005) and increased female labour force participation (Besamusca et al. 2015; Low & Sanchez-Marcos 2015). Tanaka's (2005) study of 18 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries over the period 1969-2000 shows that longer maternity leave and better benefits can reduce the number of low birthweight babies and infant mortality. Meanwhile, Low & Sanchez-Marcos (2015) found a substantial impact of maternity leave on women's labour force participation, particularly for women with children aged 0-2.

Currently, the fulfilment of maternity rights for women workers in Indonesia is still entirely delegated to the employer and has not been implemented through the employment social security system. This right is regulated in Article 82 of Law No. 13/2003 on Labour, which states that women workers are entitled to maternity leave for 1.5 months before and after childbirth, or approximately 12-13 weeks, with full wages paid by the employer. This is in contrast to ILO standards that encourage the financing of maternity leave benefits by the social security system rather than by the employer alone. This can increase the risk of women losing their jobs and income for their families during pregnancy and childbirth if they are prevented from accessing such leave and receiving assurances that they will be able to return to work after the leave period. In this article, we argue that such risks can be mitigated if paid maternity leave is included in workers' social security schemes. We use the International Labour Standards concept that maternity protection is a public good and a collective obligation, through solidarity and risk pooling from all parts of society (Addati et al. 2022).

In this article, we use a flexible concept of social protection that reflects the country-specific context and evolves over time according to a country's needs and capacities (Dekker et al. 2000), but still includes basic components of social protection such as social assistance and social security (Norton et al. 2001; Brunori & O'Reilly

2010; Kabeer 2010). Social protection is a comprehensive set of policies and programmes aimed at preventing, reducing, and addressing risks and concerns faced by all citizens throughout their lives (life cycle) in order to protect them from poverty and vulnerability (TNP2K 2018). The concept of social protection is also the underlying philosophy of maternity protection, which serves to prevent women from falling into vulnerability and poverty.

This paper is divided into four sections. The first section provides an overview of gender inequality in the labour market as a background to the argument for maternity protection. The second section explains the direction of change in Indonesia's social security system and its implications for maternity leave policy in Indonesia. The next section describes the challenges in the implementation of maternity leave in Indonesia and alternatives for improving maternity leave policy through social security schemes. The final section contains recommendations for strengthening employment social security system to better address gender risks and vulnerabilities.

In this article, the discussion of maternity protection is limited to employment social security due to the lack of literature on this subject. We do not discuss health insurance, which is a crucial part of comprehensive maternity protection. The discussion of pre-, during, and postpartum health insurance and postpartum services has been extensively discussed in various literatures (Laksono et al. 2022; Denny et al. 2021; Siregar et al. 2019). We also do not discuss other forms of maternity-related social assistance<sup>1</sup>, as the scope of this paper focuses on the transformation of maternity leave into part of the contributory social security system.

## Research Methodology

The authors used a desk research approach to develop the argument for the importance of maternity protection as part of employment social security. The authors reviewed literatures, reports, and statistics that provide evidence of gender inequality in the labour market and unpaid care work globally and in Indonesia. The authors synthesised the evidence with a review of current maternity leave policy. In this review, the authors analysed the challenges of implementing such a policy, drawing on evidence from several existing studies. In discussing the maternity leave policy, this paper limits the discussion of maternity protection to the scope of social security, in particular employment social security. While we do not discuss other social protection

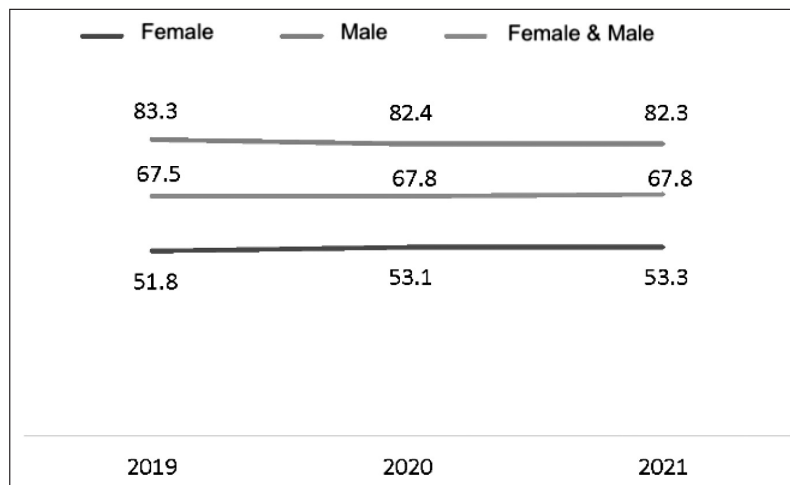
programmes, it is worth emphasising that there are still gender inequalities in access to these programmes.

**Gender Inequalities in Labour Force Participation and Care Work in Indonesia**

Maternity protection plays an important role in ensuring women’s equal access to the labour market, as well as income sustainability that contributes to the well-being of the whole family. However, maternity leave mechanisms, as well as other social protections, sometimes do not take into account the barriers women face, in particular access to decent work and “time poverty” as women bear the burden of care work. In this section, we describe the situation of women’s access to employment using the indicators of Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) and time spent on unpaid care

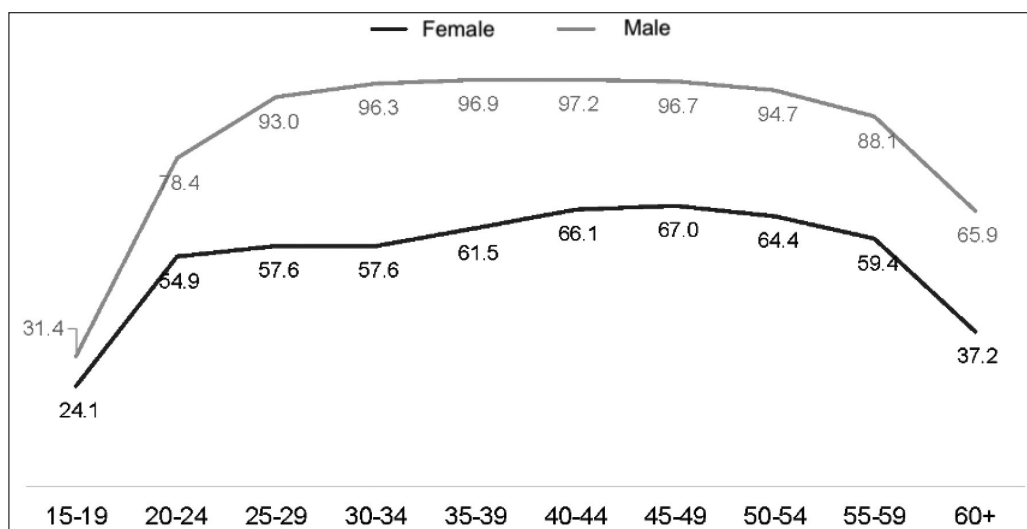
and domestic work. LFPR is commonly used to measure economic opportunities, although an increase in LFPR for women does not necessarily indicate progress in economic gender equality (Utomo 2018).

Over the past three decades, Indonesia has continued to experience gender inequalities in LFPR (Cameron et al. 2019). In 2019-2021, women’s LFPR remained unchanged at 52 to 53 per cent, while men’s LFPR was 83 per cent (Figure 1). This figure is much lower than the male participation rate of 80 per cent. Various studies have concluded that marital status and having children under five are factors associated with low female participation, especially in the 20-34 age group (Figure 2). Entering family life creates care responsibilities for women and this is a factor that causes them to stop working (Setyonaluri 2013).



**Figure 1. Labour Force Participation Rate by Gender, 2019-2021**

Source: Calculation results from SAKERNAS, August 2019-2021 (Milawati et al. 2023)



**Figure 2. Labour Participation Rate by Gender and Age, 2021 (%)**

Source: Calculation results from SAKERNAS, August 2021 (Milawati et al. 2023)

In many countries, there is an inequality in the allocation of time to unpaid care work between men and women. Time Use Survey results in 64 countries show that of the 16.4 billion hours per day allocated to unpaid care work, more than three-quarters (76 per cent) are performed by women (Charmes 2019; ILO 2018). The time spent by women on unpaid care work varies widely across countries, ranging from a maximum of 345 minutes per day (or almost a quarter of a full 24-hour day) in Iraq to a minimum of 168 minutes per day (or 2 hours and 48 minutes) in Taiwan. The highest time spent by men on unpaid care work is 200 minutes (or 3 hours and 20 minutes, equivalent to 13.9 per cent of a 24-hour day) in Moldova, and the lowest is just 18 minutes in Cambodia. On average, a man spends 83 minutes on unpaid care work, while a woman spends 265 minutes (Charmes 2019).

In Indonesia, there is also gender inequality in the allocation of unpaid care work time. A survey conducted by Sigiro et al. (2018) shows that housewives work 8 hours a day on average, with most housewives surveyed working more than 12 hours a day. The results of a pilot study of a Time Use Survey conducted by Prospera and the University of Indonesia (2023) in Jakarta and Surabaya, "Investing in Women", show that women generally spend an average of 8 hours a day on care and domestic work, while men spend only 2.8 hours. Meanwhile, women with children under five are the least free. They spend 3.7 hours on domestic work and almost 8 hours on unpaid care work. It should be noted that in the pilot survey, care work includes both active activities of interacting with the person being cared for and passive activities of monitoring or being available in case the person being cared for needs help. Passive care, also known as supervisory care, is an activity that is often overlooked in time allocation calculations, but has been found to take up more time than active care and to be a greater barrier to women's participation in the labour market (Folbre 2006).

Women's time poverty is influenced by social norms that are still reproduced to date. The responsibility for care, especially for children, falls solely on women's shoulders because social norms emphasise that women's nature is to give birth and raise children and care for the family, while men become leaders and earn a living for the family. These social norms persist and are practised to date, including among younger populations (Setyonaluri et al. 2021; YouGov & Investing in Women 2021). These social norms lead to misconceptions among men and women that most societies do not support women working after having children (Cameron et al. 2022).

To accommodate the caring role demanded by social norms, women find it difficult to keep their jobs. After giving birth, women "juggle" childcare and work. In big cities such as Jakarta, the conflict between work and care is further complicated by structural factors such as workplace policies that do not offer flexibility for workers with care responsibilities, and time-consuming and uncertain commuting due to traffic congestion or unreliable public transport (Setyonaluri & Utomo 2023). For those who do not have access to adequate maternity leave, working women have to return to work as soon as possible so that the family income is not disrupted, but they do not have enough time to recover and care for the baby. This puts further pressure on women to choose between continuing to work and caring for their children (Setyonaluri et al. 2023; Setyonaluri & Utomo 2023).

Various studies have shown that women tend to move into the informal sector, such as starting their own businesses and becoming unpaid family workers, because these jobs do not require them to be away from their children and families (Galloway & Bernasek 2002; Indraswari 2006; Purnamasari et al. 2020). This results in a higher proportion of female workers than male workers in the informal sector, especially married women with childcare responsibilities (Figure 3). Income insecurity is very high in the informal sector in Indonesia, which reduces the ability of workers to access social protection (Setyonaluri & Radjiman 2016), especially social security programmes that require contributions from workers.

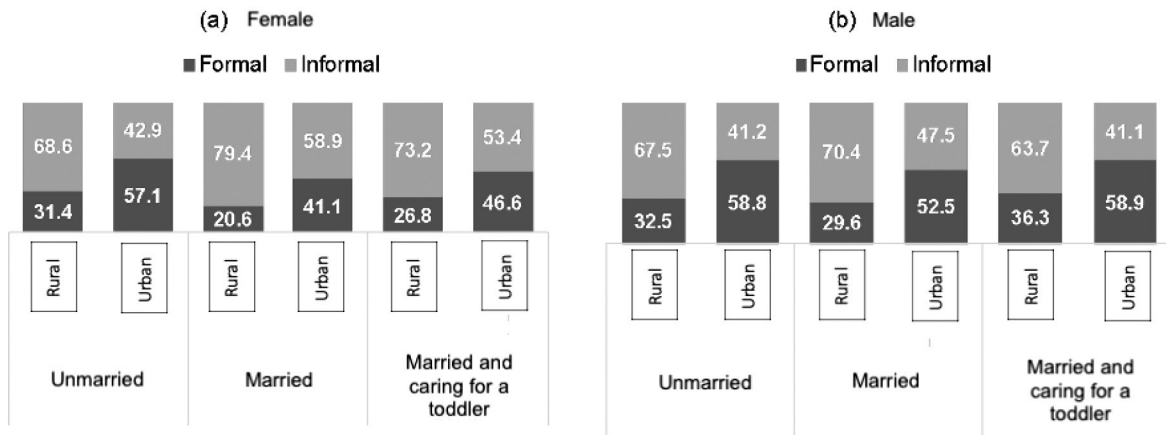


Figure 3. Proportion of Female and Male Workers in the Formal and Informal Sectors in Indonesia 2021 (%)

Source: Calculation results from SAKERNAS, August 2021 (Milawati et al. 2023)

The unpaid care and domestic work with which women are unequally burdened can also force them to leave paid work. Figure 4 shows a higher percentage of women who left jobs to care for children under five than women who do not care for children under five. This

trend applies to women in both urban and rural areas. Meanwhile, the percentage of men who quit their jobs to take care of children, or not, is quite low, at less than 5 per cent. The decision to stop working may limit their access to social security for workers.

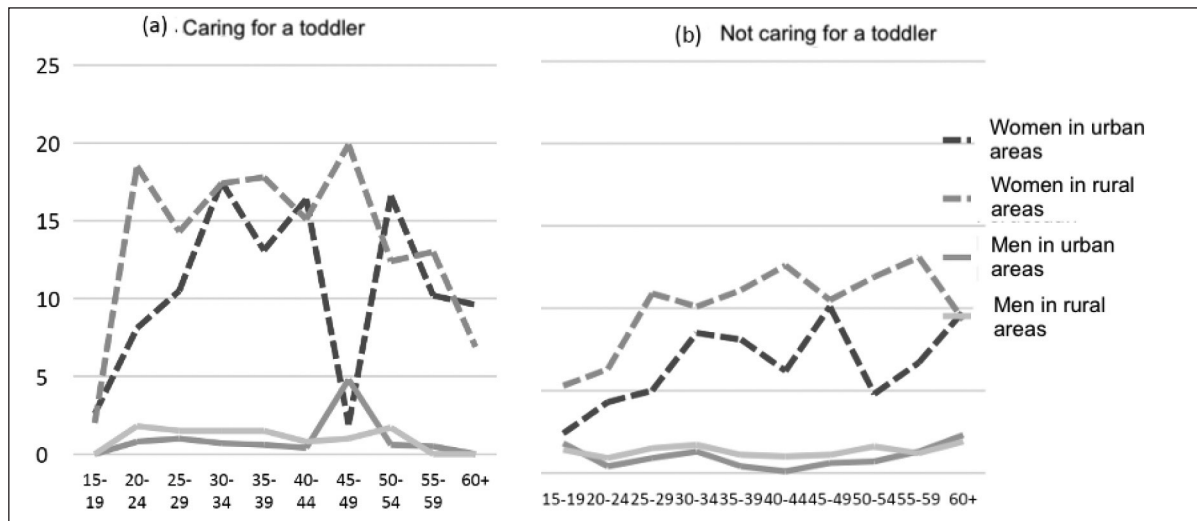


Figure 4: Workers who quit their jobs in the last 12 years, 2021 data (%)

Source: Calculation results from SAKERNAS, August 2021 (Milawati et al. 2023)

**The Changing Direction of Employment Social Security and Its Implications for Maternity Protection in Indonesia**

Law No. 40/2004 on the National Social Security System (NSSS), Article 1, defines social security as “a form of social protection to ensure that all people can meet their basic needs”. The current system covers health insurance for the entire population and social security for workers (employment social security), which consists of (a) work accident insurance (*Jaminan Sosial*

*Ketenagakerjaan, JKK*); (b) old-age insurance (*Jaminan Hari Tua, JHT*); (c) pension insurance (*Jaminan Pensiun, JP*); (d) death insurance (*Jaminan Kematian, JKM*); and (e) job loss insurance (*Jaminan Kehilangan Pekerjaan, JKP*).

As a flexible concept that evolves over time (Dekker et al. 2000), social security programmes in Indonesia have also undergone changes, both in terms of providers and types of programmes, as well as in terms of coverage. Prior to the enactment of the SJSN Law, the employment

social security programmes were administered by a state-owned enterprise (SOE) in the form of PT (Persero), PT Jamsostek. Through Law No. 24/2011 on the Social Security Organising Agency (*Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Sosial, BPJS*), the implementation of social

security is carried out by *BPJS Ketenagakerjaan* (Social Security Agency for Employment) as the organiser of the employment social security programmes and *BPJS Kesehatan* (Social Security Agency for Healthcare) as the organiser of the health insurance programme.

**Table 1. Development of the Employment Social Security Scheme\***

	Before SJSN	After SJSN
Organiser	PT Jamsostek (Persero) BUMN (SOE, profit-oriented)	BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Public Legal Entity (non-profit oriented)
Type of Programme	JKK, JKM, JHT, and JPK	JKK, JKM, JHT, JP, JKP <sup>2</sup>
Coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers performing work within an employment relationship (formal workers)</li> <li>Workers performing work outside an employment relationship (informal workers)</li> </ul>	Divided into 4 participant categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wage Earners (<i>Penerima Upah, PU</i>)</li> <li>Non-wage Earners (<i>Bukan Penerima Upah, BPU</i>)</li> <li>Indonesian Migrant Workers (IMW)</li> <li>Construction Services (<i>Jasa Konstruksi, Jakon</i>)</li> </ul>
Number of Participants	12.04 million participants (2013)	56.9 million participants (July 2023)

Source: Law No. 3/1992, Law No. 40/2004, Law No. 24/2011, roadmap for the implementation of employment social security 2013-2019, BPJS Employment Data 2023

Notes\*: JKK (Work Accident Insurance), JKM (Death Insurance), JHT (Old-age Insurance), JP (Pension Insurance), JKP (Job Loss Insurance), JK (Health Insurance), JPK (Health Maintenance Insurance).

Of the five available labour social security programmes, only the *PU* or formal workers category have access to all programmes. Meanwhile, the other categories, namely the *BPU* category (informal workers), IMW, and construction services, are limited to access to three programmes, namely JKK, JKM, and JHT.

In terms of participation, the data from *BPJS Ketenagakerjaan* show an increase from year to year. However, during the Covid-19 pandemic (2020-2021), the number of participants decreased significantly compared to the previous year and increased again in 2022. Participation is also still dominated by the *PU* category, as shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2. Participation in the Employment Social Security Programme, 2018-2023**

Category	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Juli 2023
PU	38.640.018	40.061.417	39.759.485	40.217.816	41.248.981	41.814.541
BPU	2.770.907	3.081.787	3.039.107	4.189.212	6.777.009	7.260.164
PMI	365.662	544.500	376.615	235.684	333.197	391.744
Jakon	8.639.900	11.279.754	7.521.392	6.276.788	7.020.533	7.406.237
Total	50.416.487	54.967.458	50.696.599	50.919.500	55.379.720	56.872.686

Source: BPJS Employment Data, 2018-July 2023

From a gender perspective, female participation is still far below that of men. *BPJS Ketenagakerjaan* data (2018-2020) show that less than 30 per cent of women are registered as *BPJS Ketenagakerjaan* participants. The calculation results from Sakernas data in 2021 also strengthen the evidence of gender inequality in employment social security participation. Female workers are covered by at least JKK and JKM programmes

compared to their male counterparts (Figure 5). This difference is even greater among those who are married and those who are married and care for children under five. Only 15.3 per cent of urban women who are married and have children under five are covered by at least JKK and JKM. This is lower than the 18.3 per cent of male workers in the same category.

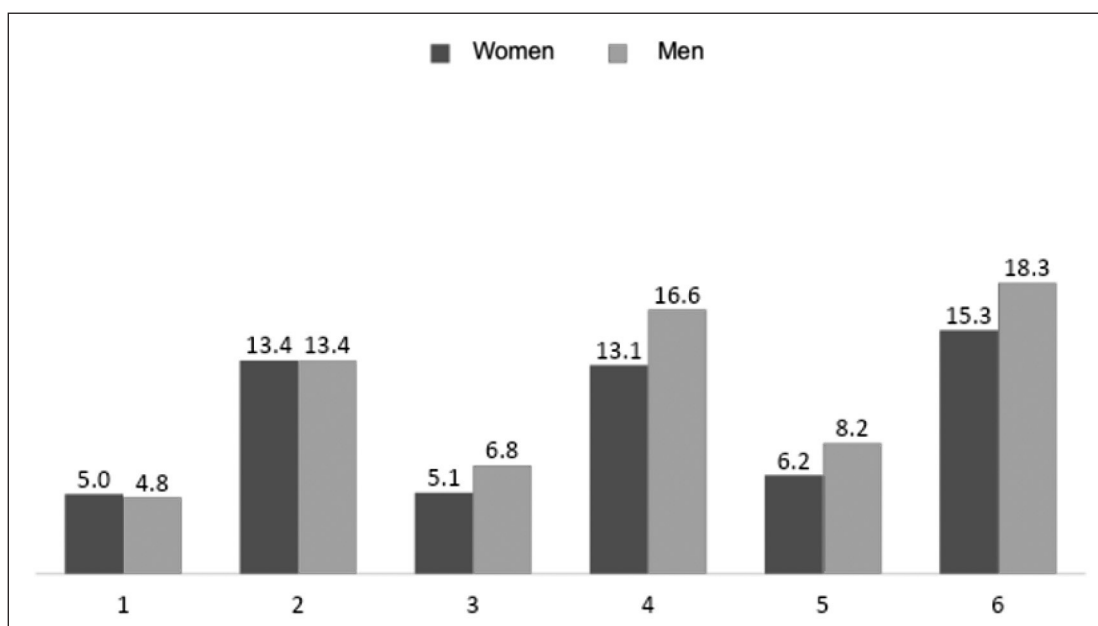


Figure 5. Proportion of Female and Male Workers Participating in Employment Insurance in Indonesia, 2021

Source: Calculation results from Sakernas, August 2021 (Milawati et al. 2023)

Although the Law on National Social Security System opens up membership to anyone who has paid contributions, membership of the employment social security programmes tends to be reserved for workers. This is evident from the membership categories (PU, BPU, IMW, and *Jakon*) and the definition of workers that still refers to a narrow concept of productivity. In Law No. 40/2004, Article 1, point 11, workers are defined as “any person who works by receiving salary, wages, or other forms of remuneration”. The Central Bureau of Statistics (*Badan Pusat Statistik, BPS*) includes care work in the home in the non-labour category, which is considered to have no economic contribution. However, in 2013, the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) adopted a new international standard that includes unpaid care work as a form of productive work in labour statistics. The narrow concept of productivity ignores the existence of unpaid care work, most of which is done by women. As a result, women who take care of children and families are excluded from employment social security because they are not considered as workers.

The benefits of social security programmes are diverse and include protection for workers and their families, but they still need to be made more gender-responsive by taking into account gender-specific risks and vulnerabilities. UNICEF (2021) describes the different risks and vulnerabilities of women at different stages of the life cycle, such as early/child marriage, teenage pregnancy, maternity-related risks, or widowhood. There are also three structural barriers: women’s limited access to economic resources and opportunities; women’s and girls’ greater exposure to gender-based violence; and women’s and girls’ unequal responsibilities for unpaid care and domestic work.<sup>3</sup>

A review of the protection of maternity rights shows that the components of maternity protection provided are in line with ILO Convention No. 183/2000, namely (i) health protection; (ii) maternity leave; (iii) leave allowance; (iv) employment protection and non-discrimination; and (v) breastfeeding mothers. As regulated by Labour Law No. 13/2003 (Table 3).

**Table 3. Protection of Maternity Rights in the Labour Law**

Article	Contents of Article
Article 76(2)	Entrepreneurs are prohibited from employing pregnant female workers/labourers who, according to a doctor’s account, are at risk of damaging their health or harming their own safety and the safety of the babies that are in their wombs if they work between 11 p.m. until 7 a.m.
Article 81(1)	Female workers/labourers who feel pain during their menstrual period and tell the entrepreneur about this are not obliged to come to work on the first and second day of menstruation.
Article 82(1)	Female workers/labourers are entitled to a 1.5 (one-and-a-half) month period of rest before the time at which they are estimated by an obstetrician or a midwife to give birth to a baby and another 1.5 (one-and-a-half) month period of rest thereafter.
Article 82(2)	A female worker/labourer who has a miscarriage is entitled to a period of rest of 1.5 (one-and-a-half) months or a period of rest as stated in the medical statement issued by the obstetrician or midwife who treats her.
Article 83	Entrepreneurs are under an obligation to provide proper opportunities to female workers/labourers whose babies still need breastfeeding to breast-feed their babies if that must be performed during working hours.
Article 84	Every worker/labourer who uses her right to take the period of rest as specified under points b, c, and d of subsection (2) of Article 79, Article 80 and Article 82 shall receive her wages in full.
Article 93(2)	The entrepreneur shall be obliged to pay the worker/labourer’s wages if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. The female workers/labourers are ill on the first and second day of their menstrual period so that they cannot perform their work;</li> <li>c. The workers/ labourers have to be absent from work because they get married, marry off their children, have their sons circumcised, have their children baptised, or because the worker/labourer’s wife gives birth to a baby, or suffers from a miscarriage...</li> </ul>
Article 93(4)	The amount of wages payable to workers/labourers during the period in which they have to be absent from work...shall be determined as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e. ...his wife gives birth to a baby or his wife suffers a miscarriage, he shall be entitled to receive a payment for 2 (two) days’ work during the absence;</li> </ul>
Article 153	The entrepreneur is prohibited from terminating the employment of a worker/labourer because of the following reasons: ... The worker/labourer... is pregnant, giving birth to a baby, having a miscarriage, or breast-feeding her baby.

Source: Law Number 13 Year 2003 on Manpower

Table 3 also shows that the fulfilment of maternity rights is still the sole responsibility of the employer, with the exception of health care during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum, which is already covered by the national social security system.<sup>4</sup> This condition raises several issues, including the coverage of beneficiaries and the level of compliance, which will be discussed in the next section.

In addition, Indonesia’s large informal sector continues to hamper compliance with labour-related obligations. This sector, dominated by micro and small enterprises, absorbs 97 per cent of Indonesia’s workforce (Ministry of Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises 2022). Meanwhile, the low productivity of the informal sector means that there is little certainty of a decent and regular income. This limits the ability of employers to meet their

obligations to workers, such as maternity leave, which ensures that women can return to work after giving birth.

**Challenges in the Implementation of Maternity Leave**

Studies show that there are still differences in the design and implementation of maternity protection in different countries. The results of an ILO survey of 185 countries in 2021 show that almost all of them have maternity leave regulations. However, there are still differences in the application of ILO Convention No. 183/2000 on Maternity Protection, which underpins the design of maternity leave in different countries. A total of 120 countries provides at least 14 weeks of maternity leave, and 52 of them have reached or exceeded 18 weeks. Further, 64 countries still have maternity leave of less than 14 weeks. This leaves 3 in 10 women of reproductive age

(15-49) worldwide without the right to adequate time off to rest and recover from childbirth and care for newborns. A total of 123 countries have fully paid maternity leave (Addati et al. 2022). However, not all countries have implemented the financing of maternity leave benefits through the social security system, as mandated by the ILO. Addati et al. (2022) found that in 2021 there were still 45 countries that put the responsibility of fulfilling maternity leave rights on employers.

Maternity leave benefits can also be provided through social assistance schemes, particularly for women who do not meet the eligibility criteria for social security or who are unable to contribute (Brimblecombe et al. 2023). We argue that the inclusion of maternity leave benefits in the national social security system can improve the fulfilment of women workers' maternity rights in accordance with ILO Convention No. 183 on Maternity Protection and ILO Convention No. 102 on Minimum Standards of Social Security. In addition, the fulfilment of maternity leave rights, supported by the provision of childcare services, is expected to increase women's participation in the labour force and women's contribution to the productivity of the economy, as well as to the well-being of their families.

The right to maternity leave for female workers is enshrined in the Law on Manpower, but its implementation practices vary across Indonesia. Although few, several studies show that women's access to maternity leave is low. Better Work Indonesia (2010) states that there are still many cases where women cannot access their maternity rights. This is due to the large number of micro and small enterprises in Indonesia. As discussed in the previous section, due to their small size, entrepreneurs face many difficulties in terms of productivity and access to credit, and as a result, they often do not comply with labour regulations, including not meeting minimum wage obligations, and experience high turnover (Rothenberg et al. 2016).

Maternity leave, which is the sole obligation of companies, fuels the perception that it is more expensive to employ women than men. In addition to the perception that they are less productive, women workers are also perceived as more likely to be absent from work to care for their children, such as when children are sick, due to social norms that still place the responsibility for caring for children on women. The three-month maternity leave is also considered to increase the cost of employing women (World Bank 2004), as companies not only have to pay wages during the leave period, but also have to hire replacements for workers on leave. As a result, in order

to reduce labour costs, some employers have adopted a policy of employing fewer women workers, especially if they are pregnant or have children.

Studies of working conditions in the 1990s show that dismissal of women workers after childbirth was a common practice, particularly in the labour-intensive manufacturing sector (Wolf 1992; Blackburn 2004; Caraway 2005). Several other studies also show that companies try to circumvent the obligation to provide maternity leave by providing contraceptive services to women workers and by employing women workers on a daily or contract basis (Hutagalung et al. 1994; Caraway 2005; Robinson 2009).

Meanwhile, although not many, studies that track women's access to maternity leave after the year of 2000 also show that women workers' access to maternity leave remains low. The results of a survey of 300 respondents in the provinces of Lampung, Central Java, and Bali show that employers only provide maternity leave rights for 3 months without providing full pay during the leave period and without monitoring the implementation of maternity leave. With regard to companies that do not pay full wages during maternity leave, 13 per cent of respondents in Bali province, 10 per cent of respondents in Central Java province, and 14 per cent of respondents in Lampung province said they did not object to this practice because it was agreed between the workers and the employers when they were hired (Istiarti 2012).

Setyonaluri et al. (2023) found that 13.4 per cent of 479 respondents in Indonesian metropolitan areas did not receive maternity leave. A total of 68.7 per cent of them (64 respondents) applied for maternity leave from their employers, but only 53.1 per cent (34 respondents) eventually received it. The survey results show that more maternity leave requests were approved for permanent employees (66.9 per cent) than for contract employees (58.9 per cent). The implementation of maternity leave also varies considerably between large enterprises and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). The majority of workers in large-scale businesses are able to take full maternity leave (3 months), while most workers in MSMEs have no leave entitlement.

Similar conditions were also found by Perempuan Mahardhika (2018) in its study of women workers in garment companies in the Cakung Nusantara Bonded Zone (KBN Cakung). Contract workers have a harder time getting maternity leave than permanent workers. When contract workers are more than 7 months pregnant, they are often offered a "holiday or break", which is

communicated in a letter of resignation or break. Some can return to work with a new contract or status. Others may only be able to take 1.5 months maternity leave or half of the statutory period.

These findings show that there are still challenges in fulfilling maternity rights in different workplaces. Workers in MSMEs and contract workers are less likely to have their maternity rights protected than workers in large enterprises and permanent employees. Delegating the full responsibility for providing maternity leave to employers opens up the possibility of discrimination against some groups of workers and may affect women's employment opportunities. In addition, the proposal to increase the length of maternity leave from 3 to 6 months, if implemented, may increase the cost burden on employers.

### Strategies for Fulfilling Maternity Leave Rights

This section discusses various challenges in implementing maternity leave protection and alternative policy improvements. We highlight three main aspects of maternity leave fulfilment: the length of maternity leave, the benefits of maternity leave, and the source of financing. We also want to promote parental leave as an effort to encourage the redistribution of care roles between genders and minimise the creation of unequal arenas between women and men in the labour market (Siregar et al. 2019; World Bank 2020).

A policy alternative is to promote collective responsibility in the implementation of maternity leave implementation as a strategy to extend the coverage of beneficiaries, ensure the provision of benefits/wages, and increase the leave period. According to ILO standards, the cost of maternity leave should not be borne by the employers alone, but should be provided through the social security system, public funds, or social assistance.<sup>5</sup> In one of its recent publications, the ILO proposed the provision of maternity benefits through the Indonesian social security system (Brimblecombe et al. 2023).

Some of the suggestions made in the ILO study are as follows:

- a) Maternity benefits cover all wage earners and construction workers.
- b) Maternity benefits are available to workers who have completed a certain period of participation or contribution. In Indonesia, it is recommended that participants are qualified for maternity/paternity benefits if they have contributed for at least 12 months of the 18-month membership

period prior to maternity/paternity leave. This eligibility must be reviewed periodically.

- c) Maternity benefits should be designed to replace wages lost during maternity leave.
- d) The value of maternity benefits should not be less than 45 per cent of the previous wage. ILO Convention 183 suggests a benefit value of 67 per cent. This value is lower than the Law on Manpower, which requires employers to pay the full wage.
- e) The participant's wage rate for the last 6 months should be used as the basis for determining the monthly maternity allowance received.
- f) Determination of the minimum value of benefits for participants who are on very low wages.
- g) The duration of maternity benefits payments should be in line with maternity leave provisions. ILO Convention 183 provides for paid maternity leave of at least 14 weeks. The Law on Manpower provides for 3 months (13 weeks) of maternity leave and the Maternal and Child Welfare Bill provides for 6 months (26 weeks).
- h) Miscarriage allowance (in accordance with the Law on Manpower) is 1.5 months' pay.
- i) Paternity leave allowance is granted for one week at full pay<sup>6</sup>.
- j) Birth allowance may be paid to female participants who have met the contribution requirements. This allowance may also be paid to male participants whose wives are not covered by social security. The value of the allowance may be adjusted to the minimum wage standard.

In terms of source of financing, practices in various countries show that protection of maternity rights is mostly financed through social security contribution schemes (joint employer-employee contributions) and covers all workers or some categories of workers in the formal sector. Some countries, such as Portugal and Cyprus, extend coverage to self-employed (informal) workers. However, in many countries, various categories of workers in the informal sector, such as domestic workers (e.g., Philippines, Argentina, and Greece), agricultural workers (e.g., Bolivia, Egypt, and Sudan), and casual workers (e.g. Panama), are excluded from maternity protection schemes due to problems with registration and collection of contributions. In some high-income countries, such as New Zealand, maternity benefits are financed by the state (taxes) and coverage

of the beneficiaries has been extended to all women citizens whose income or family income is below the national standard (Brimblecombe et al. 2023).

In the Indonesian context, employer-employee co-financing may cause a backlash, as the provision of benefits/wages during maternity leave has been the responsibility of employers. However, as previous studies have shown, the current implementation of maternity leave protection is not optimal due to non-compliance by employers and limited monitoring. The provision of maternity leave benefits through the employment social security system is expected to improve implementation and expand coverage. In addition, it has the potential to reduce gender inequality in the labour market by reducing the cost burden on employers of employing women (Karshenas et al. 2014; Lee & Cho 2005).

However, the ILO's proposals mentioned above still focus on groups of wage-earning workers. What is needed is protection for vulnerable groups of workers, such as the self-employed, informal workers, migrant workers, and workers with disabilities. Eligible groups of poor workers can be proposed as recipients of social assistance schemes (Addati et al. 2022). Meanwhile, vulnerable workers (missing middle) need to be studied further, as they are not eligible for social assistance but have limited capacity to participate in social security. One of funding strategies that could be explored is joint contributions between the government and employees, known as co-contributions. This scheme could reduce the burden of contributions on workers and ensure that the value of maternity benefits is sufficient to cover basic needs during maternity leave. These vulnerable groups of workers are generally underprotected and are often forced to continue or return to work during pregnancy, despite the medical risks, or are forced to stop working, resulting in loss of income. This puts pregnant workers in a vulnerable position and can threaten the health of their future babies (Addati et al 2022).

## Closing

This paper demonstrates the importance of fulfilling maternity leave rights as an effort to recognise, reduce, and redistribute the burden of unpaid care work that prevents working women from earning income for their families. Maternity leave not only provides a "safety net" for women to continue earning an income without compromising the welfare of the children or family being cared for. In other words, maternity leave can reduce women's risk and vulnerability.

The implementation of maternity leave in Indonesia is still varied. A number of studies have shown that access to three months paid maternity leave is uneven. This is related to the level of compliance by employers, who are responsible for fulfilling maternity leave rights, and weak supervision/monitoring. The sub-optimal implementation of maternity leave may contribute to the stagnation of women's LFPR and the high representation of women in the informal sector in the future. Women's low LFPR and low wages make it difficult for them to access social protection, especially social security (contributory scheme), which increases their risk and vulnerability to poverty.

One policy measure that can be taken to ensure the protection of maternity rights is to promote collective responsibility through the employment social security system. Employers and employees contribute jointly to the financing of maternity leave benefits. This funding scheme allows the maternity leave period to be extended from three to six months without any loss to employers or women jobseekers. The additional period of paid maternity leave is needed because the three-month leave period is considered insufficient to help mothers transition back to work. Co-financing scheme also provides an opportunity to expand the coverage of maternity leave for both female and male workers. For poor or vulnerable self-employed workers, financing can be shared between the government and workers through a co-contribution scheme or a non-contribution scheme (social assistance).

Collective responsibility for financing maternity leave can also reduce the cost burden on employers. These changes are expected to improve the discriminatory treatment of female workers by employers during pregnancy and childbirth. It is therefore important for the government to promote the implementation of maternity leave rights for workers through the employment social security system.

## Bibliography

- Addati, L., Cattaneo, U., & Pozzan, E. 2022. *Care at Work: Investing in Care Leave and Services for a More Gender Equal World of Work*. International Labour Organization Office: Geneva.
- BetterWork Indonesia. 2010. "Guidelines for Employers on Maternity Protection at Work", *betterwork.org*, accessed on 15 November 2023, at <https://betterwork.org/reports-and-publications/maternity-protection-at-work-guidelines/>.
- Besamusca, J., Tijdens, K., Keune, M., & Steinmetz, S. 2015. "Working Women Worldwide. Age Effects in Female Labor Force Participation

- in 117 Countries", *World Development*, Vol. 74, pp. 123--141. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.04.015>.
- Blackburn, S. 2004. *Women and the State in Modern Indonesia*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- Brimblecombe, S., Plamondon, P., Phand, D. T., & Tsuruga, I. 2023. *Republic of Indonesia: Report to the Government – Financial Assessment of the Social Security Pension Schemes Administered by BPJS Ketenagakerjaan as of 31 December 2020 and Costing of Sickness and Maternity Benefits*. ILO: Jakarta.
- Brunori, P. & O'Reilly, M. 2010. "Social Protection for Development: A Review of Definitions", *MPRA Paper No. 29495*, accessed on 20 November 2023, at [https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/29495/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_29495.pdf](https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/29495/1/MPRA_paper_29495.pdf).
- Cameron, L. 2019. "Social Protection Programs for Women in Developing Countries: How to Design Social Protection Programs that Poor Women can Benefit from", *IZA World of Labor*, DOI: 10.15185/izawol.14.v2.
- Cameron, L., Suarez, D. C., & Setyonaluri, D. 2022. "Gender Norms and Women's Work in Indonesia", *AEA RCT Registry*. <https://doi.org/10.1257/rct.9493-2.0>.
- Caraway, T. L. 2005. "The Political Economy of Feminization: From 'Cheap Labor' to Gendered Discourses of Work", *Politics & Gender*, Vol. 1(3), pp. 399–429. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X05050105>.
- Charmes, J. 2019. *The Unpaid Care Work and the Labour Market: An Analysis of Time Use Data Based on the latest World Compilation of Time-Use Surveys*. ILO publications: Switzerland.
- Coley, R. L., & Lombardi, C. M. 2013. "Does Maternal Employment following Childbirth Support or Inhibit Low-income Children's Long-term Development?", *Child Development*, Vol. 84(1), pp. 178–197. DOI:10.1111/j.1467-8624.2012.01840.x.
- Coordinating Ministry for People's Welfare et al. 2014. "Peta Jalan Penyelenggaraan Jaminan Sosial Bidang Ketenagakerjaan 2013-2019", accessed on 15 November 2023, at <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/Media.action;jsessionid=RLGFkF5SmkNu71ZF4wZWje2ay-1qp-88nRQ6EFhr-StBiBCA9Q30!1945465934?id=17070>.
- Denny, H. M., Laksono, A. D., & Matahari, R., Kurniawan, B. 2021. "The Determinants of Four or More Antenatal Care Visits Among Working Women in Indonesia", *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 34(1), pp. 51-56. DOI:10.1177/10105395211051237.
- Dekker, A., Jansen van Rensburg, L., Liffman, R., Thompson, M., & Van der Walt, A. 2000. "Social Security: A Conceptual View", *Law, Democracy and Development*, Vol. 4(1), pp. 1-13. <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/idd/article/view/138274>.
- Folbre, N. 2006. "Measuring Care: Gender, Empowerment, and the Care Economy", *Journal of Human Development*, Vol. 7(2), pp. 183-199. DOI:10.1080/14649880600768512.
- Gallaway, J. & Bernasek, A. 2002. "Gender and informal sector employment in Indonesia", *Journal of Economic Issues*, Vol. 36, pp. 313-321. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00213624.2002.11506473>.
- Holmes, R. & Jones, N. 2013. *Gender and Social Protection in the Developing World: Beyond Mothers and Safety Nets*. Zed Books: London.
- Hutagalung, N. K., Grijns, M., & White, B. 1994. "Women as Wage Workers", in *Different Women, Different Work: Gender and Industrialisation in Indonesia*. Aldershot: Avebury.
- International Labour Organization (ILO). 2016. "Maternity Cash Benefits for Workers in the Informal Economy", accessed on 20 November 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/beijing/what-we-do/publications/WCMS\\_537934/lang-en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/beijing/what-we-do/publications/WCMS_537934/lang-en/index.htm).
- International Labour Organization (ILO). 2018. "ILO Publications 2018", accessed on 10 November 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_630199.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_630199.pdf).
- International Labour Organization (ILO). 2021. *World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Social Protection at the Crossroads in pursuit of a better future*. International Labour Office: Geneva.
- Indraswari. 2006. "Women and Warung in an Urban Kampung", *Department of Anthropology, Division of Society and Environment*, Vol. PhD Thesis. DOI:10.25911/5d7a2cd07235b.
- Istiarti, V. T. 2012. "Penerapan Hak Cuti Melahirkan Bagi Pekerja Perempuan di Sektor Formal: The Policy for Women Labors", *Jurnal Kesehatan Lingkungan Indonesia*, Vol. 11(2), pp. 103–108. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14710/jkli.11.2.103%20-%20108>.
- Kabeer, N. 2010. *Gender and Social Protection Strategies in the Informal Economy*. Routledge: UK.
- Karshenas, M., Moghadam, V. M., & Alami, R. 2014. "Social Policy after the Arab Spring: States and Social Rights in the MENA Region", *World Development*, Vol. 64, pp. 726-739. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2014.07.002>.
- Laksono, A. D. et al. 2022. "Health Insurance Ownership among Female Workers in Indonesia: does socioeconomic status matter?", *BMC Public Health*, Vol. 22. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-14189-3>.
- Lee, K. W. & Cho, K. 2005. "Female Labour Force Participation during Economic Crises in Argentina and the Republic of Korea", *International Labour Review*, Vol. 144(4), pp. 423-450. DOI:10.1111/j.1564-913X.2005.tb00576.x.
- Low, H. & Sanchez-Marcos, V. 2015. "Female Labour Market Outcomes and the Impact of Maternity Leave Policies", *IZA Journal of Labor Economics*, Vol. 4(14), pp. 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40172-015-0029-1>.
- Milawati, R. S., Setyonaluri, D., Samudra, R. R., & Fadilla, R. R. 2023. "Analisis Gender dalam Partisipasi Pasar Kerja dan Jaminan Sosial Ketenagakerjaan di Indonesia: Mengakui Kerja Perawatan", *Kertas Kerja TNP2K No. 62*. TNP2K: Jakarta.
- Ministry of Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises. 2022. "Data Usaha Kecil dan Menengah", accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://kemenkopukm.go.id/data-umkm>.
- Ministry of Manpower. 2023. "Peserta BPJS Ketenagakerjaan, Februari Tahun 2023", [satudata.kemnaker.go.id](http://satudata.kemnaker.go.id), accessed on

- 15 November 2023, at <https://satudata.kemnaker.go.id/data/kumpulan-data/1151>.
- Misiyah. 2020. "Urgensi Perspektif Gender dalam Mitigasi Pandemi Covid-19", *Jurnal Perempuan* Vol. 25(4), pp. 217-282. <https://indonesianfeministjournal.org/index.php/IFJ/article/view/505/395>.
- Norton, A., T., Conway, T., & Foster, M. 2001. *Social Protection Concepts and Approaches: Implications for Policy and Practice in International Development*. ODI: London.
- Perempuan Mahardhika. 2018. *Pelecehan Seksual dan Pengabaian Hak Maternitas pada Buruh Garmen: Studi Buruh Garmen Perempuan di KBN Cakung Tahun 2017*. Perempuan Mahardhika: Jakarta.
- Plagerson, S., Hochfeld, T., & Stuart, L. 2019. "Social Security and Gender Justice in South Africa: Policy Gaps and Opportunities", *Jnl Soc. Pol*, Vol. 48(2), pp. 293-310. DOI:10.1017/S004727941800048X.
- PROSPERA., Universitas Indonesia., & Investing in Women. 2023. *Piloting the Measurement of Time Use, Supervisory Care and Women's Agency in Indonesia*. PROSPERA: Jakarta.
- Purnamasari, R. et al. 2020. *What's Holding Women Back? A Qualitative Study of Constraints Underlying Women's Labor Force Participation in Indonesia: The Case of Java*. World Bank: Jakarta.
- Republic of Indonesia. Law Number 13 Year 2003 on Manpower (Law on Manpower).
- Republic of Indonesia. Law Number 40 Year 2004 on the National Social Security System (NSSS).
- Republic of Indonesia. Law Number 24 Year 2011 on Social Security Organising Agency.
- Republic of Indonesia. Law No. 3 of 1992 on Labour Social Security.
- Robinson, K. M. 2009. *Gender, Islam and Democracy in Indonesia*. New York: Routledge.
- Rothenberg, A. et al. 2016. "Rethinking Indonesia's Informal Sector." *World Development*, Vol. 80, pp. 96-113. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.11.005>.
- Setyonaluri, D. 2013. "Women Interrupted: Determinant of Women's Employment Exit and Return in Indonesia", *PhD Thesis Australian National University*. DOI: 10.25911/5d5e7727dad2c.
- Setyonaluri, D. & Radjiman, D. 2016. "Social Protection for Informal Workers in Indonesia: A Case Study of Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises", *Social Protection for Informal Workers in Asia*, pp. 308-335. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/203891/sp-informalworkers-asia.pdf>.
- Setyonaluri, D. et al. 2023. *Maternity Leave in Metropolitan Indonesia: Evidence on Duration, Benefits and Job Protection*. International Labour Organization: Jakarta.
- Setyonaluri, D. et al. 2021. *Social Norms and Women's Economic Participation in Indonesia*. Investing in Women: Jakarta.
- Setyonaluri, D. & Utomo, A. 2023. "Negotiating Work, Family, and Traffic: Articulations of Married Women's Employment Decisions in Greater Jakarta", *Gender, Work & Organization*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.13069>.
- Sigiro, A., Primaldhi, A., & Takwin, B. 2018. "Ekonomi Perawatan dan Beban Kerja Ibu Rumah Tangga di Indonesia", *Jurnal Perempuan*, Vol. 23(4), pp. 249-258.
- Siregar, A. Y. M., Pitriyan, P., Walters, D., Brown, M., Phan, L. T. H., & Mathisen, R. 2019. "The Financing Need for Expanded Maternity Protection in Indonesia", *International Breastfeeding Journal*, Vol. 14(27). DOI:10.1186/s13006-019-0221-1.
- Tanaka, Sakiko. 2005. "Parental Leave and Child Health Across OECD Countries", *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 115, pp. F7-F28. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3590461>.
- TNP2K. 2018. *Sistem Perlindungan Sosial Indonesia ke Depan: Perlindungan Sosial Sepanjang Hayat bagi Semua*. TNP2K: Jakarta.
- UNESCAP. 2021. "How to Design Gender-Sensitive Social Protection Systems", *Social Development Policy Guides*. UNESCAP: Bangkok.
- UNICEF. 2020. *Gender-Responsive Age-Sensitive Social Protection: A Conceptual Framework*. UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti: Florence.
- UNICEF. 2021. *Mainstreaming Gender into Social Protection Strategies and Programmes: Evidence from 74 Low-and Middle-Income Countries*. UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti: Florence.
- UN Women. 2019. "The National Integrated Care System in Uruguay: An Opportunity for the Economic Empowerment of Women", accessed on 20 November 2023, at <https://lac.unwomen.org/en/digiteca/publicaciones/2019/10/sistema-nacional-de-cuidados-oportunidad-empoderamiento-uruguay>.
- Utomo, A. J. 2018. "Meninjau Kembali Tren Partisipasi Angkatan Kerja Perempuan di Indonesia", *Jurnal Perempuan*, Vol. 23(4), pp. 193--202.
- Wolf, D. L. 1992. *Factory Daughters: Gender, Household Dynamics, and Rural Industrialization in Java*. University of California Press: Berkeley.
- World Bank. 2004. "Gender and Development in the Middle East and North Africa: Women in the Public Sphere", accessed on 20 November 2023, at <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/976361468756608654/pdf/281150PAPER0Gender010Development0in0MNA.pdf>.
- World Bank. 2012. *Guidance Notes on Gender and Disaster Risk Management: Making Livelihoods and Social Protection Gender-Sensitive*. World Bank: Washington DC.
- World Bank. 2020. *Indonesia Country Gender Assessment: Investing in Opportunities for Women*. World Bank: Washington DC.
- YouGov & Investing in Women. 2020. "Gender Equality Matters 2020: Social Norms, Attitudes and Practices (SNAP) of urban Millennials in Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam" accessed on 20 November 2023, at [https://investinginwomen.asia/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/1.-Gender-Equality-Matters\\_SNAP-2020-Report.pdf](https://investinginwomen.asia/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/1.-Gender-Equality-Matters_SNAP-2020-Report.pdf).

**(Endnotes)**

- 1 Social assistance or social safety net programmes are forms of non-contributory cash or in-kind assistance targeted at the poor and vulnerable. These programmes include the Family Hope Programme (FHP), Basic Food Assistance, Indonesia Smart Programme (ISP), and others.
- 2 The addition of JKP is provided for in Law No. 6/2023 on the Establishment of Government Regulations in Lieu of Law No. 2/2022 on Job Creation.
- 3 During the COVID-19 pandemic, gender-based sexual violence and the burden of unpaid care for women increased. One study found that 1 in 3 respondents experienced stress due to increased household responsibilities (Misiyah 2020).
- 4 Provided through the health insurance programme financed by contributions from the participants and the maternity insurance programme financed by the national budget.
- 5 In Indonesia, the pregnancy component has become one of the requirements for the recipients of the Family Hope Programme (FHP).
- 6 In 2021, 115 provide paternity leave (Addati, Cattaneo & Pozzan 2022).

## The Lack of Industry and State Support: Care Work for Women Factory and Home-Based Workers

**Didit Saleh<sup>1</sup>, Nitya Swastika<sup>2</sup>, & Rizky Amalia Fatikhah<sup>3</sup>**

Trade Union Rights Centre  
Jalan Kompleks Batan Nomor 1, Pasar Minggu, South Jakarta, DKI Jakarta 12520<sup>1,2,&3</sup>

didit@turc.or.id<sup>1</sup>, kiki@turc.or.id<sup>2</sup>, & nitya@turc.or.id<sup>3</sup>

Manuscript Chronology: received 12 November 2023, revised 15 November 2023, accepted 23 December 2023

### Abstract

This article aims to delineate the systemic challenges and discrimination faced by women workers in the footwear and home-based industries, both in terms of working conditions and caregiving responsibilities. The findings of this study were obtained through in-depth interviews with women workers in three footwear factories in Banten Province and home-based workers in North Jakarta. The experiences of these women workers were analyzed within two interrelated domains: the realm of production and social reproduction. The research reveals that women workers, both in factories and home-based settings, face a dual burden, striving to meet high production targets while also bearing the responsibilities of caregiving. Specifically, women home-based workers are more vulnerable to health risks compared to factory workers due to the lack of separation between their workplace and living spaces. The study also uncovers that women workers in both factory and home-based settings encounter economic violence, as their caregiving work goes unpaid and lacks support from the government and the industry.

Keywords: women factory workers, women home workers, care work

### Introduction

A number of studies reveal that women workers often face various forms of discrimination. For example, Teri L. Caraway (2005) writes that women workers experience differentiation due to the dichotomy of men and women that results in the type of work they do. Another study, for example, describes discriminatory practices against women workers in the implementation of menstrual leave due to gender bias that then influences menstrual leave policies (Istakhori 2017). In terms of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS), previous studies have tended to focus on occupational accidents and illnesses affecting only male workers (Greenberg & Dement 1994). This very limited focus has led to the neglect of women workers in the context of OSH. The existence of studies that ignore the role of women workers in industry is often due to the fact that the studies focus on certain sectors, such as mining and oil processing, which are predominantly occupied by male workers. As a result, existing data and studies give the impression that the impact of occupational diseases on women workers is virtually unknown.

Another form of discrimination takes the form of the lack of identification of women's occupations in official government data collection. For example, a study by Semenciw et al. (1993) found that working women

in Canada were not recognised as farmers. Only their husbands were identified as farmers, despite the fact that the women were actively engaged in agricultural work. This situation shows that the absence of women from the world of work is often not reflected in official data. This means that the voices of women workers from the grassroots are often not heard.

According to Todaro (in Herlina 2016), in terms of labour market opportunities, women are also more vulnerable than men to obtaining decent work. They systematically find themselves in lower positions and are paid less than male workers, even when both have the same and similar job positions. A number of studies have examined this disparity, showing that female workers tend to earn, on average, 67 per cent of the wages received by male workers for the same type of work (Armstrong 1993). This significant wage gap reflects not only economic inequality, but also the gender gap that often exists in the world of work (Herlina 2016).

To make matters worse, women also face more restrictions in terms of job flexibility. They are more likely to choose part-time work and companies are more likely to employ them on a contract or temporary basis (Amalia & Saleh 2020). This trend in choice has implications for women workers, who often lack adequate employment

protection and social security. Moreover, these restrictions put women at a disadvantage in terms of long-term job security and financial sustainability, and put them at greater risk of labour market vulnerability. This phenomenon also creates inequalities in career opportunities and access to promotions in the workplace, resulting in persistent gender inequality in various industrial sectors (Herlina 2016).

In the context of the textile, garment, shoe and leather industry (TGSL), the number of women workers in this industry is generally very dominant compared to other industries (ILO 2022). Statistically, the number of female workers in the sector is 80 per cent higher than the number of male workers (Better Work 2021). However, the total number of women employed in the TGSL industry creates an illusion of progress in terms of gender participation and equality in the workforce, and exposes some harsh realities that are often overlooked. Women in this industry often face double pressures. Not only are they pressured by high targets in the factory, but they also have to carry the burden of care work at home (Saleh et al. 20-23; Saptari & Holzner 2016; Fraser 2016). Care work is often not seen as part of work because domestic work does not generate wages, making women's work invisible. This situation shows that working women face a significant imbalance between the space of production and the space of social reproduction.

Furthermore, Saptari and Holzner (2016) found that ideological factors at both the state and household levels influence the types of work assigned to men and women. There is a stereotype that domestic work is women's work. Domestic work, such as cooking, cleaning, laundry, and childcare, is seen as a type of skill that women have acquired at home. As such, women do not need specialised education or skills to perform these tasks (Saptari & Holzner 2016). Citing Nancy Fraser's concept of social reproduction (2016), in social reproduction women are responsible for tasks that are considered women's work, such as giving birth and raising children, caring for friends and family, maintaining the household and wider community, and maintaining relationships in general.

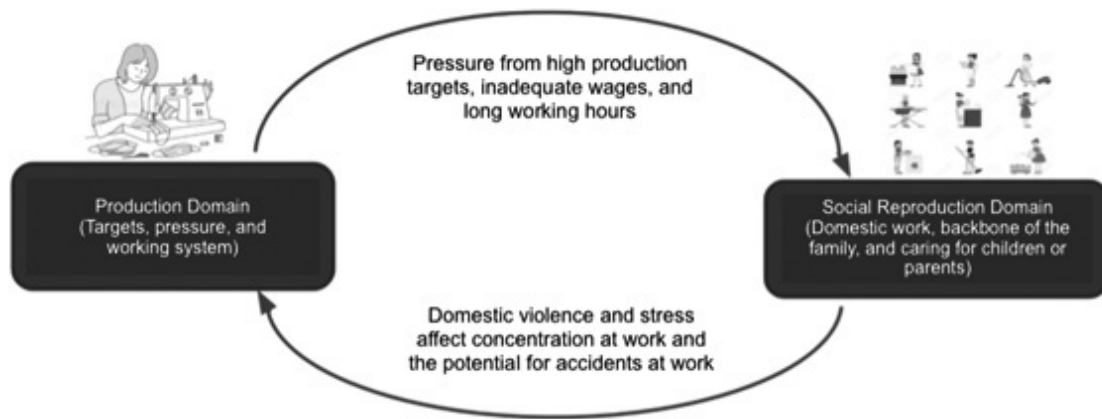
The main reason why the TGSL industry is more likely to employ women is that they can be paid low wages and are not considered to be the main breadwinners in the family, especially when compared to husbands or men. The TGSL industry is also identified with work

traditionally associated with women, such as sewing. This work is often done at home or in the area of social reproduction (Caraway 2005). In addition, capital sees the provision of wages to women in factories as a form of "favour", not as a right. Another reason is closely related to the assumption that women are easier to subjugate or organise and suppress than men.

Critically, it is important to recognise that unpaid domestic work performed by women workers in the realm of social reproduction has a huge impact on the economy as a whole. Feminist economists emphasise that understanding the economy should include not only material production but also aspects of unpaid work, such as cooking and other care work (Elson 2010). These two aspects, material production and social reproduction, are interrelated and mutually supportive. Social reproduction is key to sustaining life by providing the labour necessary for material production. Conversely, material production provides the necessary resources to support the work of social reproduction.

Based on the above narrative, the framework of this study adopts and develops a gender analysis approach to examine the conditions of women factory and home-based workers in the footwear sector. In this industry, women workers are often involved in two main domains: production and social reproduction. The production domain includes work in footwear factories, where women are involved in various stages of the product, from cutting and sewing materials to the shipping process. On the other hand, social reproduction involves women workers in domestic work, including childcare, cooking, cleaning, and other activities that support daily life.

The framework of this study not only positions women as workers, but also considers their role in the broader social structure (Saleh et al. 2023). By understanding the linkages between the production and social reproduction domains, this study can provide a more comprehensive picture of the experiences of women workers in the context of the footwear industry. It is hoped that this approach will provide a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by women workers. Figure 1 illustrates the framework of this study as a circle graph, showing the close interrelationship between the production and social reproduction domains of women workers in the industry.



**Figure 1. Gender analysis framework**

Source: Processed by the authors from observation

The framework of this study also applies to home-based workers. However, the key difference lies in the circumstances of the workplace. While formal workers have a factory as their designated workplace, home-based workers carry out their work in their own homes (Saleh et al. 2023). Home-based workers as one of the case studies adds a new element to previous studies as it aims to compare the conditions of women workers in factories and home-based workers in the realm of production and social reproduction.

**Research Methodology**

This study uses feminist research methodology because of its close connection to women’s experiences and their sensitivity in expressing these experiences. This approach places women as the subject of study. In addition, this methodology aims to respond to the needs of women as workers both in the workplace and in trade unions (Naples 2007).

The data collected in this study was of two types. Firstly, primary data was collected through observation and in-depth interviews with 20 respondents in each factory. The informants in the study came from a range of actors, including women workers from different departments in the factory, union officials, and home-based workers. The fieldwork also included observing the living environment of the informants to understand the economic and surrounding conditions. Secondly, secondary data was obtained by reviewing various literature sources, including books, academic journal articles, mass media news, and other relevant documents. Additional data was collected through focus group discussions with the Indonesian Footwear Association (*Aprisindo*), the

Ministry of Manpower, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) practitioners, Tangerang City and Serang Regency Manpower Offices, Banten Provincial Labour Inspector, *Komnas Perempuan*, *Jaringan Pekerja Rumahan Indonesia (JPRI)*, as well as partner unions at the factory, district, and national levels.

Case studies on formal workers were conducted in two factories in Serang Regency and one factory in Tangerang City, all in Banten Province. Several factors influenced the selection of these factories as study sites. Firstly, two of the three factories were selected because they produce well-known brands and have a significant share of export-oriented footwear orders, ranging from 25 per cent to 60 per cent. Secondly, these three factories belong to the tier-one category, which means that they receive orders directly from brands. Finally, these three factories employ a significant number of workers, ranging from 7,000 to 50,000.

On the other hand, the case study for informal workers was conducted in North Jakarta, DKI Jakarta Province, with the subject of the study being home-based workers. There were two reasons for choosing this location and home-based workers as the case study. Firstly, home-based workers in North Jakarta have long been involved in the production of certain footwear components, mainly for the domestic market, for a considerable period of time. In addition, the selection of this research subject is in line with the theoretical account of the challenges faced by women workers not only in the production domain, but also in the social and reproductive domains. Secondly, it is an effort to compare study findings, especially regarding the level of vulnerability among women workers in the formal and informal sectors.

## Care Work: The Dynamics of Female Factory and Home-based Workers

Women, who work in the formal sector, such as in factories where they earn minimum wage and are unable to hire full-time domestic workers, are not completely exempt from the responsibility of care work in the social reproduction domain. Childcare, cooking, and other care work are often not economically counted (Dhewy 2018). This work, mostly performed by women workers, plays a crucial role in the industrial supply chain, particularly in the TGSL industry. Nancy Fraser (2016) critically underlines that domestic work or care work drives the economic wheels of capitalism. Working women provide the productive labour that is the foundation of the capitalist economic system. Ironically, capitalism itself forces women into a double role by failing to recognise their vital contribution to reproductive labour.

The findings of the study were based on female formal workers in three factories in Banten Province. Although they work in three factories and earn wages, their spouses or husbands do not automatically take on the responsibility and role of doing care work when their husbands are unemployed. It was not uncommon for the spouses of women workers to act as drivers to pick up their wives, and even childcare was “entrusted” to other family members, such as parents. Even more extreme, there are working women who have to leave their children in nurseries, and these costs have to be paid out of their income or wages even though their wages are only the minimum wage. This phenomenon, in Fraser’s perspective (2016), is referred to as a “crisis of care”.

An interesting phenomenon of social reproduction is experienced not only by women workers in the formal sector, such as in the factories of the TGSL industry, but also by women workers in the informal sector. This study found that women home-based workers in North Jakarta are different from women factory workers, although they may produce similar goods, such as footwear. The difference lies in the circumstances of the workplace. Women home-based workers work on the production of footwear at home, even though the raw materials come from the factory. This type of work system is commonly referred to as the Putting Out System (POS), i.e., there is an intermediary in this industrial chain who acts as a mediator, connecting the entrepreneur or the factory with women home-based workers.

For women working in factories, although the boundary between the domain of production and the space of production is increasingly blurred, the boundary looks different because there is a dimension of working

places and spaces, such as factories and homes. In contrast, women home-based workers do not have clear boundaries and different places and spaces between production and social production activities. Simply put, the foreground and background of their lives, as described by Fraser (2016), merge into one entity in the same place and space. Savitri & Sigiro (2021) note that working from home for women workers combines two tasks in the same place and time. This is what happens to women home-based workers. Women home-based workers work while doing domestic tasks, such as cooking, childcare, and so on.

It seems that factory work done by home-based workers is a “solution” and more flexible to be able to work, while care work, such as childcare and cooking can go hand in hand with production work. Critically, this model and system of work is a way for capitalism to make more profit through cheap labour schemes. Their conditions are not much different from women workers in factories. They experience high pressure and targets. More ironically, they have no fixed working hours so they can often work more than twelve hours a day and still do care work. In terms of pay, women home-based workers are also perceived as cheap labour, so the wages they earn are low. This study found that they were paid only IDR50,000 for every 100 pairs of sandals. This wage calculation mechanism is based on a single outcome without taking into account the aspects of the maintenance work they do.

The findings of the above study show that both women factory and home-based workers face similar challenges. Their care work is not valued as paid work. Ironically, the wheels of capitalism keep turning thanks to the unpaid care work of women workers, who work in the social reproduction domain to support their family members who are also part of the workforce. In this context, Federici (2023) succinctly writes that the family has become the centre of labour production. In this system, capitalism “forces” labour to be “well cared for” by the family institution through women’s care work in the social reproduction domain, including providing nutritious food, proper clothing, and keeping their bodies clean.

In terms of economic violence in care work, domestic workers who work for women factory workers, for example, also experience economic violence. Domestic workers, who are also women, are often seen as unskilled labour (Dhewy 2017). Care work is naturally assigned to women, so in terms of wages, domestic workers may also not receive a decent wage.

### **Economic Violence: Two Roles, One Working Woman**

Working women face economic violence in terms of economic or care work. Not only do they work in factories or as home-based workers, but they also have to provide care at home and pay caregivers. Parallel to their work responsibilities as workers, they are also faced with unpaid work in the social reproduction domain. While they are often the main breadwinners in their families, they are often seen as complementary wage earners to the main breadwinner, who is often a man in the context of the typical family.

The findings of this study show that many women workers in the three factories studied are the main breadwinners and their husbands or partners are unemployed. The main reason why TGSL factories tend to prefer women over men as workers is that women are considered to be more conscientious. However, this reason does not reduce the maintenance burden that women workers must carry. Women's responsibility as the main breadwinner adds complexity to their work.

Critically, this situation shows that the economic violence experienced by women factory and home-based workers does not only occur within the family, but is systematically perpetrated by companies or employers. This model of work takes place within the capitalist scheme of work, where labour and machines are the means of production that produce products. Therefore, the wages paid by employers do not consider the care work done by women workers. This is despite the fact that this activity supports and is an integral part of the overall productivity of the workers in the factory. This is concrete evidence that gender inequality and failure to recognise the value of care work still exists in the TGSL industry.

The capitalist model of work that does not recognise care work as an integral part of the productivity of factory or home-based workers is supported by patriarchal cultural patterns that separate masculine and feminine roles (Mudzakir 2022). In this context, men do not work, men are not expected to do household chores. Conversely, when women do work, they are still expected to perform multiple roles, including domestic work. This reality illustrates the dominance of the patriarchal culture that distinguishes men as the main breadwinners and women performing domestic work. As a result of this separation, women seem to be obliged to do their domestic work even if they work, and men are not obliged to do their domestic work even if they do not work.

Although care work contributes significantly to the profitability of companies and their owners, it still lacks adequate support from the government and industry actors in the TGSL, such as employers and brand owners. In general, after women factory and home-based workers spend their time and energy working for the profit goals of the company or employer, care work such as childcare and even some consider their mental health and occupational illnesses to be the personal responsibility of women workers outside the scope of formal work.

Based on records of focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted by the Trade Union Rights Centre (TURC) in 2022 with trade unions in three footwear manufacturing factories in Banten and Tangerang, it was found that the three factories do not provide day-care facilities. As a result, workers with children are forced to leave their children with family members, day-care, or caregivers. More ironically, the cost of hiring domestic workers, nannies, or day-care costs is not counted as part of the wages. As a result, the wages received by working women are insufficient to cover the cost of childcare services. This reflects the inequality in the wage system and the difficulty for women workers to meet the demands of care work. It should be noted that ILO Convention No. 156 emphasises the importance of taking into account the burden on workers with family responsibilities. In particular, where workers work at home, employers are expected to understand the increased burden on workers when all work activities and family responsibilities are carried out at home. The Convention promotes the importance of providing care services, such as affordable and accessible day-care for workers at home.

### **The Fulfilment of Maternity Rights: The Long and Winding Road to Equality**

The fulfilment of maternity rights by employers and the state has a significant impact on improving the situation of working women in the social reproductive domain, especially in care work, while still affirming men's responsibilities in the household. For example, by providing adequate maternity leave for both mothers and fathers, employers give working women and their partners the opportunity to focus on their childcare without worrying about work. In another example, workplace childcare facilities remove the constraints that often force working women have to choose between a career and a parental role.

There are laws that regulate pregnancy-related rights, such as Law No. 11/2020 on Job Creation, in

conjunction with Law No. 13/2003 on Manpower, which regulates menstrual leave, maternity leave, miscarriage leave, and facilities for nursing mothers. However, at the implementation level, maternity rights under ILO Convention 183 on the Protection of the Maternity of Women Workers are still poorly enforced in the formal and informal sectors. The findings of this study show that women workers, particularly women home-based workers, still do not have adequate maternity rights. This includes menstrual leave, pregnancy and childbirth leave, miscarriage leave, as well as limited access to childcare facilities and lactation rooms.

The study by Saleh et al. (2023) found that poor implementation of maternity rights can lead to gender discrimination in the workplace. Examples of gender discrimination in the workplace include: 1) women workers experiencing unfair treatment when trying to take menstrual leave; 2) women workers facing high levels of stress and discomfort if they have to return to work too soon after giving birth, especially if their access to workplace childcare facilities is limited; and 3) informal workers, including women home-based workers, often lack access to social protection and decent work rights. In this context, women informal workers are more vulnerable to poor implementation of maternity rights due to unclear labour relations and blurred boundaries between living and working spaces. This condition is also exacerbated by the lack of regulations for workers in the informal sector, particularly home-based workers. Addressing this requires changes in company policies and practices, as well as the government support to ensure good implementation of maternity rights.

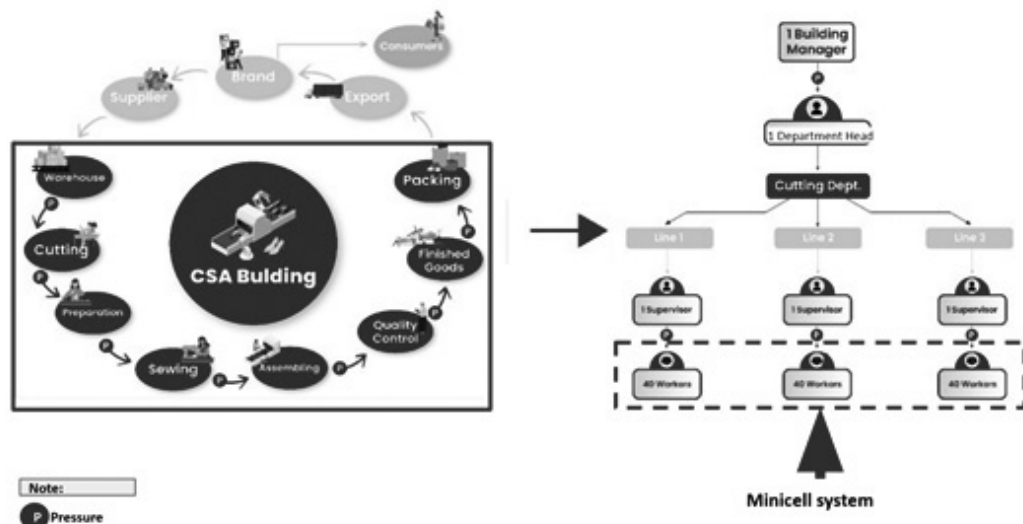
The findings of this study show that companies in the three factories studied often oppress and disregard women's needs and do not consider menstruation as a valid reason for leave. Instead of recognising menstrual pain as a legitimate health issue, companies prefer to allow "menstrual breaks" rather than menstrual leave. As a result, women workers can only take a break at the company clinic when they are experiencing menstrual pain, without considering the other discomforts they are experiencing. In this study, one female informant stated that:

Yes, I am resting at the clinic. When the pain goes away, I'll go back to work. The problem is that it's difficult to take menstrual leave. There will be (co-workers and superiors) who will make jokes; it's really complicated (AX 2022, interview 15 October).

In addition, another informant stated that she was worried that production targets would not be met if she took menstrual leave and that she would not receive overtime pay to supplement her monthly wage, which was not enough to make ends meet (BX 2022, interview 15 October).

Employers also do not provide painkillers in the first aid kit, which is easily accessible to workers who experience menstrual pain at work. This situation shows that women workers' access to adequate OSH protection still depends on the intention and commitment of the employer, rather than being guaranteed as a fundamental right.

The difficulty for women workers to take menstrual leave is inextricably linked to the interdependent system of work in the company, especially in the TGSL factory. At the lowest level and hierarchy, women workers, called operators, work with a mini-cell system<sup>1</sup>, as shown in Figure 2. For example, in the sewing department, there are 40 women workers who sew certain parts of shoes, and these 40 people depend on each other. If one of the women workers is absent for any reason, including menstrual leave, then this condition is considered to affect the achievement of production targets. Although some companies use buffer zone mechanism<sup>2</sup>, at the implementation level this mechanism is not considered to overcome this problem. With this work system, women workers at the operator level often experience verbal violence and vertical pressure from their supervisors. There is also horizontal pressure from co-workers. The combination of pressures has an impact on their mental health, causing high levels of stress due to the ever-increasing workload. On the production side, they have to work under the pressure of production targets set by the company. On the social reproduction side, they still have care work responsibility.



**Figure 2. How footwear is made in three factories in Banten Province**

Source: Saleh et al. (2023)

With such a work system and high production targets, companies often have complicated permission procedures. Some women workers who have tried to apply for menstrual leave have even been turned down by their supervisors, who fear that it will interfere with meeting production targets. As a result, workers are reluctant to take leave for fear of disrupting the production process.

One of the informants in this study said that she had often applied for menstrual leave, but had not been given permission by her supervisor.

(The boss) said it seemed insignificant to have your period. The supervisor said, "Really, menstrual pain?" Yes, even though I had permission for it (menstrual leave). Yes, if it was so bad that you fainted, you might get the permission. But if it's just a normal menstrual problem, they won't give (the permission)" (CX 2022, interview 15 October).

Another aspect to consider is the availability of free sanitary pads, which although simple, has great importance for working women. Apart from reducing the financial burden, free sanitary pads ensure that working women are comfortable during menstruation and support their reproductive health.

There are significant differences in the treatment of factory and home-based workers. Home-based workers have no rights to menstrual leave, maternity leave, pregnancy leave, miscarriage leave, and no access to free sanitary pads. They are in a more vulnerable position and are neglected by the existing formal workforce. One of the informants in this study revealed that she had never taken leave because she did not have this right.

There is no (leave) if I'm sick or menstruating. It's my husband who goes there (to get the job from the employer). If my husband is sick, I go there. I am never unemployed, never on leave (DX 2022, interview 15 October).

Pregnancy-related health problems among factory workers include nausea, vomiting, and headaches. Although they can take sick leave, the process is complicated and difficult, such as having to provide a medical certificate from the factory clinic. In some cases, they feel compelled not to report their health problems during pregnancy. More ironically, pregnant workers are often victims of dismissal by the factory, as happened in one factory in Sukabumi. Workers who were seven months pregnant were dismissed by the company (KSBSI 2022).

In the case of home-based workers, they are constantly exposed to hazardous substances while gluing shoes. This has a serious impact on their pregnancy conditions and increases the risk of miscarriage. One informant said that she had miscarried her second and fifth children while working as a home-based worker in the shoe-gluing industry.

The miscarriage, it (the foetus) was two months old. What year was it, before Covid-19, 2017, if I'm not mistaken. I glued shoes (when I was pregnant). I was tired, exhausted. At that time, my work (was) piling up, until late at night. That's why I was so strong to work until late while I was pregnant (EX 2022, interview 15 November).

This condition reflects how home-based workers are placed in a vulnerable position and ignored by existing regulations and labour protections. Therefore, providing

adequate maternity leave to home-based workers is a way of recognising that pregnancy and childbirth are physical processes that require adequate time and recovery. Such policies allow working women to care for their children with peace of mind and feel more connected to their babies during this important time. Although social reproductive work and childcare are not the exclusive responsibility of women, the fulfilment of maternity leave rights for working women at least reduces the burden on working women.

Another aspect that is integral to the fulfilment of maternity rights is the provision of lactation and childcare facilities. In the context of the right to breastfeed, unrealistic and ambitious work targets have a serious impact on women workers who are breastfeeding. Production targets are not necessarily reduced for workers who are breastfeeding, leaving them to organise their own time to meet their targets. Despite the availability of lactation rooms, high work targets are imposed without adequate consideration for the needs and welfare of workers. They do not have enough time to express breast milk. As a result, many of them are forced to switch to formula milk. In the ILO's 5R lens, the fulfilment of support for care work is what workers need, the reduction aspect can be fulfilled by providing facilities, such as lactation corners, access to childcare services, menstrual breaks/leave provided by companies/factories are examples of efforts to reduce the burden on women.

The study also found that women factory workers are forced to rely on family members such as parents, in-laws, brothers, or sisters to care for their children. Some of them, who are overseas, have to rely on neighbours or friends for help, which is obviously an additional financial burden compared to their monthly wages. One of the informants in this study revealed how much money she has to spend each month on childcare costs.

Yes, as usual, (the childcare situation in the first months) with my mother. Later, when I want to go to work, I leave it to the caretaker. Of course I pay. Six hundred and fifty thousand per month (FX 2023, interview 15 November).

The provision of childcare facilities at the workplace is a progressive step towards supporting working women and their partners in the social reproduction domain. In practice, however, the success of childcare facilities depends to a large extent on their implementation. The provision of childcare facilities can bring tangible social and reproductive benefits to working women and their partners, provided that the implementation and quality of these facilities are well managed.

Based on the fieldwork conducted by the research team, we found significant differences between home-based and factory workers. Their conditions do not allow for childcare facilities and lactation rooms in the workplace, as there is no separation between home and workplace. The inseparable living and working environment of home-based workers gluing shoes affects family members, including their children, who are also exposed to the smell of glue and suffer health problems. The smell of glue in the home is also a health hazard during pregnancy and breastfeeding. During pregnancy and breastfeeding, the need for income forces many home-based workers to continue gluing shoes, causing serious health problems.

This situation also burdens women with the heavy responsibility of caring for children and working at the same time. Male family members, including spouses, children, parents, siblings, and relatives, need to be actively involved in sharing household tasks and caring for children. This can reduce the burden that women face as home-based workers. Governments and businesses must also commit to creating a more inclusive and supportive working environment for all workers, including those who work from home. However, these efforts still face obstacles because home-based workers are not yet recognised as workers, which makes it difficult for them to access their rights, including maternity rights and the right to decent work. Efforts to gain recognition for home-based workers have been made through judicial review by the Trade Union Rights Centre (TURC) and *Jaringan Pekerja Rumahan Indonesia (JPRI)*. Five home-based workers filed a judicial review of Law No. 13/2003 on Manpower in August 2022 (Arfana 2022).

In this context, the 5R concept promoted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) is also relevant. Recognition of the right to maternity and paternity leave without loss of pay is the first step towards respecting the role of women. Reduction is reflected in efforts to provide facilities and services such as lactation areas and access to childcare services. Redistribution can be seen in the availability of care services (in the workplace or easily accessible) that help to distribute the caring role by the company or employer. Meanwhile, Reward, such as the provision of bonuses and training programmes that support women in caring roles, are a form of valuing caring tasks. However, it should be recognised that access to these rights and services may not be comparable for home-based workers because they are not recognised as workers by the government. Even home-based workers

have to balance their working hours with caring for children at home, which affects the amount of time and targets that can be achieved for paid work.

This package of care policies should be country-specific and include a combination of time (leave), benefits (income security), rights, and services to enable the right to care and be cared for and to promote gender equality and decent work (Addati et al. 2022). Care policies package must be rights-based and gender-responsive, integrated, universal, and based on solidarity, representation and social dialogue. They should also take a lifecycle approach and include policies and services ranging from care leave and breastfeeding rights to child and elder care services for all workers with family responsibilities.

## Closing

Women workers in the footwear industry and home-based workers face the double burden of meeting high production targets while performing care work. They face challenges in both production and social reproduction domains. In particular, women home-based workers are more vulnerable to health risks than women factory workers due to the lack of separation between their workplace and home.

Active participation of male family members in housework and childcare is important to reduce the burden on working women. Governments and businesses should commit to addressing these challenges, for example by providing free childcare.

In addition, women factory and home-based workers often continue to work while pregnant and breastfeeding, which can cause serious health problems. They are perceived as cheap labour, yet their wages do not reflect the care work they do. Therefore, there is a need to change social attitudes and government and industry policies to value women workers and support their roles in the production and social reproduction domains.

## Bibliography

Addati, L., et al. 2022. *Care at work: Investing in Care Leave and Services for a more Gender Equal World of Work*. ILO Cataloguing in Publication Data.

Amalia, R. & Saleh, D. 2020. *Permasalahan Pekerja Perempuan Secara Makro di Indonesia*. TURC: Jakarta.

Arfana, N. T. 2022. "Lima Pekerja Rumahan Uji UU Ketenagakerjaan", *mkri.id*, accessed on 6 December 2023, at <https://www.mkri.id/index.php?page=web.Berita&id=18397>.

Armstrong, P. & Armstrong, H. 2010. *The Double Ghetto: Canadian Women and Their Segregated Work (3rd revised edition)*. Oxford University Press: UK.

Bakker, I. 2007. "Social Reproduction and the Constitution of a Gendered Political Economy", *New Political Economy*, Vol. 12 (4), pp. 541-556. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13563460701661561>.

Better Work. 2021. "Apakah otomatisasi merupakan ancaman bagi pekerja garmen perempuan? Pakar industri mengatakan bahwa hal tersebut tidak perlu terjadi", Better Work, accessed on 6 December 2023, at <https://betterwork.org/id/is-automation-a-threat-to-women-garment-workers-industry-experts-say-it-doesnt-have-to-be/>.

Bhattacharya, T. 2017. *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentring Oppression*. Pluto Press: London.

Caraway, T. L. 2005. *The Political Economy of Feminisation: From "Cheap Labour" to Gendered Discourses of Work*. Cambridge University Press: UK.

Dhewy, A. 2017. "Diskriminasi, Kekerasan dan Pengabaian Hak: Status PRT di Tengah Ketiadaan Payung Hukum Perlindungan PRT", *Jurnal Perempuan*, Vol. 22(3), pp. 261-271. <https://indonesianfeministjournal.org/index.php/IFJ/article/view/197/206>.

Dhewy, A. 2018. "Catatan Jurnal Perempuan", *Jurnal Perempuan*, Vol. 23(4), pp. III. <https://indonesianfeministjournal.org/index.php/IFJ/article/view/280/279>.

Elson, D. 2010. "Gender and the Global Economic Crisis in Developing Countries: A Framework for Analysis", *Gender and Development*, Vol. 8(2), pp. 201-212.

Federici, S. 2023. *Revolution at Point Zero Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle*. PM Press: New York.

Fraser, N. 2016. *Contradictions of Capital and Care*. New Left Review: UK.

Greenberg, G. N. & Dement, J. M. 1994. "Exposure Assessment and Gender Differences", *Journal of Occupational Medicine*, Vol. 36(8), pp. 907-912.

Herlina, E. 2016. "Faktor-faktor yang Mempengaruhi Kesempatan Kerja Wanita dan Implikasinya terhadap Kesejahteraan Keluarga di Kabupaten Cirebon", *Economic Journal of the Borobudur University Postgraduate Programme*, Vol. 18(2). <https://doi.org/10.37721/je.v18i2.293>.

International Labour Organisation (ILO). 2022. "Indonesia's Garment Industry to Combat Gender Inequality and Empower Women Workers", accessed on 6 December 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/info/public/pr/WCMS\\_838968/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/info/public/pr/WCMS_838968/lang--en/index.htm).

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2000. "C183 - Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)", accessed on 11 November 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:55:0::55:P55\\_TYPE,P55\\_LANG,P55\\_DOCUMENT,P55\\_NODE:REV,en,C183,/Document](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:55:0::55:P55_TYPE,P55_LANG,P55_DOCUMENT,P55_NODE:REV,en,C183,/Document).

International Labour Organization (ILO). 1981. "K156 - Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981", accessed on 11 November 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--asia/--ro-bangkok/--ilo-jakarta/documents/legaldocument/wcms\\_181930.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--asia/--ro-bangkok/--ilo-jakarta/documents/legaldocument/wcms_181930.pdf).

Istakhori, K. 2017. "Cutai Haid dan Lingkaran Eksploitasi Terhadap Buruh Perempuan di Tempat Kerja: Studi Kasus Pelaksanaan Cutai Haid pada Perusahaan Sektor Garmen dan Tekstil, Kertas, Penambangan Batu Bara, Makanan, dan Jasa di Provinsi DKI Jakarta, Jawa Barat, Jawa Timur, Sumatera Selatan, dan Riau", *Jentera: Journal of Law*, Vol. 1(2). <https://jurnal.jentera.ac.id/index.php/jentera/article/view/12>.

Kodir, F. A. 2023. *Perempuan (Bukan) Makhluk Domestik: Mengaji Haid Pernikahan dan Pengasuhan dengan Metode Mubadalah*. Afkaruna.id: Yogyakarta.

KSBSI. 2022. "Seorang Buruh Perempuan Hamil di-PHK Sepihak oleh PT BIG dengan Alasan Kontrak Habis", [ksbsi.org](https://www.ksbsi.org/home/read/1798/-Seorang-Buruh-Perempuan-Hamil-di-PHK-Sepihak-Oleh-PT-BIG-Dengan-Alasan-Kontrak-Habis-), accessed on 16 November 2023, at <https://www.ksbsi.org/home/read/1798/-Seorang-Buruh-Perempuan-Hamil-di-PHK-Sepihak-Oleh-PT-BIG-Dengan-Alasan-Kontrak-Habis->.

Mudzakir, A. 2022. *Feminisme Kritis: Gender dan Kapitalisme dalam Pemikiran Nancy Fraser*. PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama: Jakarta.

Naples, N. A. 2007. "Feminist Methodologies for Critical Researchers: Bridging Differences", *Contemporary Sociology*, Vol. 36(3), pp. 282--284. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009430610703600350>.

Republic of Indonesia. Law Number 13 Year 2003 on Manpower (Labour Law).

Republic of Indonesia. Law No. 11 of 2020 on Job Creation junto Law No. 13 of 2003 on Manpower.

Saleh, D., et al. 2023. *Under the Weight of Production Targets and Reproductive Labour: Exploring Women Workers' Occupational Health and Safety in Indonesia's Shoe and Footwear Industry*. TURC Publication: Jakarta.

Saptari, R. & Holzner, B. 2016. *Perempuan, Kerja, dan Perubahan Sosial: Sebuah Pengantar Studi Perempuan*. Kalyanamitra: Jakarta.

Savitri, D. & Sigiro, A. N. 2021. Menilai 'Bekerja dari Rumah' sebagai 'Kenormalan Baru' bagi Perempuan Pekerja Melalui Perspektif Feminisme, *Jurnal Perempuan* Vol. 26, No. 1.

Semenciw, R. M., Morrison, H. I., Riedel, D., Wilkins, K., Ritter, L., & Mao, Y. 1993. "Multiple Myeloma Mortality and Agricultural Practices in the Prairie Provinces of Canada", *Journal of Occupational Medicine: official publication of the Industrial Medical Association*, Vol. 35(6), pp. 557-561. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00043764-199306000-00010>.

Tejani, S. & Fukuda-Parr, S. 2021. "Gender and Covid-19: Workers in Global Value Chains", *International labour review*, 160(4), pp. 649-667. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ilr.12225>.

Tejani, S. & Fukuda-Parr, S. 2021. "Gender and Covid-19: Workers in Global Value Chains Gender and Covid-19: Workers in Global Value Chains". Working Paper. Department of Economics.

Young, B., Bakker, I., & Elson, D. (Eds.). 2011. *Questioning Financial Governance from a Feminist Perspective*. Routledge: New York.

## (Endnotes)

- 1 The Mini-Cell system is a working method commonly used at the operator level in garment, shoe, and footwear factories. Each Mini-Cell consists of 40 workers who depend on each other. If one of the 40 workers in a Mini-Cell is absent for some reason, such as going to the toilet, it can affect other work and even affect the achievement of production targets. The Mini-Cell work system puts double pressure on workers, especially women workers. They face vertical pressure from supervisors due to disruption of work and failure to meet production targets. Horizontal pressure also comes from co-workers in the same mini cell due to interdependence and group responsibility for high production targets.
- 2 This term refers to a group of workers (operators) who act as back-up workers. Their main function is to cover for primary operators who are absent or unable to work. This is to ensure that high production targets are met despite the absence of the main operators.

## Toxic Care: Plantation Maintenance Work and Social Reproduction on Palm Oil Monoculture Plantations

**Hariati Sinaga**

Gender Studies Programme, School of Strategic and Global Studies, University of Indonesia  
Jalan Salemba Raya Number 4, Central Jakarta, DKI Jakarta 10430

hariati.sinaga@ui.ac.id

Manuscript Chronology: received 9 November 2023, revised 12 December 2023, accepted 24 December 2023

### Abstract

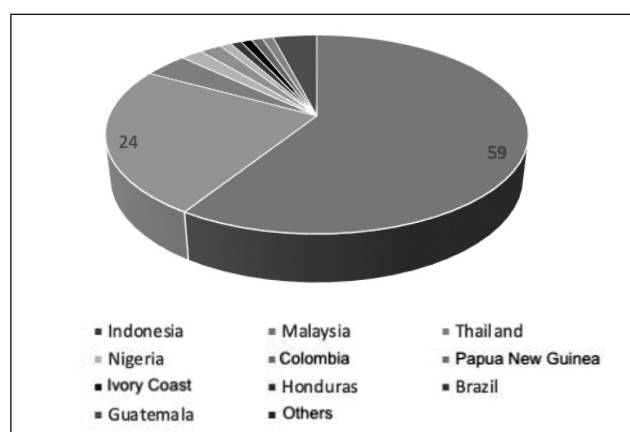
The expansion of palm oil plantation has drawn scholarship attention. On one hand, studies have examined how palm oil plantation development serves an important instrument for employment creation, poverty alleviation and rural development. On the other hand, there is plenty of research that shows adverse impacts of such expansion on socio-ecological conditions. This includes the recruitment of women plantation workers into maintenance work with flexible labour relations. Meanwhile, literature on palm oil plantations in Indonesia has not paid significant attention on care work. Employing feminist political economy perspective, this article attempts to understand care work in palm oil monoculture plantations, particularly in relations to maintenance work on plantation. Through the concept of social reproduction, care work is understood in a broader term as a way to draw the entanglement between production and reproduction in palm oil monoculture plantations. This article argues that women workers participation into maintenance work on plantations show the articulation of social relations based on patriarchal system with palm oil competition in the global market. From the perspective of the women workers, participation in the maintenance work is viewed as a livelihood strategy. The strategy that involves works with risk of regular exposure to toxic chemicals is understood as toxic care.

Keyword: care work, social reproduction, palm oil plantation, women workers

### Introduction

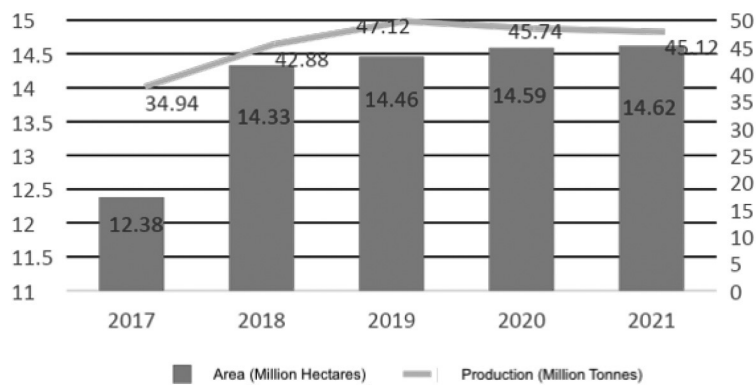
Palm oil plantations are one of the favourites in Indonesia's plantation sector mainly due to the position of the Indonesian palm oil sector in the global vegetable oil market. Since 2007, Indonesia has been the world's largest producer of crude palm oil. According to Figure 1, Indonesia accounts for about 59 per cent of the

world's palm oil production. In 2021, Indonesia's palm oil plantations reached 14,586,597 hectares with production reaching 45,741,845 tonnes (Central Bureau of Statistics 2022). The importance of Indonesia's palm oil plantation sector is accompanied by the expansion of palm oil plantations. Figure 2 shows the trend of land expansion and production of palm oil plantations between 2017-2021, which shows an increasing trend.



**Figure 1. Contribution of Palm Oil Production to Global Palm Oil Production in 2023**

Source: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (2023)

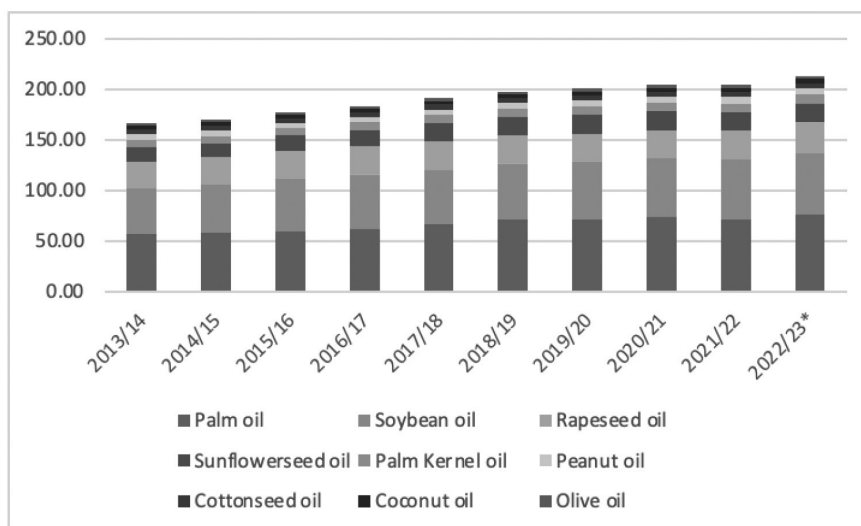


**Figure 2. Expansion of Indonesian Palm Oil Plantation Area and Production**

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics (2022)

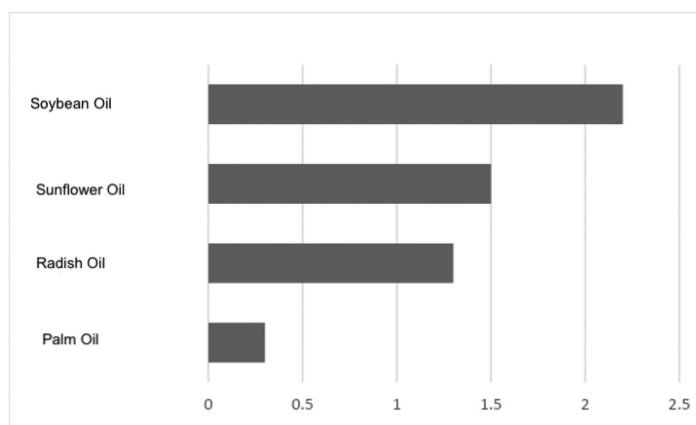
The growth of Indonesia’s palm oil sector cannot be separated from palm oil’s important position in the global vegetable oil market. Figure 3 shows how palm oil dominates global palm oil consumption. This is partly due

to the view that palm oil is the most efficient commodity (see Figure 4). In addition, palm oil is also seen as a flexible commodity as it can be processed into different products (Alonso-Fradejas et al. 2016).



**Figure 3. Global Vegetable Oil Consumption by Type of Vegetable Oil (million metric tonnes)**

Source: Statista (2023)



**Figure 4. Area Required to Produce 1 Tonne of Oil**

Source: Ministry of Industry (2021)

The growth of Indonesia's palm oil plantation sector has attracted academic attention to the economic aspects of palm oil plantations. Various studies have highlighted the importance of palm oil development for employment generation, poverty alleviation, and rural development (Rist et al. 2010; Zen et al. 2005). Meanwhile, other studies have examined the social and environmental impacts of palm oil expansion (Richter 2009; Colchester et al. 2006). Working conditions in palm oil plantations are one of the highlights of reports and academic studies on the social impacts of palm oil expansion (Assalam & Parsaoran 2018). One of them is the large number of plantation workers who are casual daily workers (*Buruh Harian Lepas, BHL*), who are predominantly women (Sinaga 2021; Muttaqien et al. 2021).

While the issue of vulnerable women workers in palm oil plantations is not new, there is relatively little literature focusing on care work in monoculture palm oil plantations. This article seeks to analyse care work in the monoculture palm oil plantation sector, particularly in relation to plantation maintenance work. Using the concept of social reproduction in the study of feminist political economy, this article understands care work in a broader context, particularly in the relationship between the productive and social reproduction domains. In the context of the ILO's 5Rs - Recognition, Reduction, Redistribution, Representation, and Reward - the analysis of plantation maintenance work carried out by women plantation workers is the first step in recognising the role of these workers in the social reproduction of palm oil plantations.

Based on an analysis of findings from case studies in four monoculture palm oil plantations in Sambas, West Kalimantan, this article argues that the involvement of women workers in palm oil plantations must be understood in terms of the relationship between social reproduction and labour processes in monoculture palm oil plantations that are influenced by palm oil competition in the global market. The participation of women workers in plantation maintenance work can be understood more broadly as care work in the context of plantation social reproduction.

This article has the following structure: The first part is the introduction. The second section presents the research methodology. The third section reviews the literature on women workers in palm oil plantations and its relationship to social reproduction. The fourth section explains the framework used in this article,

namely feminist political economy studies, in particular the concept of care work, and social reproduction. This section is followed by a brief overview of palm oil plantations in Sambas. Findings from the case study of palm oil plantations in Sambas, West Kalimantan, are discussed in the sixth section. In the seventh section, the author presents an analysis of the findings presented in the previous section. The article ends with conclusions and recommendations.

## Research Methodology

The research methodology used in this study is qualitative research. Case studies were conducted on four monoculture palm oil plantations (PT A, PT B, PT C, and PT D) in Sambas District, West Kalimantan. Interviews and focus group discussions with 22 female maintenance workers were used as data collection techniques and were conducted in January and July 2023. Most of the female workers were between 30 and 50 years old, and one was an elderly female worker. They were mostly local residents with Sambas Malay ethnic background and a small number were descendants of transmigrants from Java Island. One female worker was a migrant worker from East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). The interview and focus group data were transcribed and analysed using qualitative content analysis. The interviews and focus group discussions were conducted as part of a larger research project on Just Transition in the Indonesian Palm Oil Industry. The palm oil plantations in the Sambas region of West Kalimantan were chosen because it was one of the organising areas of one of the plantation unions involved in the research project on Just Transition in the Palm Oil Industry.

This article aims to understand the relationship between the concept of social reproduction and the labour process in monoculture palm oil plantations. This article does not examine domestic maintenance work done by women at home, as this issue has been extensively covered in reports and studies on women workers in palm oil plantations. By focusing on women plantation maintenance workers, this article examines the relationship between social reproduction and plantation labour processes. The author uses case studies of monoculture palm oil plantations in Sambas, West Kalimantan. In the next two sections, the author explains the research methodology used and provides a brief profile of palm oil plantations in Sambas, West Kalimantan.

## **Women Workers and Social Reproduction in Indonesian Palm Oil Plantations**

Various studies on the social impacts of the expansion of palm oil plantations in Indonesia show that palm oil plantations have become an important employment sector for Indonesians (Dib et al. 2018; Dharmawan et al. 2020). This is illustrated by the recruitment of women workers in Indonesian palm oil plantations. Women workers typically work in the maintenance section of the plantation. According to Yallita and Mardhiah (2023), this division of labour is influenced by occupational risks, psychological factors, and the stigma of women workers in plantations. Furthermore, although palm oil plantations provide employment for women, women workers in Indonesia tend to work as casual daily workers (BHL). Due to this tendency, accurate data on the number of women working in palm oil plantations is difficult to find. According to the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR 2017), there are approximately 1.5 million women workers in Indonesian palm oil plantations, both large and small. According to Sawit Watch (2019) there were 16.2 million people working in Indonesian palm oil plantations, with 4 million working directly, and the rest working indirectly. The latter includes female plantation workers. For this reason, women workers in palm oil plantations are often referred to as “hidden workers”. In addition to unpaid maintenance work, the term hidden workers is also used to refer to the status of women workers as casual workers. Casual women workers in palm oil plantations earn low wages and do not have access to health and safety insurance provided by the BPJS. The low wages associated with flexible work relations mean that women workers are paid according to the number of working days. In addition, women workers do not have access to leave regulated by Law No. 13/2003 on Manpower, such as menstrual leave, annual leave, and sick leave.

Literatures on women workers in palm oil plantations generally highlight the double burden of women workers (Eliza 2021; Fatchiya et al. 2022). While having to do work in the plantation, women workers also have to do household chores. In fact, women workers sometimes take on extra jobs on top of their work as plantation workers (Theresia & Wahyuni 2021). This is due to the low wages paid to women workers. This double or even triple burden means that female plantation workers work longer hours than male workers (Rowland et al. 2022).

In addition to the double burden of women workers, various studies that address the issue of gender and

palm oil plantations analyse the changes and dynamics of gender relations related to the expansion of palm oil plantations. In particular, this relates to the gendered impact of changes in land relations due to the expansion of palm oil plantations. Julia and White (2012) show how the articulation of local patriarchal systems with the expansion of palm oil plantations affects gendered experiences that are reflected in land relations, division of labour, and livelihoods. In particular, such changes in the gendered division of labour lead to women having to work as labourers in palm oil plantations, a phenomenon referred to as the feminisation of agricultural labour (Julia & White 2012).

Another issue arising from the expansion of palm oil plantations is the reduction of customary forests in Central Kalimantan. This has an impact on the gender relations of the Ngaju Dayak tenurial community, which is reflected in the dominance of men in the tenurial relations (Siscawati & Mahaningtyas 2012). This has resulted in women losing more access to land and livelihoods. Reduced access to livelihoods is also experienced by Modang Dayak women in East Kalimantan due to changes in gendered access to natural resources and customary benefits brought about by the expansion of palm oil plantations (Toumbourou & Dressler 2020).

While literatures on gender and plantations have highlighted the double burden of women’s work in plantations and the wider gender and livelihood aspects of changing tenure relations following the expansion of palm oil plantations, there are relatively few studies that focus on care work in monoculture palm oil plantations. In this study, care work is understood more broadly, in terms of social reproduction. In an effort to show and analyse the intertwining of production and reproduction in monoculture palm oil plantations, the next section outlines the framework underlying this paper, namely care work and social reproduction from a feminist political economy perspective.

## **Care Work and Social Reproduction in Feminist Political Economy Studies**

Care work and social reproduction are two important concepts in feminist political economy studies. Feminist political economy studies emerged as a feminist critique of political economy studies and critical political economy studies, both of which ignore gender relations when analysing the relationship between the state and the market, especially in the global capitalist system (Bedford & Rai 2010). In feminist political economy studies, gender relations become an entry point for examining

the relationship between the state, the market, and the non-market, both in the contexts of production and social reproduction (Rao & Akram-Lodhi 2021). Various analyses from feminist political economy studies have similar views to feminist economic studies (Mezzadri et al. 2021). These include the concept of care work and the care economy. The care economy essentially refers to the economy associated with care work. This concept initially emerged as a way for feminist economists to address the economic value of care work, particularly in the formulation of relevant public policies, including pay equity, the valuation of non-market labour, and public support for parents (Folbre 1995). Nancy Folbre (2006) understands the economics of care in terms of care work that can be categorised based on the relationship of care work to the market, the characteristics of the work process, and the types of care recipients. In terms of the relationship between care work and the market, care work includes unpaid subsistence work, informal work, and paid care work. Each of these categories can be further subdivided into direct care work, which involves personal and emotional involvement, and indirect care work, which supports direct care work. In terms of work process characteristics, care work can refer to work that involves close personal or emotional interaction. In terms of the recipients of care work services, there are children, the elderly, the sick, the disabled, and oneself.

Nicola Yeates (2004) defines care work as activities or relationships that support the physical and emotional wellbeing of others who are unable or less able to undertake such activities. Both Folbre's conceptualisation and Yeates' definition suggest that care work does not only take place in the home. In line with this, Paula England (2005) argues that care work can be provided in the home or by the market for a fee. In relation to paid care work, the concept of care extractivism is known, which refers to the exploitation of workers and the depletion of resources in the health sector due to the impact of neoliberal policies (Wichterich 2019). This concept of care extractivism can be linked to the term corporate care (Nading 2020).

Based on the above, the concepts of care work and the care economy initially focused on the relationship between work and the household in an attempt to capture how care work affects the characteristics of work and employment relationships (Mezzadri et al. 2021, p. 1788). While feminist literatures on care work have contributed to thinking about how care work can be understood, it is important to reiterate that care work is a social construction and so the boundaries between

what is care work and what is not must continue to be problematised. Furthermore, the author understands care work in a broader context, that of social reproduction.

The concept of social reproduction provides a link between the production of goods and services and the production of life (Luxton 2006, p. 36). Feminist thinkers have developed the concept of social reproduction into social reproduction theory (Bhattacharya 2017). Social reproduction theory seeks to map the capitalist system as a social relation involving an integrated relationship between points of production and spaces of labour reproduction (Bhattacharya pp. 4 & 7). According to this theory, the space of labour reproduction does not take place only in the home, but must take into account wider social relations. Thus, the concept of social reproduction shows that feminist struggles are not limited to the balance between productive work and domestic work, but go beyond that to include struggles for decent housing, food security, jobs with a decent income, struggles for better public services, and so on (Fraser 2017, p. 35). Social reproduction can refer to three aspects: (1) the biological reproduction of human beings, including pregnancy and lactation; (2) the reproduction of labour, which includes not only subsistence work but also education and training; (3) the reproduction of social services and care needs, whether privatised within the family or outside the household, or a combination of both (Bakker & Gill 2003, p. 32). In addition, social reproduction includes the institutions, processes, and social relations associated with the formation and maintenance of communities that are the fulcrum of production and exchange (Bakker 1999). Social reproduction is also a productive concept in looking at the interconnections between everyday life and aspects of the wider global economy (Elias & Rai 2019). Using the concept of social reproduction, care work can be situated within a broader social landscape (Kofman 2012).

Using the concept of social reproduction as an analytical lens, the boundary between production and reproduction can be understood as a social construction. According to feminist thinkers, all work is productive (Federici 2012). Moreover, productive and reproductive work can be performed simultaneously, rather than alternatively or sequentially. This can be seen in the context of the agricultural and plantation sectors (Gore & LeBaron 2019). Subsistence work in the agricultural sector is generally considered to be reproductive work, which is included in the calculation of national economic growth. Compared to small-scale agriculture, the boundary between productive and reproductive labour is more

visible in large-scale agribusiness plantations. However, the boundaries remain relatively vague. Similarly, in the context of large-scale monoculture palm oil plantations, there is no separation between work and living space. Care work therefore needs to be understood in a broader sense.

In addition to the lack of separation between work and living space, which requires a broader understanding of maintenance work, maintenance in the context of monoculture palm oil plantations can also be linked to one of the plantation work activities. Work activities in monoculture palm oil plantations are generally divided into two categories: harvesting and maintenance. Harvesting is generally done by men, as it is perceived to require a stronger physique. Maintenance includes palm tree care from fertilisation, herbicide spraying to disc cleaning. This division of labour is gendered, resulting in women dominating maintenance work. As plantation maintenance workers, women workers tend to work as casual daily workers (BHL) because plantation maintenance is not considered to be the main activity in the plantation work process. This shows that the concept of social reproduction needs to be linked to the labour process in monoculture palm oil plantations. This is in line with the understanding in the concept of social reproduction that the boundaries between production and reproduction must be understood historically and involve the transformation of social processes, various mechanisms, and institutions on which society, production, and power depend (Bakker & Gill 2003). In addition, the labour process of production has political and ideological implications that affect the social system as a whole (Burawoy 1985).

Linking the concept of social reproduction to the labour process in monoculture palm oil plantations also helps to understand two things. First, an understanding of daily life in monoculture palm oil plantations can be gained if aspects of production and reproduction are understood as two integrated relationships. Second, linking the concept of social reproduction to the labour process can help to understand plantation maintenance work within the framework of the labour regime as maintenance work. The labour regime refers to the set of social relations and institutions that shape labour and influence exploitation at different scales and through different spheres within the global economy (Baglioni et al. 2022, p. 82). This definition highlights not only the social but also the environmental aspects of the labour regime (Sinha 2023). The plantation labour regime

cannot be dissociated from the growing concentration and power of large-scale agribusiness, particularly the trend towards large-scale monoculture plantations, followed by an emphasis on agricultural modernisation policies involving the use of intensive technologies, high-yield seeds, and agrochemicals such as fertilisers and pesticides. Agrochemicals contain toxins and plantation workers are exposed to these toxins. In relation to the intensive use of toxins in modern agriculture, environmental thinkers' critique of the rampant use of toxins in modern life emphasises that work is a reflection of toxic globalisation, that the working body not only becomes a mechanism of toxic globalisation, but also becomes a toxic world itself (Nading 2020). It is in this context that the term toxic care is introduced, which seeks to understand care in the context of the rampant use of toxins in everyday life.

### Palm Oil Plantations in Sambas, West Kalimantan

Since 2007, Indonesia has been the world's largest producer of crude palm oil. In 2021, the area of palm oil plantations in West Kalimantan reached 1,829,533 hectares (Central Bureau of Statistics 2022). Figure 5 shows the contribution of West Kalimantan Province to national crude palm oil production. Meanwhile, the area of palm oil plantations in Sambas District, West Kalimantan, reached 81,743 hectares in 2022, up from 68,676 hectares in 2021 (West Kalimantan Central Bureau of Statistics 2023a).

In 2022, palm oil production from large-scale plantations in Sambas District reached 272,850 tonnes (West Kalimantan Central Bureau of Statistics 2023b). Various studies have highlighted landscape changes due to the expansion of palm oil plantations in Sambas District (Milieudedefensie 2018; Nurhidayah et al. 2015).

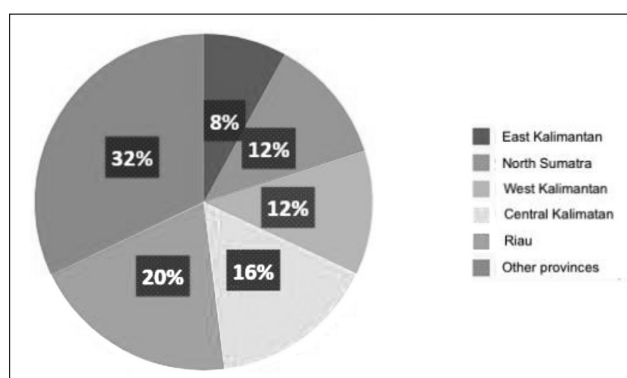


Figure 5. Crude Palm Oil Production by Province in 2021

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics 2022

The agricultural sector is the largest contributor to the economy of Sambas District, with palm oil as an increasingly important agricultural commodity alongside rice, vegetables, and rubber (Supriadi 2013). The important role of palm oil as an agricultural commodity in Sambas District has also affected the commodity production process, which also shows changes in the agricultural landscape due to the expansion of palm oil plantations (Morgan 2017). In addition, the expansion of palm oil plantations in Sambas District has been met with resistance from local communities, triggering land conflicts (de Vos 2016), including protests by local women (Morgan 2017). A study shows the gendered impacts of palm oil expansion in Sambas District (De Vos & Delabre 2018).

### Plantation Maintenance Workers and Social Reproduction in Palm Oil Plantations

Women plantation maintenance workers at PT A, B, C and D perform plantation maintenance tasks such as fertilising and spraying pesticides. Female workers at PT A, B, and C have the status of casual daily workers (BHL). As a result of their status as casual daily workers, women workers do not have access to the labour rights set out in the Labour Law No. 13/2003, such as leave, including menstrual and maternity leave. In the context of the care economy, these rights are part of care policies and services. There is no recognition of the care needs of women workers.

One of the plantation maintenance workers at PT B explained how she had to work until she was eight months pregnant and then stop working until her baby was three months old (Mrs A 2023, interview 20 January). During the period of non-work, she was not paid by the company. In addition to the lack of access to leave, these plantation maintenance workers do not have access to insurance provided by the Social Security Agency for Employment (BPJS Ketenagakerjaan). Women workers are also not covered by *BPJS Kesehatan's* health insurance scheme. Women plantation maintenance workers with casual labour status also face difficulties in accessing personal protective equipment (PPE). At PT A, women plantation maintenance workers were not provided with PPE by the plantation company, so they had to buy their own. At PT B, PPE was provided by the company only once a year. According to focus group discussions with women workers at this PT (FGD 2023, 20 January), PPE is usually damaged after three months. Women plantation maintenance workers at PT C now do not use aprons, only masks and gloves when fertilising. PPE was provided

by the company in the past, but is no longer provided for efficiency reasons.

Women maintenance workers at PT D now have the status of permanent daily workers (*Buruh Harian Tetap, BHT*). The term BHT used by the company creates confusion about the working status of the women workers. According to the women workers, this status indicates their "permanent" status. However, women plantation maintenance workers at PT D are still paid on the basis of working days. As will be explained below, working days (*Hari Kerja, HK*) is a component that determines how much income women workers receive. However, unlike BHL, who are not paid on holidays, women workers with BHT status at PT D still receive HK on holidays. Based on interviews with women workers at PT D, the difference they feel after being appointed as "permanent" workers is the access they have to leave and BPJS rights. The rest, they are still paid according to the HK calculation. However, some workers admitted that they had not been able to access menstrual leave. Based on focus group discussions with women workers at PT D, there were no difficulties in accessing PPE. If PPE was damaged, women workers could ask the company (FGD 2023, 11 July).

In terms of wages, women plantation maintenance workers, both casual and permanent, are paid on the basis of HK. HK is a unit of working days with a certain nominal value set by the company. The nominal value is then multiplied by the number of HK a worker has in a month. The use of the HK as the basis for calculating the wages of women workers shows an emphasis on the aspect of labour productivity. Table 1 shows the amount of income received by women plantation maintenance workers and how it compares to the district minimum wage (*Upah Minimum Kabupaten, UMK*) in Sambas. Table 1 shows that the income of women plantation workers is still below the minimum wage. The calculation of income in Table 1 assumes that women workers work a 5-day week. Meanwhile, at the time of the interviews and focus group discussions with women plantation maintenance workers at PT C, the workers had just received information from the company that their working days had been reduced to 4 days a week due to declining production. This means that women workers are earning even less than calculated in Table 1. Women plantation maintenance workers at PT B said their wages are not enough to meet their daily needs. This inadequate livelihood shows that there is no recognition of the care needs of women workers.

**Table 1. Comparison of HK Rates and Earnings of Women Plantation Maintenance Workers**

	PT A	PT B	PT C	PT D
HK Rate	IDR 111,700	IDR 111,000	IDR 108,000	IDR 111,700
Total Income in a month*	IDR 2,234,000	IDR 2,220,000	IDR 2,160,000	IDR 2,234,000
Minimum wage of Sambas District in 2023	IDR 2,792,599.31			

Source: interview results processed by the author

Note\*: The assumed number of HK owned by women palm oil maintenance workers is five days a week, so the total HK owned in a month is 20.

In terms of occupational health and safety (OHS), women plantation workers are exposed to toxins from chemicals in fertilisers and herbicides every time they carry out plantation maintenance. Access to PPE is therefore important for the health of women plantation maintenance workers. Based on the explanation in the first paragraph of this section, only PT D provides easy access to PPE. Meanwhile, in the other three plantations, where women workers are still casual daily workers (BHL), they do not have access to PPE. This means that women plantation maintenance workers are experiencing different effects of toxic exposure. Women fertiliser workers at PT A reported shortness of breath after work. One of the workers also showed blackened fingernails from fertilisation (Mrs W 2023, interview 19 January). In addition to shortness of breath, women spraying workers at PT B reported itchy skin. The same health effects were also experienced by women plantation maintenance workers at PT C. One of the women workers at this PT even reported a bleeding navel after spraying (Mrs L 2023, interview 20 January). Itchy skin was also reported by women plantation maintenance workers at PT D (FGD 2023, 13 July). Although the company provides access to PPE, health impacts are still being felt. The purpose of PPE is not to eliminate toxic exposure, but to minimise exposure. On the other hand, the use of PPE often makes it difficult for women workers to carry out their jobs. Wearing full PPE in the middle of a hot palm oil plantation can make it difficult to work in the plantation. Women workers are faced with a choice between protecting their health and meeting work targets.

In addition to exposure to chemical toxins, other health problems experienced by women plantation maintenance workers are related to repetitive work activities. One of the women plantation maintenance workers at PT A requested early retirement due to foot pain and found it difficult to work due to the illness (Mrs M 2023, interview 19 January). The palm oil plantations of PT A and PT B are located on peatland with a soil structure that is not as firm as normal soil, especially during the rainy season. This means that women workers have to use extra

energy walking and moving around the plantation area. In addition to foot pain, women plantation maintenance workers at PT D complained of back pain (FGD 2023, 11 July). Both the fertiliser workers and the sprayers have to carry heavy loads. Women workers who fertilise at PT D have to carry buckets of fertiliser weighing between 12.5 and 25 kilograms, repeatedly, 5 times a day. Meanwhile, women workers who spray at the same PT D have to carry 12-litre buckets repeatedly, with 12 to 13 buckets to be filled.

Despite these health and safety issues, not all plantations have clinics. Of the four monoculture palm oil plantations used as case studies for this research, only two plantations, PT A and PT D, have health clinics. However, neither PT A's nor PT B's clinic has a full range of medicines. PT B does not have a clinic on the farm. The reason is that it is under the same management and is not far from the plantation. PT B encourages the plantation workers to seek treatment at PT A's clinic. Instead of being treated at PT A's clinic, the plantation workers at PT B prefer to be treated outside. However, the workers have to get permission from the foreman. At PT C, the clinic is no longer provided by the company.

The responsibilities of women plantation maintenance workers in the social reproduction of the plantation include domestic work and the responsibility for meeting the family's food needs. Because they receive low wages, as shown in Table 1, women workers rely on other alternatives to meet the family's food needs, such as relying on plants and vegetables that grow around the plantation. While doing plantation maintenance work, women workers collect plants or vegetables that they come across to take home and cook. One of the women plantation maintenance workers at PT C revealed that selling food is one of the strategies to meet household needs (FGD 2023, 20 January). Meanwhile, selling cakes requires more capital, so this option is not the main choice for women workers. Some women plantation maintenance workers at PT D have food gardens in their yards. However, these workers face the possibility of the

company cutting down the plants in their food gardens. The rules on what plants are allowed change with each change of management.

Water is an important aspect of social reproduction in palm oil plantations. At PT A, the workers families' source of water for bathing and household hygiene comes from wells rather than from river water. In palm oil plantations, there are generally two types of water used for household purposes: water for bathing and hygiene, and water for drinking. Well or river water is the source of water used for bathing and household hygiene. Meanwhile, gallon water is used as a source of drinking water. Although they no longer rely on river water, workers at PT A, including women workers, are concerned about the plan to build a palm oil factory around the plantation, which will result in water pollution. Water availability is also important for women plantation maintenance workers who carry out spraying work. The women workers need water to mix the herbicide. In addition, female sprayers also use the water in the plantation's ditches to clean themselves after work while waiting to go home. Women plantation maintenance workers at PT B expressed how difficult it is to find water in the ditches during the dry season (FGD 2023, 20 January). Women plantation maintenance workers at PT C sometimes even have to ride a motorbike to find a ditch with water.

Access to land is central to the social reproduction of women plantation workers. Even before becoming plantation workers, access to land was a source of livelihood for women. Most of the plantation workers in PT A and PT B come from the community in the neighbouring village, Village A. The arrival of the two plantations in 2006 was initially met with resistance from the village community, who are Sambas Malay. One of the reasons was the unclear plasma scheme. Under the scheme offered to the people of Village A, they were to give up their land and then receive plantation land on a 70:30 basis.

According to the FGDs (2023), plantation workers do not understand the meaning of the 70:30 allocation and its implications. Plantation workers also had doubts about the financial structure of the plasma scheme, which raised the question of whether they will eventually receive the promised plantation land. Ultimately, according to the people of Village A, the plasma scheme only brought problems. One of the women plantation workers at PT A revealed that the plasma lands her family had received had just been planted with palm oil. This means that women workers have to work as plantation workers at PT A. PT C is located in Village C, which has a

history as a transmigration village. Since the start of PT C's plantation in 1990, there have been various problems, including conflicts over the plasma project with the Dayak Bekati indigenous community (Jiwan & Colchester 2020). The plantation workers at PT C are made up of different ethnic groups from the surrounding area, such as Sambas Malay, Javanese (second generation transmigrant communities) and migrant workers from other regions, such as East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). Meanwhile, plasma-related conflicts have also occurred at PT D. In 2012, PT D's replanting caused conflict because it overlapped with the surrounding community's land, which ended with the land being returned to the surrounding community (Tempo 2018). PT D's plantation workers are also from different ethnic groups, including Sambas Malay, Javanese (generations of transmigrant families) and Dayak.

Based on the characteristics of the workers in the four plantations, most of whom are local workers, it can be concluded that changes in land use due to the expansion of palm oil plantations have led to women working in the plantations. This change in access to land affects women's bargaining power. However, the women workers in this study are union members. Although most of them are casual workers, union membership can at least increase their bargaining power with the plantation companies.

### **Toxic Treatments**

The description of the working conditions of women plantation workers in the previous section shows that most women plantation workers are employed under a flexible labour regime. Their status as casual workers allows the company to hire female workers in times of need. Female plantation maintenance workers at PT A revealed that when the pandemic hit, the company reduced their HK to two days a month for seven months. As described in the previous section, women plantation maintenance workers at PT C also experienced a reduction in their working days to 4 days a week due to declining production. The "no work no pay" flexible working arrangement gives the company the freedom to spend efficiently, especially on labour.

Regarding flexible work arrangements in monoculture palm oil plantations, companies generally use flexibility as an offer to capture the recruitment potential of women workers. Assuming that women workers are also responsible for household maintenance, flexible work arrangements allow women workers to balance productive economic work in the plantation with reproductive work in the household. There is also an

assumption that plantation maintenance, which is mostly done by women workers, is supporting work rather than the main work in monoculture palm oil plantations. This can be seen from the trend towards casualisation of plantation maintenance work and the efficiency of plantation companies, which tend to reduce the HK of casual workers.

In the context of the work process in monoculture plantations, it should be understood that the flexible work regime of plantation maintenance is generally carried out by women workers. The characteristics of monoculture plantations allow companies to make profits in a shorter period of time while minimising costs. The profits offered by monoculture plantations are achieved by focusing on plantation production and productivity. This is achieved through the use of chemical fertilisers and herbicides. The use of fertilisers and herbicides is a significant expense for the company as they are relatively expensive. Therefore, an alternative to reduce expenditure is to introduce flexible working arrangements. This labour arrangement allows the company to limit its expenses because it does not have to pay fixed salaries, severance pays, and pensions, and does not have to provide leave rights, health rights, and occupational safety. According to Tania Li (2017), flexible labour relations in palm oil plantations are one way to increase profits. In this way, palm oil production costs can be reduced to compete with other vegetable oil commodities in the global market. In the context of the global vegetable oil market, palm oil is considered to be the most efficient and competitive commodity. The efficiency and competitiveness of the palm oil commodity in this global competition depends on the expansion of palm oil plantations.

From the above explanation, plantation maintenance work in the context of monoculture palm oil plantations can be understood as an articulation between the competition for palm oil commodities in the global market and the social relations of society, namely relations based on a patriarchal system that makes women responsible for reproductive work. Plantation maintenance work under a flexible labour regime in palm oil plantations allows companies to take advantage of the supply of cheap labour, namely women workers. Historical literatures on labour regimes and gender in palm oil plantations show that the colonial aspect of the recruitment of women workers in palm oil plantations continues in the labour regime of contemporary palm oil plantations (Sinaga 2021). In contemporary plantation labour regimes, the household labour recruitment approach allows for an additional potential labour force,

namely women workers. In order to enable female workers to fulfil their dual roles, a flexible work regime is seen as the right choice. Thus, the recruitment of women plantation maintenance workers can be seen as both inclusionary and exclusionary. Inclusion in the sense that monoculture palm oil plantations provide employment for women workers. Exclusion in the sense that the status of women workers as casual daily workers limits their access to decent wages and labour rights.

The dynamics of social relations described in the previous paragraph cannot be separated from access to land as a source of livelihood. The expansion of palm oil plantations has reduced access to land. The plasma scheme, offered to increase community participation in the small-scale palm oil plantation sector, has in fact created problems. As described above, the four plantations that are the case studies of this article are facing land conflicts related to the plasma scheme. Restrictions on access to land due to conflicts over the plasma scheme can affect the labour regime in the plantation. As one of the plantation maintenance workers at PT A explained, she worked as a casual daily worker in the company because her family had just received plasma land that was not yet producing.

As mentioned above, the assumption that plantation maintenance is supporting work is the reason why the company has adopted a flexible plantation regime. In fact, plantation maintenance is carried out on a regular basis. As a result, female plantation maintenance workers can be employed as casual daily workers for many years. For example, women plantation maintenance workers at PT A have worked as casual daily workers since the company started operations in 2006.

Based on the FGDs, there are some plantation maintenance workers with casual status who have been appointed to the *SKU* because the previous appointment process was considered easier. However, the maintenance workforce is still dominated by casual daily workers. At PT C, women plantation maintenance workers have worked as casual daily workers for two to five years. At PTD, women plantation maintenance workers are appointed as BHT after working for 10 to 15 years. The view that plantation maintenance work is supporting work, and that women are better suited to do this supporting work, is partly influenced by social perceptions of a gendered society. Furthermore, in line with Burawoy's view (1985) that the labour process has political and ideological implications and that the plantation maintenance work carried out by women workers also affects the whole social system. This further illustrates how the productive aspect of labour

operates as well as the social reproduction of a particular social system.

In the previous section, it was explained that inclusion in palm oil plantations is understood in terms of providing plantation employment for women workers. On the other hand, women work in plantations to supplement family income. As the literatures on the gendered impacts of palm oil expansion show, women's reduced access to land, forests, and other livelihood resources results in women being forced to work as plantation workers. This means that women's participation in monoculture palm oil plantations is a livelihood strategy. In the gender dynamics constructed within the patriarchal system, this strategy is adopted by women workers based on the need to provide for the household. The need to provide for the household is a reflection of the need for care.

The role of women in social reproduction is thus understood not only in terms of women's care work in the households, but also in terms of the work of women plantation workers. Furthermore, plantation workers who perform their work at the risk of continuous exposure to chemical toxins over a long period of time can be understood as toxic care. This shows the relationship between social reproduction and monoculture palm oil plantations based on the paradigm of agricultural modernisation. As explained in section three, the paradigm of agrarian modernisation leads to the use of plantation chemicals, which, as it develops, becomes increasingly widespread along with the desire to increase plantation productivity and profits. Meanwhile, women's role in the social reproduction of the households influences their decision to participate in plantation work as a livelihood strategy.

As plantation maintenance workers, women workers perform maintenance work in two intertwined aspects. The first aspect relates to plantation maintenance work that contributes to the production, profits, and expansion of monoculture palm oil plantations. Reducing labour costs through the implementation of flexible plantation labour regimes not only improves the competitiveness of palm oil in the global market, but can also contribute to the expansion of monoculture palm oil plantations. The second aspect is that care work is understood as social reproduction of workers' households. By using the concept of social reproduction, a broader understanding of workers' household care work does not only occur within the home. When women workers collect plants and vegetables around the plantation as a source of food, this also reflects the workers' household care work. In addition, the first and second aspects are intertwined

and reflect contradictions in social reproduction. The first aspect shows the desire for profit, while the second aspect shows the desire for life-making (Bhattacharya 2017).

In the context of monoculture palm oil plantations, toxic maintenance can also reflect the transfer or externalisation of costs from plantation companies to women workers and the environment. Women plantation maintenance workers are responsible for performing unpaid reproductive work. This reproductive work enables the reproduction of labour in the workers' households. This reflects the externalisation of costs by the company. In addition, the use of toxic plantation chemicals has a negative impact on both the women workers and the environment around the plantation. Women maintenance workers at PT B have to use the plantation's ditch water, both as a mixture of herbicides and to clean their bodies. This is because the company does not provide water to mix with herbicides. This is a form of cost externalisation by the company. When cleaning their bodies with water after spraying, maintenance workers at PT B realised that they were "cleaning poison with poison" (Mrs A 2023, interview 20 January). A research report (Kinasih, forthcoming) on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in palm oil plantations shows how the long working hours of workers handling chemicals shows the integration of chemicals into the daily lives of workers ("living with poison"). Women plantation maintenance workers' limited access to PPE, work tools, transportation, leave rights, and OSH add to the list of costs that companies externalise. Water pollution from palm oil mill effluent also illustrates the externalisation of environmental costs by the company, which are then borne by plantation workers and surrounding communities.

## Closing

Care work, which is at the heart of the care economy, needs to be understood in a broader context. The concept of social reproduction offers an approach that can help to understand the intertwining of productive and reproductive aspects. Using the concept of social reproduction as an analytical lens, the participation of women workers in plantation maintenance in monoculture palm oil plantations reveals the articulation of social relations between a society based on a patriarchal system and palm oil competition in the global vegetable oil market. The monocultural nature of plantations, which tends to reduce costs, runs up against unequal gender relations. This is reflected in the gender division of labour, which tends to place male workers in harvesting

and female workers in plantation maintenance. Palm oil plantation maintenance work is also seen as supporting work, which justifies the application of a flexible work regime for women plantation maintenance workers.

Apart from being perceived as supporting work, the application of a flexible labour regime in plantation maintenance is also designed to ensure that women workers fulfil their dual roles, namely their role in the productive work of the plantation and their role in the reproductive work of the workers' households. With reference to ILO Convention No. 156 on Workers with Family Responsibilities, women plantation workers have equal opportunities to participate in the economic activities of the plantation. However, the flexible nature of plantation maintenance work shows how women plantation workers are discriminated against. Because flexible plantation maintenance work makes it difficult for women workers to exercise their rights, including maternity rights. Thus, it is not in line with ILO Convention 183 on Maternity Protection.

From the perspective of women workers, participation in plantation maintenance is seen as a livelihood strategy. This is due to the role of women workers in the social reproduction of the households. Strategies to ensure the social reproduction of the households are adopted by women workers based on their aspirations to maintain the household. Thus, women's role in social reproduction is understood not only in terms of women's care work in the households, but also in terms of the productive economic work of women plantation workers, namely plantation care work. This shows the importance of women's role in social reproduction. However, the role of women in social reproduction has not yet been recognised. Women workers involved in plantation maintenance, where they risk continuous exposure to chemical toxins over long periods of time, can be understood as toxic maintenance.

This article is based on research that focuses on labour and gender issues in palm oil plantations. The issue of intersectionality, in terms of the intersection between aspects of labour, gender, and other social relations, is not discussed in this article. The author recommends research using an intersectionality approach on the economy of care in palm oil plantations. Furthermore, access to land is central to social reproduction in the context of palm oil plantations. This research is limited in its in-depth discussion of the relationship between land tenure and the plantation labour regime, particularly in terms of its gender dynamics. Therefore, the author recommends the need for studies that examine in depth the gender dynamics in the land and labour nexus in the

context of social reproduction in monoculture palm oil plantations. In addition, the issue of social reproduction can be an entry point for linking various social-ecological issues that go beyond care work in monoculture palm oil plantations. Making these connections is important not only for building cross-issue solidarity among different community organisations, including trade unions, but also for shaping the transformation of monoculture palm oil plantations from a social-ecological perspective (Pye 2021). Therefore, the author also suggests the need for research that seeks to understand how community social organisations, especially plantation unions, use the issue of social reproduction to build solidarity networks with various other social movements.

## Bibliography

Alonso-Fradejas, A., Liu, J., Salerno, T., & Xu, Y. 2016. "Inquiring into the Political Economy of Oil Palm as a Global Flex Crop", *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 43(1), pp. 141-165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2015.1052801>.

Assalam, R. & Parsaoran, H. 2018. *Keuntungan di Atas Keringat Buruh: Kondisi Kerja di Bawah Rantai Pasok Perkebunan Sawit Milik Sinar Mas*. Asian Monitor Research Centre and Sawit Watch: Hong Kong.

Bakker, I. & Gill, S. 2003. "Ontology, Method, and Hypotheses", in Isabella Bakker & Stephen Gill (Eds.), *Power, Production, and Social Reproduction: Human In/Security in Global Political Economy*. Palgrave MacMillan: New York.

Bakker, I. 1999. "Neoliberal Governance and the New Gender Orders", *Power, Production and Social Reproduction*, pp. 66-82. [https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230522404\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230522404_4).

Baglioni, E., Campling, L., Mezzadri, A., Miyamura, S., Pattenden, J., & Selwyn, B. 2020. "Exploitation and Labour Regimes: Production, Circulation, Social Reproduction, Ecology", in Baglioni, E., Campling, L., Coe, N. M., & Smith, A. (Eds.), *Labour Regimes and Global Production*. Agenda Publishing: Newcastle.

Bhattacharya, T. 2017. "Introduction: Mapping Social Reproduction Theory", in Bhattacharya, T. (Ed.), *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentring Oppression*. Pluto Press: London.

Bedford, K. & Rai, S. M. 2010. "Feminists Theorise International Political Economy", *Signs*, Vol. 36(1), pp. 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1086/652910>.

Burawoy, M. 1985. *The Politics of Production: Factory Regimes under Capitalism and Socialism*. Verso: London.

Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS). 2022. *Statistik Kelapa Sawit Indonesia 2021*. Central Bureau of Statistics: Jakarta.

Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). 2017. "Transforming the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil for greater gender equality and women's empowerment", *CIFOR Info Brief*, accessed on 17 November 2023, at [https://www.cifor.org/publications/pdf\\_files/infobrief/6383-infobrief.pdf](https://www.cifor.org/publications/pdf_files/infobrief/6383-infobrief.pdf).

Colchester, M., Jiwan, N., Andiko, Sirait, M., Firdaus, A. Y., Surambo, A., & Pane, H. 2006. *Promised Land: Palm Oil and Land Acquisition in*

*Indonesia- Implications for Local Communities and Indigenous People*. Forest People Programme and Perkumpulan Sawit Watch.

De Vos, R. 2016. "Multi-functional Lands Facing Oil Palm Monocultures: A Case Study of a Land Conflict in West Kalimantan, Indonesia", *ASEAS - Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, Vol. 9(1), pp. 11-32. <https://doi.org/10.14764/10.ASEAS-2016.1-2>.

DeVos, R. & Delabre, I. 2018. "Spaces for Participation and Resistance: Gendered Experiences of Oil Palm Plantation Development", *Geoforum*, Vol. 96, pp. 217-226. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2018.08.011>.

Dharmawan, A. H., Mardiyarningsih, D. I., Komarudin, H., Ghazoul, J., Pacheco, P., & Rahmadian, F. 2020. "Dynamics of Rural Economy: A Socio-Economic Understanding of Oil Palm Expansion and Landscape Changes in East Kalimantan, Indonesia", *Land*, Vol. 9(7), p. 213. <https://doi.org/10.3390/land9070213>.

Dib, J. B., Krishna, V. V., Alamsyah, Z., & Qaim, M. 2018. "Land-use Change and Livelihoods of Non-farm Households: The role of Income from Employment in Oil Palm and Rubber in Rural Indonesia", *Land Use Policy*, Vol. 76, pp. 828-838. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2018.03.020>.

Elias, J. & Rai, S. M. 2019. "Feminist Everyday Political Economy: Space, Time, and Violence", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 45(2), pp. 201-220. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210518000323>.

Eliza, P. 2021. *Peran Buruh Perempuan Perkebunan Kelapa Sawit: Studi Kasus di Desa Ujong Krueng Kecamatan Tripa Makmur Kabupaten Nagan Raya*. UIN Ar-Raniry: Aceh.

England, P. 2005. "Gender Inequality in Labour Markets: The Role of Motherhood and Segregation", *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, Vol. 12(2), pp. 264-288. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxi014>.

Fatchiya, A., Sulistyawati, A., Fredian, T., Siwi, M., Adisantoso, J., Budiarto, T., & Prasetyo, K. 2022. "Karakteristik Sosiodemografis dan Ketenagakerjaan Perempuan di Perkebunan Sawit, Provinsi Lampung", *Jurnal Penyuluhan*, Vol. 18(1), pp. 155-163. <https://doi.org/10.25015/18202236894>.

Federici, S. 2012. *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction and Feminist Struggle*. Autonomedia: New York.

Folbre, N. 1995. "Holding Hands at Midnight: The Paradox of Caring Labour", *Feminist Economics*, Vol. 1(1), pp. 73-92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/714042215>.

Folbre, N. 2006. "Measuring Care: Gender, Empowerment, and the Care Economy", *Journal of Human Development*, Vol. 7(2), pp. 183-199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649880600768512>.

Fraser, N. 2017. "Crisis of Care? On the Social-Reproductive Contradictions of Contemporary Capitalism", in Bhattacharya, T (Ed.), *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentring Oppression*. Pluto Press: London.

Gore, E. & LeBaron, G. 2019. "Using Social Reproduction Theory to Understand Unfree Labour", *Capital and Class*, Vol. 43(4), pp. 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03098168198807>.

International Labour Organization (ILO). ILO Convention No. 156 of 1981 on Workers with Family Responsibilities.

International Labour Organization (ILO). ILO Convention No. 183 on Maternity Protection.

Jiwan, N. & Colchester, M. 2020. "Kota Transmigrasi dan Orang Dayak Bekati", *Briefing*, accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://www.forestpeoples.org/sites/default/files/documents/Transmigration%20Townships%20BAH%20v2.pdf>.

Julia & White, B. 2012. "Gendered Experiences of Dispossession: Oil Palm Expansion in a Dayak Hibun Community in West Kalimantan", *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 39 (3-4), pp. 995-1016. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2012.676544>.

Kinasih, S. R. forthcoming. "Menjalar dalam Diam: Kesehatan dan Keselamatan Kerja di Perkebunan Sawit", *Transnational Palm Oil Labour Solidarity*.

Kofman, E. 2012. "Rethinking Care through Social Reproduction: Articulating Circuits of Migration", *Social Politics*, Vol. 19(1), pp. 142-162. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxr030>.

Li, T. M. 2017. "The Price of Un/Freedom: Indonesia's Colonial and Contemporary Plantation Regimes", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 59(2), pp. 245-276. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417517000044>.

Luxton, M. 2006. "Feminist Political Economy in Canada and the Politics of Social Reproduction", in Bezanson, K. & Luxton, M (Eds.), *Social Reproduction: Feminist Political Economy Challenges Neoliberalism*. McGill-Queen's University Press: Montreal.

Mezzadri, A., Newman, S., & Stevano, S. 2021. "Feminist Global Political Economies of Work and Social Reproduction", *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 29(6), pp. 1783-1803. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09692290.2021.1957977>.

Milieudefensie. 2018. "Draw the Line: A Black Book about the Shady Investments of Dutch Banks into Palm Oil", *milieudefensie.nl*, accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://milieudefensie.nl/actueel/draw-the-line-english.pdf>.

Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia. 2021. "Tantangan dan Prospek Hilirisasi Sawit Nasional: Analisis Pembangunan Industri", *kemenperin.go.id*, accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://www.kemenperin.go.id/download/28310>.

Morgan, M. 2017. "Women, Gender and Protest: Contesting Oil Palm Plantation Expansion in Indonesia", *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 44(6), pp. 1177-1196. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2017.1300579>.

Muttaqien, W., Ramdhaningrum, H., Aidha, C. N., Armintasari, F., & Ningrum, D. A. 2021. "Pelanggaran Hak Buruh Perkebunan Sawit: Studi Kasus di Kalimantan Barat dan Sulawesi Tengah", *The Prakarsa*, accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://theprakarsa.org/pelanggaran-hak-buruh-perkebunan-sawit-studi-kasus-di-kalimantan-barat-dan-sulawesi-tengah/>.

Nading, A. M. 2020. "Living in A Toxic World", *The Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 49, pp. 209-224. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-010220-074557>.

Nurhidayah, Y., Lovadi, I. & Linda, R. 2015. "Tumbuhan Berpotensi Bahan Pangan di Desa Sebangun Kecamatan Sebawi Kabupaten Sambas", *Probiont*, Vol. 4(1), pp. 151-159. <http://dx.doi.org/10.26418/protobiont.v4i1.9684>.

- Pye, O. 2021. "Agrarian Marxism and the Proletariat: A Palm Oil Manifesto", *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 48(4), pp. 807-826. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2019.1667772>.
- Rao, S. & Akram-Lodhi, A. H. 2021. "Feminist Political Economy", in Berik, G. & Kongar, E (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Feminist Economics*. Routledge: London.
- Richter, B. 2009. "Environmental Challenges and the Controversy about Palm Oil Production: Case Studies from Malaysia, Indonesia and Myanmar", *FES Publications*, accessed on 17 November 2023, at <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/06769.pdf>.
- Rist, L., Feintrenie, L., & Levang, P. 2010. "The Livelihood Impacts of Oil Palm: Smallholders in Indonesia", *Biodiversity and Conservation*, Vol. 19, pp. 1009-1024. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10531-010-9815-z>.
- Rowland, D., Zanello, G., Waliyo, E., & Ickowitz, A. 2022. "Oil Palm and Gendered Time Use: A Mixed-methods Case Study from West Kalimantan, Indonesia", *Forest Policy and Economics*, Vol. 137. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forpol.2021.102682>.
- Sawit Watch. 2019. "Sawit Watch Annual Report 2019", accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://sawitwatch.or.id/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Annual-Report-2019-Sawit-Watch.pdf>.
- Sinha, S. 2023. "Agrarian Labour Regimes, Crisis & the Materiality(s) of Dalit Women's Work in India", Working Paper Draft.
- Sinaga, H. 2021. "Buruh Siluman: The Making and Maintaining of Cheap and Disciplined Labour on Oil Palm Plantations in Indonesia", in Backhouse, M. et al. (Eds.), *Bioeconomy and Global Inequalities: Socio-Ecological Perspectives on Biomass Sourcing and Production*. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-68944-5\\_9\\_](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-68944-5_9_)
- Siscawati, M. & Mahaningtyas, A. 2012. "Gender Justice: Forest Tenure and Forest Governance in Indonesia", *Rights and Resources Initiative*, accessed on 17 November 2023, at [https://rightsandresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/doc\\_5224.pdf](https://rightsandresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/doc_5224.pdf).
- Statista. "Vegetable Oils: Global Consumption 2013/14 to 2022/23, by oil type", accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://www.statista.com/statistics/263937/vegetable-oils-global-consumption/>.
- Supriadi, W. 2013. "Perkebunan Kelapa Sawit dan Kesejahteraan Masyarakat di Kabupaten Sambas", *Jurnal Ekonomi Daerah*, Vol. 1(1), accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://jurnal.untan.ac.id/index.php/JEDA2/article/view/2785/2770>.
- Tempo. 2018. "Akrobat Lahan Raja Sawit", *majalah.tempo.co*, accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://majalah.tempo.co/read/investigasi/155107/akrobat-lahan-raja-sawit>.
- Theresia, H. Y. K. & Wahyuni, E. S. 2021. "Peran Gender Buruh Perkebunan Kelapa Sawit: Studi Kasus: PT Perkebunan Nusantara VIII Kebun Cimulang, Kecamatan Cigudeg, Bogor, Jawa Barat", *Jurnal Sains Komunikasi dan Pengembangan Masyarakat*, Vol. 5(1), pp. 105-120. <https://doi.org/10.26858/sosialisasi.v1i2.33683>.
- Toumbourou, T. & Dressler, W. 2020. "Sustaining Livelihoods in a Palm Oil Enclave: Differentiated Gendered Responses in East Kalimantan, Indonesia", *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, Vol. 62(1), pp. 40-55, at <https://doi.org/10.1111/apv.12265>.
- United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agriculture Service. "PalmOil2023WorldProduction", *usda.gov*, accessed on 17 November 2023, at [https://ipad.fas.usda.gov/cropexplorer/cropview/commodityView.aspx?startrow=1&cropid=4243000&sel\\_year=2023&rankby=Production](https://ipad.fas.usda.gov/cropexplorer/cropview/commodityView.aspx?startrow=1&cropid=4243000&sel_year=2023&rankby=Production).
- West Kalimantan Central Bureau of Statistics. 2023. "Luas Tanaman Perkebunan Besar", accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://kalbar.bps.go.id/indicator/161/248/1/luas-tanaman-perkebunan-besar.html>.
- West Kalimantan Central Bureau of Statistics. 2023. "Produksi Perkebunan Besar", accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://kalbar.bps.go.id/indicator/161/249/1/produksi-perkebunan-besar.html>.
- Wichterich, C. 2019. "Care Extractivism and the Reconfiguration of Social Reproduction in Post-Fordist Economies", *ICDD Working Paper*, No. 25, accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://kobru.uni-kassel.de/handle/123456789/11680>.
- Yallita, M. & Mardhiah, D. 2023. "Pembagian Kerja pada Buruh di Perkebunan Kelapa Sawit", *Jurnal Perspektif: Jurnal Kajian Sosiologi dan Pendidikan*, Vol. 6(1), pp. 38-46. <https://doi.org/10.24036/perspektif.v6i1.728>.
- Yeates, N. 2004. "Global Care Chains. Critical Reflections and Lines of Enquiry", *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol. 6(3), pp. 369-391. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461674042000235573>.
- Zen, Z., Barlow, C. & Gondowarsito, R. 2005. "Oil Palm in Indonesian Socio-Economic Improvement A Review of Options", *Australian National University Departmental Working Paper*, No. 2005(11), accessed on 17 November 2023, at [https://acde.crawford.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publication/acde\\_crawford\\_anu\\_edu\\_au/2020-11/2005-11.pdf](https://acde.crawford.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publication/acde_crawford_anu_edu_au/2020-11/2005-11.pdf).

## The Urgency of Protecting Domestic Workers as a Recognition of Care Work in Indonesia

Yogi Paramitha Dewi<sup>1</sup> & Y. Sari M. Widiyastuti<sup>2</sup>

Faculty of Law, Atma Jaya University Yogyakarta  
Campus 1 Santo Alfonsus Building  
Jalan Mrican Baru Number 28, Caturtunggal, Depok, Sleman, DI Yogyakarta 55281

putu.yogi@uajy.ac.id<sup>1</sup> and sari.murti@uajy.ac.id<sup>2</sup>

Manuscript Chronology: received 4 November 2023, revised 18 December 2023, accepted 24 December 2023

### Abstract

Domestic workers (DWs) are in a very vulnerable position. However, the problems faced by domestic workers have not yet become a mainstream discourse, let alone transformed into public policies that provide legal protection for them. In the absence of a legal framework that can be used to claim their rights, domestic workers are one of the most vulnerable groups of workers to discrimination, violence, and exploitation. In Indonesia, advocacy for a law to protect domestic workers has been ongoing for almost two decades. However, to date, the law has not been materialised, even though the Indonesian government, when hosting the G20, advocated for the recognition of the care economy. This article aims to discuss the PPRT Bill using the 5 R's framework (recognition, reduction, redistribution, reward, and representation) developed by the ILO. This article assesses that the PPRT Bill is generally in line with the 5R's framework, but it still needs strengthening in several aspects, especially issues of pay, benefits, and the right to unionise.

Keywords: domestic workers, care work, PPRT Bill, gender, labour, Indonesia

### Introduction

Indonesia has set a direction to promote the recognition of the care economy. When hosting the G20, the Government of Indonesia highlighted the importance of the care economy as one of the resolutions of the G20 in 2022. This attention stemmed from the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic. Unpaid care work is important but invisible in the public sphere. The invisibility of care work, which tends to be shouldered by women, has led to the low participation of women in labour statistics (Indonesia.go.id 2022). Efforts to promote the care economy can actually start with care work that is already familiar to the community, namely domestic workers (PRT).

As workers, domestic workers are in a very vulnerable position because of the nature of their work. Much of their work is done in private spaces, so not many people know what happens to them behind the walls of the homes in which they work. Another source of vulnerability is the lack of regulations to protect domestic workers. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that 29.9 per cent of domestic workers worldwide do not have a protective framework through national labour laws (Mahanta & Gupta 2019). Globally, there are approximately 75.6 million domestic workers aged 15 and over, and the sector is still dominated by women

at 76.2 per cent (ILO 2021). 74 per cent of women who choose to work as domestic workers come from rural areas with low levels of education (ILO 2015). Ironically, care work, such as cooking, washing, feeding, caring for the sick, and other forms of domestic work that are inherent in people's daily lives and are then carried out by domestic workers, is not seen as productive work that contributes to the economy. The work of domestic workers also supports the economist. They provide the daily needs of the workers, in this case the employers, so that when they return home, they can rest and be ready to return to capital accumulation the next day (Dhewy 2018).

The relationship between domestic workers and employers is also characterised by unequal power relations. This imbalance of power between employers and domestic workers often results in violence against domestic workers, both economic and physical. Komnas Perempuan categorises violence experienced by domestic workers as violence that occurs in the public sphere, that is, violence that occurs in the workplace. According to Komnas Perempuan's Annual Report (CATAHU) 2023, there were 2,978 cases of public violence in 2022, of which 1,276 cases were reported to Komnas Perempuan (Komnas Perempuan 2023). Of the total 1,276

cases of public violence reported to Komnas Perempuan, 115 cases occurred in the workplace (Komnas Perempuan 2023). However, the data does not indicate how many of these cases involved domestic workers. Meanwhile, *Jala PRT* estimates that there are at least 20 cases of harassment and violence against domestic workers every day. Some are even held captive and subjected to multiple forms of physical, psychological, sexual, and economic abuse for months to nine years (*Jala PRT* 2023). This figure, of course, only scratches the surface, as there are many cases that go unrecorded because domestic workers cannot report or do not know where to report.

In Asia and the Pacific, there are 38.3 million domestic workers, according to the ILO, and 61.5 per cent of these domestic workers are still not protected by labour laws (ILO 2021). Furthermore, ILO data shows that 71 per cent of domestic workers in the region have no legal limits on their working hours (ILO 2021). In Indonesia alone, there are an estimated 5 million domestic workers who have contributed to the expansion of employment opportunities but are not fully supported through recognition and protection in government regulations and policies (Komnas Perempuan 2023). Covid-19 also had a major impact on the informality of domestic workers in Asia and the Pacific, as they had no legal protection when they lost their jobs during the pandemic (ILO 2021).

The lack of protection for domestic workers in Asia and the Pacific, particularly in Indonesia, cannot be separated from a number of factors, including the failure to ratify ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers and the lack of accurate data on domestic workers due to lack of access to information given the hidden nature of domestic work. In the absence of a legal framework that can be used to claim their rights, domestic workers have no channel through which to resolve issues when they experience abuse and exploitation. Mapping the scale of abuse faced by domestic workers is also quite difficult, as there are no reporting mechanisms from employers or specialised institutions to receive complaints from domestic workers (Mahanta & Gupta 2019).

Based on the problems faced by domestic workers in Indonesia, the legal protection of domestic workers is an urgent need for the enactment of the Draft Law on Protection of Domestic Workers (PPRT Bill). The National Network for Advocacy of Domestic Workers (*Jala PRT*), together with civil society and academics, has been advocating for the PPRT Bill since 2004. However, the PPRT Bill has not yet been passed into law. This has led to the protracted nature of the PPRT Bill as an important issue

to be studied in order to understand the state's position on the problems faced by domestic workers. Therefore, this article aims to discuss the debates surrounding the long deliberation process of the PPRT Bill to see how the state's policy to regulate the legal protection of domestic workers is debated and formulated. Using the 5R framework (Recognition, Reduction, Redistribution, Reward and Representation), this article also explains how the key issues in these bills are in line with efforts to protect the rights of domestic workers, especially women.

## Research Methodology

This article uses the socio-legal research methodology. In particular, state policies and policy plans regarding domestic workers. The study of the draft law, namely the final draft of the PPRT Bill (2020), will be studied using existing theories, concepts, or methods of social sciences, especially gender studies. At the time of writing, the authors attempted to confirm this with Mrs Lita Anggraini, the National Coordinator of *Jala PRT*, who stated that the draft was still in use and that there was no other version. In order to answer the problem, this article uses secondary data from labour laws and regulations relevant to the research topic, literatures consisting of books, articles, chapters as well as government documents or reports, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), international organisations, and tertiary materials in the form of legal dictionaries or encyclopaedias. The data collected will be analysed qualitatively in order to explain how the state recognises the experiences and interests of women in care work as contained in the PPRT Bill.

As stated by Mahanta and Gupta (2019), in order to understand the complexity of domestic workers' issues, researchers have to grapple with issues of social hierarchy in the form of class, gender, race, and caste. Because the characteristics of domestic work are closely tied to gender relations, the study of the PPRT Bill is conducted using feminist jurisprudence, which places gender relations at the centre of assessing who wins and who loses in legal policy battles. This departs from two basic tenets of feminist jurisprudence, that: (1) laws are shaped by men as a result of their privilege and power in the historical trajectory; and (2) as a product of social construction, laws can be changed to create equality between women and men (Levit & Verchick 2016, p. 12). In this sense, following MacKinnon (1979; see also Scales 1986), feminist legal scholarship is used to question how state legal policies or practices contribute to the

maintenance and reproduction of class and gender inequality.

## **Women and Domestic Work**

### **Care Work**

In its report entitled *"Care Work and Care Jobs for the future of Decent Work"*, the ILO categorises care work as direct and indirect. Direct, personal and relational care work can be seen in feeding children or caring for a sick spouse while indirect care work includes cooking and cleaning (ILO 2018). Meanwhile, UN Women links care work to the care economy, which includes the production and consumption of goods and services necessary for the physical, social, mental, and emotional well-being of care-dependent groups such as children, the elderly, the sick, people with disabilities, as well as healthy, productive age adults (UN Women 2018).

Federici (2012) defines care work as not only cleaning the house, but also serving workers (men and women working in the formal sector), caring for their children, and getting them ready for work each day. Furthermore, Federici sees that behind every factory, school, office, or mine there is the invisible work of millions of women working as domestic workers who spend their lives and labour to produce other labourers who work in the factory, office, school, or mine. (Federici 2012). Care work - the paid or unpaid provision of care services to others - remains marginal in the labour discourse.

Traditionally, historians and economists have viewed care work as a traditionally female domain and as "unproductive" because it takes place in non-public spaces and therefore outside the framework of commercial relations (Blofield 2012; Van Nederveen Meerkerk et al. 2015, pp. 4-5; Sigiro et al. 2018). Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) in February 2018 estimated that there were around 36.1 million people working in domestic care, and this type of work is classified as "non- labour force" (Sigiro et al. 2018).

The domestic work that many women do is often seen as unproductive work in the capitalist economic system, so many women want to exchange (domestic) work for work in the (formal) labour market. This is the case even though both are forms of routine or repetitive work for a wage (Kreps 1971 in Federici 2012, p. 99). The devaluation of domestic work is thus deeply rooted in wider structural discrimination. In this case, neither domestic work (the person nor the activity) is seen within the framework of a formal employer-employee relationship (Mahanta & Gupta 2019).

Historically, paid care work, particularly in the form of domestic work, has existed for centuries and until recently has been a highly feminised sector (Van Nederveen Meerkerk et al. 2015). As Blofield (2012) points out, paid domestic work is one component of the broader context of care work and its relationship to gender (Blofield 2012). This is because such work has specific implications for women and class relations in society, so issues surrounding domestic work must be seen in the context of gender and class inequalities in that society (Blofield 2012).

As stated by Van Nederveen Meerkerk et al. (2015, p. 18), in addition to producing food and an emotionally satisfying environment, domestic work also generates "social capital" for groups with greater economic and political power and who benefit from unequal class and gender relations to continue to enjoy their privileged status in society. The "services" provided by domestic workers, such as food preparation and cleaning, certainly add value in terms of a higher and healthier quality of life for the employer and their family. In turn, employers are able to continue their production activities outside the home because their domestic work has been outsourced to domestic workers. The politics of domestic work are thus at the intersection of class, gender and, in some contexts, race or ethnicity. In reality, domestic workers are predominantly women and come from poor backgrounds; they are also more likely to belong to ethnic or racial minorities who have difficulty accessing the formal labour market (Van Nederveen Meerkerk et al. 2015, p. 4).

### **International Arrangements for Domestic Workers and The Practices in Other Countries**

In the international context, the regulation of domestic workers is a relatively new legal phenomenon. Domestic workers have only been recognised since 16 June 2011, when the Geneva Conference of the ILO adopted ILO Convention No. 189 on Domestic Workers. Prior to this, the rights of domestic workers were scattered in various soft and hard law instruments relating to the right to work, women's rights, and the protection of vulnerable groups. For example, Article 23(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) recognises that "Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment and paragraph (2) states that "Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work".

With the adoption of ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers, domestic workers around the world have received significant recognition (Mahanta & Gupta 2019). Legally, according to Article 1 (a) of ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers, domestic work is defined as “... work performed in or for a household or households”. The Convention also defines domestic workers in Article 1(b) as “...any person engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship”.

The Convention itself aims to ensure decent work for domestic workers, and also requires State Parties to adhere to certain labour standards when employing domestic workers (Mahanta & Gupta 2019). Essentially, the minimum standards that State Parties must follow to protect domestic workers are the fundamental rights of domestic workers, information on working conditions, working hours, wages, occupational health and safety, social security, standards for vulnerable groups (child domestic workers, live-in domestic workers, migrant domestic workers), private employment agencies, and dispute resolution, complaints, and enforcement (DPR RI 2020).

Today, many countries have followed the guidelines of the ILO Convention to create national legal frameworks to protect domestic workers. In India, for example, recognition of domestic workers is enshrined in legislation called the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act. The Act extends social security measures to domestic workers, such as life insurance, health, and maternity benefits, old age protection, and such other protection as may be prescribed by the Central government for domestic workers. Thus, the Act situates the relationship between the employer and the domestic worker in the context of paid domestic work, which falls within the domain of private households (Mahanta & Gupta 2019). The same trend can be seen in Latin America. While labour laws in most Latin American countries still do not provide equal rights for domestic workers, eight Latin American countries have made legal reforms related to domestic workers since 2010. Four of them (Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Uruguay) have recognised domestic workers as having the same rights as workers in general. The other four countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Peru) have made partial reforms in terms of recognition, for example in relation to limits on working hours (Blofield 2012).

In Southeast Asia, only the Philippines has ratified ILO Convention 189, incorporating it into Republic Act No. 10381 or known as *Batas Kasambahay*. Indonesia itself, although ILO Convention 189 is 12 years old, has

shown no sign of a policy to ratify the Convention. This contradicts the agenda of promoting recognition of the care economy, which was discussed when Indonesia hosted the G20 in 2022. On the other hand, efforts to push through the PPRT Bill as a form of embodiment of ILO Convention 189 also seem to be dragging on.

### **Stagnation in the Discussion of PPRT Bill**

The discourse on the need for a law on the protection of domestic workers is not really a new agenda. It stems from the shortcomings of existing national laws and regulations in protecting domestic workers. In the absence of specific provisions for the protection of domestic workers, issues of domestic workers' rights still refer to general laws. Some of these legal references are, for example, the Law on Manpower, Article 27(2) of the 1945 Constitution (UUD 1945); Articles 38, 49 and 64 of Law No. 39/1999 on Human Rights (Human Rights Act); Articles 6 and 7 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ratified by Law No. 11/2005 (KIHEsb). For example, Article 1(3) of Law No. 13/2003 on Manpower defines a worker as a person who receives wages or other forms of remuneration. This article tends to regulate formal employment relationships, so there is no specific regulation of the rights of domestic workers as workers who also receive wages.

The submission of PPRT Bill itself began in 2004. Since then, the Bill has been included in the National Legislation Programme of the Parliament in the period 2004-2009, and continued to be included in the Programme in the periods 2009-2014, 2014-2019, and 2019-2024, and has been listed as a priority Bill since 2020. To date, however, the PPRT Bill has not been enacted into law, raising the question of why it has taken so long to gain political acceptance. This is certainly contrary to human rights provisions, as the state has an obligation to fulfil the rights of its citizens to work and a decent livelihood by ensuring the protection of workers, wages, and decent working conditions, including for domestic workers.

On closer examination, the problems of domestic workers described above are closely linked to unequal class and gender relations. As many observers have pointed out, Indonesia's democratic and legal institutions have been hijacked by the interests of politico-economic elites with economic power who direct public policy as a means of defending their social class privileges (Robison & Hadiz 2004; Winters 2013; Wardana 2023). Meanwhile, other social groups, particularly women domestic workers, lack access to influence or even shape public policy. The recognition and protection of domestic workers' rights

is expected to have an impact on social groups with greater economic and political power and access to public policy-making processes that have benefited from unequal class and gender relations. This is reflected in the comments of Teddy Gusnadi, Spokesperson for the Garuda Party, who argues that if the PPRT Bill is passed, domestic workers will have to be paid in accordance with the laws and regulations that burden the employers, and decisions on whether or not to fire domestic workers will have to be made in accordance with the laws as well. For him, the relationship between domestic workers and employers must be based on local wisdom, so that not all domestic workers have to be equal and this is not a form of discrimination (Detiknews 2023). Merike Blofield (2012, p. 4) reveals that “legally and economically, the interests of domestic workers are at odds with the interests of their employers, who are from the middle, upper middle, and upper classes”. Therefore, the conflicting interests of employer groups and domestic workers, as well as unequal access to the legislative process, are obstacles to domestic worker protection policies.

Based on local discussions around the PPRT Bill, the state’s stance on addressing unequal power relations between employers and domestic workers is an indicator of the extent to which the state is fulfilling its responsibility to balance the interests of the rich and poor in society (Blofield 2012, p. 4). In Indonesia, the state must try to balance these interests by proposing the PPRT Bill. However, the government’s rationale for supporting the PPRT Bill has more to do with economic growth than the protection of human rights. For example, Jaleswari Pramodhawardani, Deputy V Political, Legal, Security, and Human Rights, Presidential Staff Office, argues that the passage of the PPRT Bill could have a knock-on effect by reducing unemployment in Indonesia as domestic workers would be included in labour statistics (KemenPPPA 2023). In the Parliament itself, on 8 December 2022, two major parties, Golkar and PDI-P, refused to include the Bill in the Parliament’s initiative draft, arguing that the protection of domestic workers was not an urgent issue (Utami 2022).

### **Crucial Issues in the PPRT Bill**

In this section, the discussion will focus on key provisions in the PPRT Bill. In this case, there are at least seven urgent issues that should be addressed in the PPRT Bill (Adyatama 2021). The seven issues are:

First, the categorisation of domestic workers. Problems with categorisation arise from the definition of domestic workers. In the academic paper, domestic

work is defined as “activities such as cleaning household appliances, washing clothes, caring for children including bathing and feeding, preparing food, cleaning the house, ironing clothes, and shopping” (Academic Paper n.d., p.10). On the basis of this definition, domestic work can be divided into two categories: a) Basic and additional work, which refers to the routine work that is carried out on a daily basis. b) Additional work, which is incidental work and additional to the main job.

Second, the terms and conditions of employment. These refer to the conditions that must be met in the relationship between the employer and the domestic worker, such as the working age limit, which should prohibit the employment of children. In the academic paper, the regulation on the age limit of domestic workers is aimed at prohibiting the employment of children under the age of 15. In addition, the age limit of 15-18 years is still possible if several conditions are met: a) a written permission from parents/guardians; b) an agreed working agreement from parents/guardians; c) shorter working hours than domestic workers aged 18 and over; d) not working until late at night; e) not endangering health, safety and/or morals; f) given the opportunity to learn; g) employed for light work that does not interfere with the development of physical, mental, and social health.

Working conditions are also linked to issues of recruitment and placement, so that domestic workers are employed according to their skills. Furthermore, the issue of employment relations is also highlighted in the context of domestic workers’ working conditions in order to recognise the unequal power relations between employers and domestic workers as people seeking work. Therefore, this relationship is directed towards formalisation through the requirement of an employment contract that regulates the rights and obligations of both parties involved in the employment relationship.

Third, the education and training of domestic workers. The education and training of domestic workers is an important aspect to pay attention to. This is because domestic workers need to continuously improve their skills through education and training. In addition, domestic workers can be empowered as part of the community.

Fourth, dispute resolution. Domestic workers and employers may have disputes in their labour relations. Therefore, the need to establish a dispute resolution mechanism that takes into account the existing unequal power relations is crucial for domestic workers to protect and fulfil their rights.

Fifth, guidance and supervision are responsibilities that must be borne by the state. In terms of guidance, the state is responsible for organising domestic workers protection, providing guidance to domestic workers providers, and socialising and evaluating domestic workers' protection policies (Academic Paper n.d., pp. 127-128). Supervision is also needed to "create conditions that support the smooth and accurate implementation of the obligations, duties, and responsibilities of both parties based on the agreed working agreement" (Academic Paper, n.d., p.128).

Sixth, job information and service providers. Job information is a necessity for prospective domestic workers to know the suitability of recruitment, placement, and the rights and obligations they will receive during the employment relationship. Without this information, domestic workers are vulnerable to being lured into jobs that do not meet their expectations. In the absence of accurate, complete, and timely information, domestic workers often become victims of trafficking. In this case, service providers have a responsibility to manage the flow of information, recruitment, demand, and placement of qualified domestic workers and to protect the rights of domestic workers.

Finally, sanctions against recruiters. It is not uncommon for recruiters to take advantage of domestic workers' lack of education and resources to exploit domestic workers for their own benefit. It is therefore necessary to impose sanctions on unscrupulous domestic workers recruiters who violate the rights of domestic workers.

Based on these 7 (seven) issues, the PPRT Bill will be analysed to understand how and to what extent the Bill is in line with the 5R Framework for Decent Care Work developed by the ILO to ensure legal protection for domestic workers. The 5R framework is: Recognise (recognition of the importance and value of care work), Reduce (reduction of drudgery), Redistribute (redistribution of care responsibilities), Reward (recognition of care work), and Represent (representation of domestic workers in organisations and decision-making) (ILO, n.d., pp. 17-18).

### **Recognition**

Reading the PPRT Bill, there are positive provisions that can contribute to the recognition of care work done by domestic workers. The positive content can be found in several provisions. One of them is as stated in Article 3 of the PPRT Bill regarding the objectives of the PPRT Bill.<sup>1</sup> This article starts from the background and recognition

of the fact that there are many cases of violence and exploitation against domestic workers, especially women, in Indonesia. In addition, many employers also treat domestic workers inhumanely by not employing them in accordance with their duties. This can be seen as a form of recognition of the care work done by domestic workers, who tend to be vulnerable. This is an improvement over the Manpower Law, which tends to be biased towards formal workers and gender-blind.

The PPRT Bill will also play a crucial role in recognising women's care work, which has been invisible until now. In conjunction with the National Long Term Development Plan (RPJPN) 2025-2045, which aims to increase women's participation from 53 per cent to 70 per cent in 2045, the enactment of the PPRT Bill will help achieve this goal. This is because the recognition of care work, including domestic work, is integrated into the dominant economic framework and development model that has so far excluded care work dominated by women workers. As the Philippines' experience shows, the recognition of domestic workers in the national labour system has contributed to the Philippines' rise in the Global Gender Gap Index (Ogaya 2020, p. 171).

### **Reduction**

Several provisions in the PPRT Bill also have the potential to promote the reduction of workloads and risks for domestic workers. Article 5(2) of the PPRT Bill requires a written employment agreement between prospective domestic workers and employers.<sup>2</sup> This is important because the existence of a written employment agreement can ensure the certainty of the domestic worker's employment status and minimise violations of the rights and obligations clearly set out in the employment agreement. The scope of work (Article 7) also aims to limit working hours and workload in the hope that domestic workers will not be required to do anything outside the scope of work and working hours specified.

A further contribution can be made by the provisions relating to the rights and obligations of employers, such as in Articles 11, 13, 14, 15 of the PPRT Bill. In this case, the employer has responsibilities as stated in Article 15 of the PPRT Bill, including: (a) comply with and implement all provisions of the employment agreement; (b) provide domestic workers with their rights in accordance with the employment agreement; (c) provide rest periods; (d) provide clear and correct information about the identity of the employer, their family members, details, and work procedures; (e) report the presence of domestic workers

working in their homes to RT/RW. On this basis, a written employment agreement that explicitly regulates the scope of work is an important tool to reduce excessive and risky forms of work.

### **Redistribution**

In fact, a domestic worker has a double domestic workload. In addition to domestic work in their work environment, domestic workers are also inextricably linked to domestic work and responsibilities within their own families. Therefore, they need to be guaranteed the right to work within a humane timeframe so that domestic workers can still fulfil their roles in their own households and also have time to rest. Strict provisions on employment agreement and guarantees of decent working hours and a clear scope of work are necessary to fulfil the rights of domestic workers to be free from exploitation by employers. This, in turn, will have a positive impact on the redistribution of work that is not covered by the employment agreement to the employer or transferred to other parties. Thus, the transfer of work outside the employment agreement will open up opportunities for other women workers in need.

### **Reward**

Reward for domestic workers is an important issue that will be regulated in the PPRT Law, as a consequence of the recognition of their contribution to social reproduction through care work. This will be regulated in the provisions on the rights of domestic workers, which will then have to be set out in the employment agreement, as stipulated in Articles 5, 8, and 15 of the PPRT Bill. One form of reward for domestic workers in the PPRT Bill is related to wages, benefits, health insurance, and social security, which are the rights of domestic workers as stipulated in Article 11 of the PPRT Bill.

The provision of reward also requires a dispute resolution mechanism if the reward for the domestic worker is not honoured by the party obliged to honour it. Article 26 of the PPRT Bill provides that disputes between domestic workers and employers should be resolved by consensus. Given the unequal power relations between the disputing parties, Article 27 provides for the possibility of resolving disputes with the assistance of a third party through a mediation mechanism. If this mechanism is unsuccessful, the parties can seek legal redress. Thus, the struggle of domestic workers to assert their rights to labour reward has been opened up by the PPRT Bill.

Equally important is the provision of sanctions for those who do not fulfil their obligations. Article 23 of the PPRT Bill<sup>3</sup> provides for the prohibition and administrative sanctions against domestic workers providers, which aims to protect the rights of domestic workers from irresponsible providers. In order to ensure the implementation of the law, a monitoring mechanism (Article 25 of the PPRT Bill) will be established to ensure the protection of domestic workers in case of violation.<sup>4</sup> Article 28 of the PPRT Bill contains a number of prohibitions aimed at protecting domestic workers from acts of discrimination, threats, harassment and/or other violence that are currently very common among domestic workers in Indonesia. Finally, there are criminal provisions (Articles 30-32 of the PRT Bill). These provisions are necessary to act as a deterrent to anyone who commits a violation relating to the protection of domestic workers.

### **Representation**

The academic paper of the PPRT Bill states that the rights and obligations of employers should be explicitly regulated. In this case, it includes the employer's obligation to provide domestic workers with freedom of association (Academic Paper n.d., p.122). However, the 2020 version of the PPRT Bill does not appear to explicitly include a guarantee of freedom of association for domestic workers. It is therefore important that the PPRT Bill guarantees and explicitly articulates the rights of association and dispute resolution mechanisms. This is important because with the right to organise and effective mechanisms, domestic workers can fight for their previously marginalised rights. This is also in line with ILO R204 recommendations on the transition from the informal to the formal economy. As domestic work is predominantly women's work, a guarantee of association for domestic workers would help to politically and organisationally empower domestic workers to actively participate in decision-making that affects them. This guarantee of association and participation for domestic workers is an embodiment of the ILO's 5R framework, particularly in terms of representation.

In short, in the context of the debate on the PPRT Bill, the above positive provisions to recognise and protect the rights of domestic workers will be viewed differently by those affected, especially employers. The clarity on status and working hours will certainly reduce the power of employers. In addition, the written nature of the employment agreement does not reflect the fact that the working relationship between domestic workers

and employers is more likely to be oral and based on local custom. As a paid employment relationship, it should follow a formal-rational relationship format through a written employment agreement to ensure certainty for both parties and to be able to create calculability and predictability in case of disputes.

Furthermore, some parties believe that criminal provisions are unnecessary. Teddy Gusnaldi of the Garuda Party, for example, argues that if the PPRT Bill aims to protect domestic workers from violence and other crimes, then law enforcement agencies can use other provisions relating to these crimes, so there is no need for specialisation for domestic workers because these crimes are also committed against other groups (Detiknews 2023). In the context of the ILO 5R framework, the threat of criminal sanctions for anyone who violates the criminal provisions of the PPRT Bill must be seen as a form of repressive legal protection in the reward and punishment scheme.

### **Substantive Strengthening of PPRT Bill**

Apart from the above positive provisions, which are relatively in line with the ILO's 5R principles, there are things that need to be strengthened and improved in the current draft. First, the PPRT Bill does not set a minimum age limit for domestic workers. This could create a loophole for employing children as domestic workers. In a patriarchal society, boys are preferred by families. When faced with the need to employ child domestic workers, the burden is most likely to fall on girls. Therefore, girls are more vulnerable to exploitation if there is no regulation on the minimum age of domestic workers.

Secondly, Article 11 of the PPRT Bill mentions wages and benefits for domestic workers. The article states that domestic workers are entitled to wages and holiday pay in accordance with the agreement with the employer. This wording suggests that the provision of wages does not yet refer to a clear standard for the amount of wages for domestic workers. This article seems to leave room for an agreement between the employer and the domestic worker, although given the unequal power relations, the results of this agreement tend to favour the employer, who has more power. Article 11 of ILO Convention 189 states the obligation of countries with a minimum wage system to ensure that domestic workers receive a minimum wage without discrimination on the basis of sex. So far, communication and negotiations on decent wages for domestic workers have been difficult because of the concerns of employers who may receive a salary at the regional minimum wage (UMR) to pay domestic

workers the same amount. Holiday pay is generally paid at the rate of one month's salary. However, the PPRT Bill does not explain how much employers should give domestic workers in terms of holiday pay. It is hoped that the negotiations on wages and benefits will lead to a meeting point that can balance the interests of both domestic workers and employers.

Thirdly, Article 11(b) states that working hours shall be humane. This is not clear because it does not specify the number of hours, leaving room for different interpretations. Therefore, this article needs to take into account possible working hours for domestic workers, such as four hours per day for part-time domestic workers and eight hours per day for full-time domestic workers. In order to take into account the different practices in relation to domestic workers, it could be stated that the provisions on working hours and the status of domestic workers should be regulated in more operational provisions, such as government regulations.

Regarding the recruitment of domestic workers, Article 5(1) of the Bill states that direct recruitment of prospective domestic workers shall be carried out on the basis of an agreement between the prospective domestic worker and the employer. Article 5(2), indirect recruitment of prospective domestic workers referred to in Article 4 (3) shall be carried out with a written employment agreement between the prospective domestic worker and the employer. It should be noted that while a written agreement is valid evidence and can be used if there is a discrepancy between the agreement and its implementation, the written agreement only applies to domestic workers recruited indirectly through domestic worker providers. Meanwhile, directly recruited domestic workers are not required to use a written agreement. This puts directly recruited domestic workers in a more vulnerable position than those recruited through providers.

In India, domestic worker providers are required to have a registered legal entity under the Shops and Commercial Establishment Act 1953, and irresponsible providers are subject to administrative sanctions in the form of licence cancellation as well as criminal sanctions (Mahanta & Gupta 2019, p. 10). Furthermore, Mahanta and Gupta (2019, p. 10) argue that a comprehensive law to protect domestic workers can only be understood if there is a well-researched database that provides certain definitive indicators of the complexity of the domestic worker problem. Therefore, it is important to have a centralised database on domestic workers to facilitate policymaking based on the realities and

empirical conditions of domestic workers on the ground. The requirement for providers to be legal entities is one means of obtaining information on domestic workers to build the database needed to protect domestic workers. This is something that Indonesia should emulate in order to develop a database on domestic workers needed to formulate evidence-based policies.

In addition, the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act in India mandates the Central government to establish a task force called the National Policy on Domestic Workers to develop pro-domestic workers policies (Mahanta & Gupta 2019, p. 2). The National Policy on Domestic Workers also recognises the right of domestic workers to organise and form trade unions, as stated in Section 4.3 (Mahanta & Gupta 2019, p. 5). In the PPRT Bill, the content of the right to organise and form trade unions, as well as provisions related to special institutions to develop policies to protect domestic workers, is a necessity, as well as an institution to monitor the implementation of the law.

At the time of writing, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA) is developing a Roadmap and National Action Plan for the Care Economy with reference to the 5Rs. In addition, the Care Economy Framework for 2024--2028 is being developed into the RPJMN for 2025--2029 with 7 priority strategy points, viz: 1. Care and childcare services, 2. Long-term and elderly services, 3. Inclusive services for disabled and vulnerable groups, 4. Maternity leave, 5. Paternity leave, 6. Decent work for care workers, 7. Social protection for the care economy. In point 6, decent work for care workers includes childcare workers, carers for the elderly, carers for people with disabilities, community care workers, including domestic workers. This shows that there is a dominant discourse on the care economy within the government itself. However, the policy will be difficult to implement effectively if there is no legal framework at national level that specifically regulates care work, especially domestic workers as one of its spearheads. Therefore, the struggle for the PPRT Bill should also be a struggle for the government to be able to implement policies related to the care economy.

## Closing

Domestic workers are in a very vulnerable position because domestic worker issues are closely linked to the unequal class and gender relations that exist in society. Class inequality places domestic workers in the working class, providing services to the more powerful employer class. Furthermore, in a society with unequal gender

relations, women who are conditioned in the domestic sphere are undervalued because they do not contribute to the production process. Given this reality, the problems faced by domestic workers have not yet become part of mainstream discourse, let alone translated into public policies that provide them with legal protection. In many places, domestic workers are not seen as workers with the same rights as formal workers. In the absence of a legal framework to claim their rights, domestic workers are one of the most vulnerable groups of workers to discrimination, violence and exploitation.

In Indonesia, given the complexity of domestic workers' issues, advocacy for a law on the protection of domestic workers began almost two decades ago. One of them is the submission of the Draft Law on the Protection of Domestic Workers in 2004. However, to date, the draft law has not been enacted. As a result, domestic workers remain excluded from legal protection and effective mechanisms to enforce their rights.

As described above, using the ILO's 5R framework to review the PPRT Bill, several conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, the 2020 version of the PPRT Bill has at least reflected the agenda of recognising the care work done by domestic workers, especially women; encouraging efforts to redistribute domestic work; reducing the scope of work and working hours of domestic workers to make them more humane; and rewarding domestic workers for their contributions to society and sanctioning those who violate the rights of domestic workers. Secondly, the PPRT Bill does not explicitly provide space and guarantees for domestic workers to associate in order to strengthen their organisational capacity and representation in public policy-making processes that affect domestic workers. Thirdly, the right to association and certainty regarding wage standards need to be considered in order to strengthen the legal protection provisions for domestic workers in the PPRT Bill.

## Bibliography

- Adyatama, E. 2021. "7 Alasan Kenapa RUU Perlindungan PRT Harus Disahkan", accessed on 30 October 2023, at <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1472928/7-alasan-kenapa-ruu-perlindungan-prt-harus-disahkan>.
- Bridget, A. & Davidson, J. O. 2003. *Is Trafficking in Human Beings Demand Driven? A Multi-Country Pilot Study*. International Organisation for Migration (IOM): Geneva, accessed on 25 October 2023, at [https://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/ER-2004-Trafficking\\_Demand\\_Driven\\_IOM.pdf](https://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/ER-2004-Trafficking_Demand_Driven_IOM.pdf).
- Blofield, M. 2012. *Care Work and Class: Domestic Workers' Struggle for Equal Rights in Latin America*. The Pennsylvania State University Press: Pennsylvania.

Centre for Indonesian Law and Policy Studies. n.d. Academic Paper on Draft Domestic Workers Law.

DetikNews. 2023. "Partai Garuda Tolak RUU Perlindungan Pekerja Rumah Tangga, ini Alasannya", accessed on 30 October 2023, at <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-6566081/partai-garuda-tolak-ruu-perlindungan-pekerja-rumah-tangga-ini-alasannya>.

Dhewy, A. 2018. "Perempuan dan Ekonomi Perawatan", *Jurnal Perempuan* 23(4), p. lii, accessed on 14 November 2023, at <https://indonesianfeministjournal.org/index.php/IFJ/article/view/278/274>.

Federici, S. 2012. *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle*. PM Press: California, New York.

Gerstel, N. 2000. "The Third Shift: Gender and Care Work Outside the Home", *Qualitative Sociology*, Vol. 23 (4), pp. 467-483. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005530909739>.

House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI). 2020. *Meeting Notes of the Legislation Body's Public Hearing Meeting to Listen to Input/Views from Resource Persons on the Bill on the Protection of Domestic Workers*, accessed on 25 October 2023, at <https://www.dpr.go.id/dokakd/dokumen/BALEG-RJ-20200622-042407-1772.pdf>.

Indonesia.go.id. 2022. "Indonesia Soroti Isu Perawatan tidak Berbayar pada Kaum Perempuan", accessed on 14 December 2023, at <https://indonesia.go.id/g20/kategori/kabar-terkini-g20/6103/indonesia-soroti-isu-perawatan-tidak-berbayar-pada-kaum-perempuan?lang=1>.

International Labour Organization (ILO). Convention No. 189, 2011 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers.

International Labour Organization (ILO). Recommendation No. 204 on the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy.

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2015. "Pekerja Rumah Tangga Indonesia", accessed on 20 October 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-jakarta/documents/presentation/wcms\\_553078.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-jakarta/documents/presentation/wcms_553078.pdf).

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2018. "Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work", accessed on 14 November 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/-ddcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_633166.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/-ddcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_633166.pdf).

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2020. "RDP Badan Legislasi DPR RI: RUU Perlindungan Pekerja Rumah Tangga", accessed on 30 October 2023, at <https://www.dpr.go.id/dokakd/dokumen/BALEG-RJ-20200622-042906-9061.pdf>.

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2021. "Making Decent Work a Reality for Domestic Workers", accessed on 14 December 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms\\_802551.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms_802551.pdf).

Jala PRT. 2023. "Tidak Ada Toleransi Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan", *instagram.com*, accessed on 14 December 2023, at <https://www.instagram.com/p/C0gdPuQyDZH/?hl=id>.

KemenPPPA. 2023. "Menteri PPA Dukung Semangat Kekeluargaan dan Gotong Royong Lindungi PRT Melalui Pengesahan RUU PPRT", accessed on 30 October 2023, at [https://www.kemenpppa.go.id/index.php/page/read/29/4354/menteri-pppa-dukung-semangat-](https://www.kemenpppa.go.id/index.php/page/read/29/4354/menteri-pppa-dukung-semangat-kekeluargaan-dan-gotong-royong-lindungi-prt-melalui-pengesahan-ruu-pprt)

[kekeluargaan-dan-gotong-royong-lindungi-prt-melalui-pengesahan-ruu-pprt](https://www.kemenpppa.go.id/index.php/page/read/29/4354/menteri-pppa-dukung-semangat-kekeluargaan-dan-gotong-royong-lindungi-prt-melalui-pengesahan-ruu-pprt).

Kreps, J. M. 1971. *Sex in the Marketplace: American Women at Work*. Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, MD.

Levit, N. & Verchick, R. 2016. *Feminist Legal Theory: A Primer, 2nd<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. New York University Press: New York.

Mackinnon, C. 1979. *Sexual Harassment of Working Women: A Case of Sex Discrimination*. Yale University Press: USA.

Mahanta, U. & Gupta, I. 2019. *Recognition of the Rights of Domestic Workers in India: Challenges and the Way Forward*. Springer: Singapore.

National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan). 2022. "Siaran Pers Komnas Perempuan Peringatan Hari Pekerja Rumah Tangga (PRT) Nasional", accessed on 19 October 2023, at <https://komnasperempuan.go.id/siaran-pers-detail/siaran-pers-komnas-perempuan-peringatan-hari-pekerja-rumah-tangga-prt-nasional>.

National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan). 2023. "Lembar Fakta Catatan Tahunan Komnas Perempuan Tahun 2023 Kekerasan terhadap Perempuan di Ranah Publik dan Negara: Minimnya Pelindungan dan Pemulihan", accessed on 19 October 2023, at <https://komnasperempuan.go.id/download-file/949>.

National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM). 2022. "Kajian Kebijakan Ratifikasi Konvensi International Labour Organization (ILO) No. 189 tentang Pekerjaan Yang Layak Bagi Pekerja Rumah Tangga", accessed on 20 October 2023, at <https://www.komnasham.go.id/files/20230508-kajian-kebijakan-ratifikasi-konvensi-189.pdf>.

Ogaya, C. 2020. "The Rights Movement for Domestic Workers in the Philippines Its Local and Transnational Path to Decent Work", *In Revue internationale des études du développement*, Vol. 242(2), pp. 169-189. DOI:10.3917/ried.242.0169.

Republic of Indonesia. Law Number 13 Year 2003 on Manpower. Supplement to the State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Number 4279.

Robison, R. & Hadiz, V. 2004. *Reorganising Power in Indonesia: The Politics of Oligarchy in an Age of Markets*. Routledge Curzon: London.

Scales, A. C. 1987. "The Emergence of Feminist Jurisprudence: An Essay", *The Yale Law Journal*, Vol. 95 (7), pp. 1373-1403. <https://doi.org/10.2307/796562>.

Sigiro, A. N., Primaldhi, A., & Takwin, B. 2018. "Ekonomi Perawatan dan Beban Kerja Ibu Rumah Tangga di Indonesia", *Jurnal Perempuan*, Vol. 24 (4), pp. 249-258, accessed on 14 November 2023, at <https://indonesianfeministjournal.org/index.php/IFJ/article/view/278/274>.

UN Women. 2018. "Promoting Women's Economy Empowerment: Recognizing and Investing in the Care Economy", *unwomen.org*, accessed on 2 November 2023, at <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2018/Issue-paper-Recognizing-and-investing-in-the-care-economy-en.pdf>.

Utami, E. 2022. "Membongkar Bias Kelas dalam Pembahasan RUU Perlindungan PRT, PRT Lancarkan 'Bom' Panci", *Konde (online)*, accessed on 2 November 2023, at <https://www.konde.co/2022/01/bongkar-bias-kelas-dalam-pembahasan-ruu-perlindungan-prt-prt-lancarkan-bom-panci.html/>.

van Nederveen M. E. et al. 2015. "Domestic Workers of the World: Histories of Domestic Work as Global *Labour History*", *Labour History*. DOI:10.1163/9789004280144\_002.

Wardana, A. 2023. "Governing Through Courts? Law and the Political-Economy of Climate Change Litigation in Indonesia", *Verfassung un Recht in Übersee*, Vol. 56 (2), pp. 351-370.

Winters, J. 2013. "Oligarchy and Democracy in Indonesia", *Indonesia*, Vol. 96, pp. 11-33. <https://doi.org/10.5728/indonesia.96.0099>.

### (Endnotes)

1 Article 3 of the PPRT Bill: Protection of domestic workers aims to: a. Provide legal certainty to domestic workers and employers; b. Prevent all forms of discrimination, exploitation

and harassment of domestic workers; c. Organise harmonious working relationships by upholding human values and justice; d. Improve the knowledge, expertise and skills of domestic workers; and e. Improve the welfare of domestic workers.

2 Article 5(2) of the PPRT Bill: The indirect recruitment of prospective domestic workers referred to in Article 4(3) shall be carried out with a written employment agreement between the prospective domestic worker and the employer.

3 Article 29 of the PPRT Bill: Domestic workers providers are prohibited from: a. Providing false information to employers about their business and about prospective domestic workers; and/or b. Intimidating and using violence against prospective domestic workers or domestic workers.

4 Article 30 of the PPRT Bill: Employers who discriminate, threaten, harass and/or use physical and non-physical violence against domestic workers referred to in Article 28 shall be punished with a maximum of 8 (eight) years imprisonment or a maximum fine of IDR 125,000,000 (one hundred and twenty-five million rupiah).



## Women's Work and State Policies: Contending Paid and Unpaid Care

**Sri Wiyanti Eddyono**

Centre for Law, Gender and Society Studies, Faculty of Law, Gadjah Mada University  
Department of Criminal Law, Faculty of Law, Gadjah Mada University  
Jalan Sosio Yustisia Number 1, Bulaksumur, Sleman, DI Yogyakarta 55281

sriwiyanti.eddyono@ugm.ac.id

Manuscript Chronology: received 22 November 2023, revised 10 December 2023, accepted 24 December 2023

### Abstract

Paid and unpaid care work has regained prominence in national and international forums as a pivotal issue affecting the low participation of women in development. Despite being predominantly carried out by women, care work remains inadequately recognized and undervalued, especially at the policy level. This paper delves into the reasons behind the lack of attention to care work issues at the national level. It explores the extent of gender ideology implications on state policies related to care work. The research employs desk review and self-reflection based on the author's experience facilitating discussions on care work issues. The analysis reveals a policy gap in Indonesia concerning care work, influenced by the ambiguity of the state's gender ideology. Consequently, gender transformation has not been a central focus in care policies, and the legitimacy of women's roles in unpaid work tends to be reinforced.

Keywords: care work, economic care, gender ideology, gender transformation

### Introduction

In October 2021, ASEAN adopted the ASEAN Comprehensive Framework on Care Economy in response to Covid-19 (ASEAN 2021).<sup>1</sup> The document emphasises that during the Covid-19 pandemic, care work, health care, and the role of women in the family and at home are important contributors. Therefore, this issue needs to be prioritised in the development of ASEAN countries. This finding is not very different from the results of studies done by international organisations such as UN Women (2020), ILO or Oxfam (2020) on the importance of paying attention to care work. To date, development, especially economic development, has been based on work in the public sphere. Economic development is seen as separate and does not take place in the domestic space. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the work situation changed. The office moved to home, so that home became both a place of paid work and a place where care work was carried out. This shows that care work affects and supports the family economy. Other public activities that moved to home during the Covid-19 pandemic were education and teaching. In addition, home also became an independent health care unit for each family member, considering that the hospital's priority at that time was focused on Covid-19. In a pandemic situation, there was a fusion, home becomes the centre of public and

domestic activities. This has an impact on increasing the role of care, especially for women. This also highlights the problem of gender inequality in care work, which existed long before Covid-19.

Beghini et al (2019), in their study published by the ILO, found that there is an imbalance in the number of women engaged in unpaid care work compared to men. According to the study, women account for 606 million people or 21.7 per cent, more than men with 41 million people or 1.5 per cent doing unpaid care work. They calculated that, based on the standard seven working days, women use 201 working days per year to provide care, while men use 63 working days per year. The problem is that women's contribution to unpaid care work is not taken into account, even though data from 64 countries show that unpaid care work contributed an economic value of 16.4 billion per hour per day. Thus, women have actually contributed a third of the total value, which is equivalent to 2 billion people working full-time (40 hours per week) without pay (Beghini et al. 2019).

Under Covid-19 conditions, this imbalance in unpaid care work was even more pronounced (UN Women 2020). While both men's and women's contributions to domestic care work increased, the gap between women's and men's care work time remained. UN Women (2020) and Villanueva et al. (2020) analyse that traditional gender

roles are still strongly held by society. This is due to social assumptions and practices that interpret care roles as the primary responsibility of women.

The issue of care work is not new to the women's movement in Indonesia. Care work as work associated with women, referring to work in the domestic sector, is one of the issues considered by the women's movement as an obstacle to gender equality and justice (Eddyono 2022). As a result, there have been various initiatives by women's civil society organisations to promote a more equitable division of labour between men and women in the household. However, these activities have not been widespread and have not been fully supported by government policies (Eddyono 2022).

This research examines the extent to which the Indonesian government is addressing the issue of care work. Care work has become a regional and international issue. It has even been discussed at the ASEAN level and in the G20 forum. Indonesia is even seen as a country pushing for care work to be an important agenda item in the G20 forum. However, the extent to which the agenda is integrated at the policy level in Indonesia remains to be seen. The author argues that the issue of care work or domestic work is not considered important and has not been included as a priority policy for the government. This is due to the contradictory gender ideology of the state. On the one hand, the state wants to encourage women's participation in the economy and more active development for the sake of economic acceleration in Indonesia. On the other hand, gender construction still perpetuates the notion that household and domestic responsibilities are women's primary work.

### **Research Methodology**

The research used desk review and internal reflection methods. The desk review was carried out by analysing government documents, government programmes, and studies available on the internet. The data was then processed with observations made while participating in various consultations on care work organised by civil society and international organisations such as Oxfam and ILO in 2022-2023.

### **Care Work and Gender Transformation**

The terms care work, unpaid care, paid care, and care economy are contested terms with paradoxical dimensions (Eddyono 2022; Kabeer 2008). Eddyono (2022) analyses that these terms have emerged from various critiques of the strong dichotomy between

domestic work and work in the public sphere. Domestic work is described as reproductive work associated with women, while public activities are productive work that is the domain of men (Eddyono 2022; Kabeer 2008). Reproductive work is understood as work that, although indirect, is a prerequisite for the production of something (Villanueva et al. 2020). Meanwhile, productive work is connoted as work that has a monetary dimension (Kabeer 2008); such as working in an office, working in a factory, and working in the government sector.

Productive work is considered to require certain skills. Productive work has performance calculations that are used as a standard by companies/employers to promote and/or grant certain career advancements. In patriarchal societies, reproductive work is often associated with women as something that is taken for granted and considered unpaid work (Kabeer 2008; Power 2020). For example, reproductive work such as caring for children, educating children, caring for the sick or the elderly is identified and assigned to women. Other reproductive work includes domestic activities, from shopping and cooking to provide food for the family, washing and ironing to ensure clean clothes for work at the office, cleaning the house to ensure cleanliness and health, and many other practices. This reproductive work is also known as care work (ILO 2018; Chopra & Krishnan 2022).

Feminist theories and previous research suggest that women's participation in the public sphere, including participation in paid work, is relatively low. This is due to women's attachment to domestic work (Kabeer 2008). This results in a disproportionate division of labour between men and women (Chopra & Krishnan 2022). Opening up women's access to paid work is therefore important in an effort to empower women in the world of work. Women's access to paid work makes them more independent and increases their bargaining power with men (including their husbands), their families, and their environment (Kabeer 2008). Kabeer also argues that it is important for women to leave their homes because it exposes them to different ways of life and gives them more control over their lives. However, access to the outside world and participation in the productive economy alone does not necessarily lead to gender justice. If women are involved in the productive economy, but the double burden of care work is not recognised, reduced, and redistributed in a balanced way, it is very likely that women will be excluded from productive work.

The idea of promoting women's participation in the labour market is of concern to feminists and gender justice activists (Kabeer 2008). But the question is, if

women are involved in productive work, to whom is this reproductive work delegated? Especially in unequal power relations, women who have worked in the public sector do not necessarily escape their role in the domestic sector. They do double work and do not always have the privilege to delegate to other parties, let alone husbands (Observation of the "I WILL" Project evaluation seminar, Oxfam, 15 June 2023).

In the Covid-19 situation this dilemma was even more apparent. Women's role in family care work was performed at the same time as office work, making it difficult to delegate work to others. At the same time, isolation becomes a challenge for working women (Power 2020; UN Women 2022). When such work is done by a wife, mother, and female family member, it is considered unpaid care. For women who do productive work and have economic privilege, they have the option of delegating their role to others, such as domestic workers. When the work is transferred to another person who is delegated to replace the role of wife, mother, or other female members, the work becomes paid care work. This paid care work is relatively performed by women, as it is work that is closely associated with women's 'skills'. The work of delegation has a transnational dimension (Yeates 2005), not only for women who work in the public sector in their own country. It is also true for women migrant workers. Migrant workers leave childcare to neighbours and extended family.

There are issues with the delegation of care tasks. While economically independent women have greater opportunities and advantages to delegate their roles to others, such as domestic workers, relatives who are incentivised to babysit, or day-care centres for working mothers to undertake domestic care work, including childcare. There are issues of vulnerability on the part of those who receive such delegation of care tasks (Observation, parallel discussion to the ASEAN Consultation on Gender Equitable Care Work organised by Oxfam and Kalyanamitra, 14 March 2023). It is worth considering that care work is often delegated to other women who are more economically disadvantaged, or who are lower class (Yeates 2005). A problem facing domestic workers in Indonesia today is the lack of adequate wage standards or well-paid day-care workers (UN Women 2022). This is due to the notion that care work is unskilled labour, and as a result care work is not considered to be of high value, which implies low wages (Chopra & Krishnan 2022). What is important about the phenomenon of care work delegation is that the practice does not necessarily change women's gender relations

with men. Although delegation of care work provides a great opportunity for women to 'enjoy' activities in the public sphere like men in general, it leaves a problem of inequality for women who do paid care work.

Is the delegation of care responsibilities sufficient to promote women's economic empowerment? Especially when social understandings and practices still perpetuate the association of care work with women. According to the author, the expected gender transformation and gender justice in the context of work is indicated by a shift in the meaning and appreciation of reproductive work as work that is valued and considered important by society. In a capitalist society, the calculation of value is always linked to economic calculations. There is a view that if maintenance work is to be understood and accepted as valuable work, then even unpaid work needs to be economically quantified. In this way, the contribution of maintenance work to productive work can be seen, so that its direct impact and contribution to the economy can be appreciated. Given this relationship, paid or unpaid care work needs to be recognised as work done by "workers" as work in the care economy (ILO 2018). But again, the context of the care economy is not simple. It requires a deeper and broader analysis, which needs to be seen in different contexts and not just through an economic approach (Yeates 2005).<sup>2</sup>

The economic approach suggests that care work can and has the potential to contribute to the global economy by placing care work outside the family; day-care centres that recruit and create jobs for care workers (Power 2020). However, on closer examination, care work is not just about task-shifting and economic dimensions, but also involves interactional roles between and within families that cannot be outsourced to third parties when producing food, caring for children, caring for the elderly or doing other care work (Power 2020). There is a connectedness that makes care work valuable and of high quality.

### Care Work Policy and Gender Ideology in Indonesia

So how should the issue of paid care, unpaid care, economic care be promoted, especially in the Indonesian context? Of course, the answer is not easy, mainly because of the paradoxes that arise, especially at the level of state policy. The very basic state policy, namely Law No. 1 /1974 on Marriage, still standardises women's gender roles, and this policy underlies various policies that have emerged since then in relation to women's roles. This law represents the state's ideology about family and women's traditional gender roles. Although there have been

efforts to encourage women to escape the trap of their traditional gender roles, especially since the reform, and there have been policy changes related to the protection of women in gender-based violence (Eddyono 2019), marriage policy and women's roles have not changed, as explained below.

Since Law No. 1/1974 on Marriage (UUP), the role of women as domestic workers has been standardised (Hadiz & Eddyono 2003). Women are said to have the role of housewives and are obliged to carry out household duties. Failure to fulfil her duties then becomes the basis for the husband to divorce her, as stated in Articles 31, 34 and 35 of the UUP.

To date, the articles relating to the standardisation of gender roles have not been revised and there is no discourse to change them. In 2009, Indonesia passed Law No. 52/2009 on Population and Family Development, which states that gender equality is the basis for family development in Indonesia. However, the law does not emphasise the need to change the roles of men and women. Gender equality is not further elaborated in family practice. Eddyono (2019) analyses that the state's gender ideology continues to fluctuate. Although on the one hand the state has used the framework of women's empowerment, the concept of women's empowerment is still unclear. Wieringa (2015) also analyses the push and pull of the state's ideology, from women's empowerment back to gender harmony, which leads to traditional notions of gender.

The complexity of the issue of the care economy intersects with the lack of clarity of the country's gender ideology, making the Indonesian Government stutter (fail) in responding to the issue of the care economy. The government's response is inconsistent, scattered, and contradictory. For example, the care economy has been included in Goal 5 of the SDGs, Target 5.4: "recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate". This policy stresses the importance of "recognising and valuing unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure, and social protection policies, and promoting shared responsibility within the household and family, as appropriate at national level".

Although Indonesia has developed a Sustainable Development Goals Roadmap 2023-2030, the Indonesian Government has not included Goal 5.4 in Indonesia's SDGs priorities for the next five years. Indonesia has two

priorities in Goal 5, namely the proportion of children and adolescents at an increasing age of marriage and the proportion of women in leadership positions. One of the recommendations in the roadmap is to "provide work flexibility, including flexibility of working time and workplace, to support women's work-life balance". This is expected to help women to remain productive in their careers while managing the demands of personal and family life (Bappenas 2023). This means that on the one hand, the government is encouraging an increase in the number of women in leadership positions in the workplace, but on the other hand, there is pressure to balance work with the demands and roles of women in the family. The existence of this document shows the government's inability to analyse the problems faced by women working in the public sphere, namely the demands of gender roles that are ignored. The lack of support for a fair division of labour, including the delegation of unpaid care work, is a major challenge for women to reach leadership positions in their field of work. The prioritisation and approach to SDG Goal 5 with the two priorities above, and without linking to Goal 4, actually shows the neglect of the core of Goal 5: achieving gender equality and empowering women.

Another issue reflected in the state's policy is the existence of the Mother and Child Welfare Bill (RUU KIA), which places the central role of mothers (women) in the family development (DPR RI 2022). This Bill is an initiative of the Parliament and has been discussed with the government. The positioning of women as the main actors in the family is very visible in the various proposed articles. One of them is a proposal to increase maternity leave for working mothers/women from three to six months.

Although this Bill begins to give men/husbands and fathers a role in childcare, the 40 days of accompanying leave is not balanced with the amount of maternity leave. The 6-month leave period consists of 3 months paid leave and 75% paid leave for the following 3 months. This provision creates a dilemma for workers (Kompas 2022). It is possible that companies will be reluctant to hire women as full-time employees because the burden of providing leave for maternity will be borne by the company alone. As a result, women will work more as flexible workers to overcome childcare difficulties (Blair-Loy et al. 2015). Flexible working prevents women from reaping the full benefits of full-time employment. These contradictions result in policies that appear to recognise and respond to the needs of women workers, but do not. In fact, this policy design tends to place women in a

dilemma. They are forced to choose between continuing their careers or taking care of their children, given that 6 months is a long time and takes women out of public life. Moreover, the environment has not changed to make women the main carers of children.

In addition, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA) also prioritises the existence of child-friendly day-care. This can be seen in the preparation of policies and programmes issued by the Ministry, including Permen PPPA No. 5/2015 on the Provision of Gender-Responsive and Child-Friendly Work Facilities in the Workplace, Perpres No. 25/2021 on Child-Friendly District/City Policy, and Permen PPPA No. 12/2022 on the Implementation of Child-Friendly District/City.<sup>3</sup> In the Strategic Plan 2020-2024, the Ministry targets the availability of Child Friendly Day-care in 15 ministries/institutions. The Ministry has also developed the Indonesian National Standard (SNI) for Childcare, which is used as a minimum standard. In the Preamble of Permen PPPA No. 5/2015, it is mentioned that the role of childcare is not only the responsibility of women, but requires care and is the responsibility of the family and everyone in the environment. Therefore, in order to support working women, there is a need for gender-responsive support, including places for breastfeeding mothers and day-care. However, the existence of day-care centres is again only for female workers, not for male workers. On the one hand, this policy can be an affirmation for women workers, but on the other hand, it closes off the possibility for men who also have caring responsibilities to send their children to day-care. This policy has not supported participation or efforts to promote an equal division of roles between men and women in access to childcare facilities. This is not in line with the considerations that the care and upbringing of children should not be the sole responsibility of women.

On the one hand, the Ministry's prioritisation of day-care seems to support women in delegating childcare tasks while they work. This is also provided that the company eventually provides the facility. On the other hand, the issue of day-care at the workplace is not always appropriate in practice, as the workplace may be far from home and there may be special needs for transporting children. The cost of transporting children and the time spent with them, especially if the workplace is far away, becomes an additional burden for workers. Moreover, when the woman returns home, it does not change the fact that the child is still dependent on her care. The day-care programme does not change the power relations between husband and wife, nor does it change the roles

of husband and wife. The day-care programme only transfers women's roles to other parties, which in women's workplaces actually increases the burden on women workers in the eyes of their companies/workplaces.

Not to mention that the monitoring of the normative rights of women workers, namely three months' leave, is relatively not fully effective. Women's right to be pregnant is still restricted, as the ILO found in its research that around 4 out of 25 workers hide their pregnancy because of restrictions in their employment contract (ILO 2022).<sup>4</sup>

So how can the complexity of different care issues be unravelled in the future? According to the author, it is important to eliminate the dichotomy of women's public and domestic roles and the standardisation of gender roles in policy. The dichotomy of public and domestic roles for men and women needs to be unravelled and eliminated. This means that this dichotomy stems from the unclear gender ideology of the state. If the state's gender ideology is one of women's empowerment, then its policies must be consistent with policies that support gender equality and equity. This includes policies that balance the roles of men and women in the public and domestic spheres. This is important, given that there is currently a clear disproportionality between men and women in the role of being responsible for care work (Chopra & Krishnan 2022). Another issue that needs to be considered is that the government is not single, but diverse (Eddyono, 2019). This is demonstrated by the fact that the issues raised and prioritised by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment are not necessarily considered important by other institutions. For example, the existence of an SDG document that omits care work as a priority in the indicators on SDG 5 outcomes compiled by the Bappenas shows the diversity of views and the lack of connection between one ministry and another.

Several frameworks for equitable care work have been developed by different parties. For example, Chopra & Krishnan and Oxfam International (2022) have emphasised the importance of the Triple R, namely Recognise, Reduce, and Redistribute, in promoting gender-responsive quality of care. Meanwhile, the ILO has added two important elements to the Triple R, namely Reward and Representation (ILO 2018; Eddyono 2023). Triple R is based on several considerations and principles. Firstly, care work is very important and needs to be increased in number and strengthened in quality for families, society, and the world (Chopra & Krishnan 2022). The care crisis is seen as reducing the quality of human life. Recognising the value of care work is therefore crucial. This includes recognising care workers as decent

workers (ILO 2018). Secondly, Chopra and Krisnan (2022) emphasise the principle of gender transformation, that the disproportionality of women’s care roles needs to be reduced and then redistributed to other parties in order to achieve equal gender relations. The division of domestic work is fundamental to all efforts to support women’s participation in public life, especially in the world of work. The reduction and redistribution of this role through the existence of care infrastructure, protection/social security, care services, and labour policies related to care (Chopra & Krisnan 2022; ILO 2018).

In addition to the Triple R, the ILO stresses the importance of respect for care work and care workers to encourage more people to do care work, not just women. Representation of care workers is also considered very important to promote the full participation of care workers, especially women, the formation of care workers’ organisations, and constructive social dialogue to further improve the quality of care work and the well-being of care workers (Eddyono 2022).

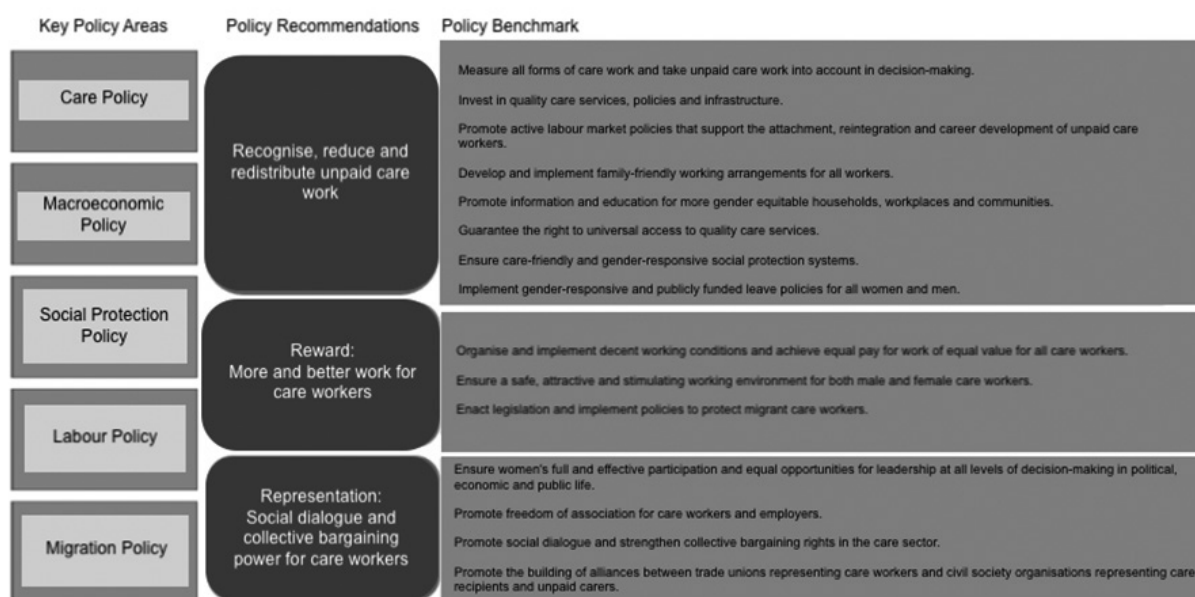


Chart 4, ILO's policy framework on care work

Figure 1. ILO's Policy Framework on Care Work

Source: Eddyono 2022

The Triple R plus 2R or 5R framework can unravel the complexities and contradictions of policies and responses to efforts to increase women’s participation. The key word is care work transformed into gender justice. Gender transformation requires that any programme developed addresses aspects of changing roles and more equitable power relations. Strategic gender approaches and programmes need to be developed, not just practical gender. The author reflects that there are a number of things that need to be considered in policy making to support gender justice for women in the world of work:

First, while the provision of day-care can be a starting point as a practical gender solution, it is not enough. Especially if the provision of day-care is emphasised, imposed, and managed in the workplace only for women workers. Day-care must open up space for the

involvement of both parents in the placement of children in day-care, before and after the children are left in day care. Day-care is important not only for women but also for men. The development of diverse day-care is adapted to the social context, such as community-based day-care, which further strengthens the division of roles between individuals and community involvement in childcare (Eddyono 2023). Day-care organisations also need to consider the gender diversity of workers or caregivers in order to create an inclusive environment. In addition, day-care workers need to be recognised and their welfare guaranteed. Finally, it is important to present a day-care module that socialises gender equality education from an early age, as the content must become a learning standard.

Second, the shift in emphasis from maternity leave to parental leave. Parental leave puts mothers and

fathers on an equal footing in employment agreements and policies. The implication is that companies can be more equitable in their recruitment of workers. Parental policies can prevent labour market aversion/exclusion of women workers. Both male and female workers are equally likely to take parental leave, as both have caring responsibilities. According to the author, parental leave is strongly linked to the principle of equal roles within the family and in childcare.

Third, of course, the provision of parental leave should not be the burden of one party, namely the employer. Given that care work has far-reaching implications for public welfare and the formation and strengthening of a quality population and society, the provision of family leave must be a social protection system. The state should play a role by providing social security or incentives for providers of leave. A social security and reward system should also be established for those who support parental leave. The provision of day-care and parental leave are mutually reinforcing efforts to reduce, share, recognise, and reward care work.

Fourth, the recognition of care workers must take the form of labour policies. Care workers need to be recognised as workers in order to be guaranteed decent and safe work. Recognising care workers as decent workers means recognising that care work is work that is not only needed but highly valued. Care workers are therefore part of and included in social security systems. Like workers in other sectors, care workers must have their rights guaranteed and fulfilled.

Fifth, gender-equitable policies and implementation of day-care, parental leave and employment policies require comprehensive planning that is integrated into macro and micro state policies. These programmes need to be structured in the form of a clear roadmap to ensure that a gender-equitable transformation of care is achieved within a clear timeframe. It is also important to ensure comprehensive data collection on the different forms of care work and care workers, as well as on the availability of services and the conditions of existing services at the national level. Studies on social protection systems, including paternity leave, should also be undertaken. Documenting care practices in the current context and conditions allows stakeholders to map future needs as an integral part of the care work roadmap. The existence of this care work roadmap must be included in the medium and long-term development plan. Neglect of care work should no longer occur.

## Closing

The Indonesian Government, in this case the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA), is involved in regional and international discussions. However, attention to the issue of care work has not been widespread at the government level. The government is not singular and one ministry does not represent the face of the government in responding to the issue of care work. Current government policies also tend not to support a more equitable division of care work roles for women. This is manifested in the absence of an agenda to amend Law No. 1/1974 on Marriage. The law still standardises the traditional gender roles of women and men. Further evidence can be found in the existence of RUU KIA, which still focuses on the role of mothers/women as the main caregivers. Although there are efforts to include the role of fathers/men, this involvement is yet to exist in the framework of a more equitable transformation of gender roles. The existence of the day-care programme initiated by KPPPA still does not place the role of fathers proportionally as parents who have the responsibility of caring for children. The solution offered is still to share/ delegate the task to other institutions.

The author argues that the lack of political support for fair care work is due to the country's unclear gender ideology. There is an unsustainable development in the country's gender ideology, namely the change from traditional gender ideology to the concept of women's empowerment. The concept of women's empowerment is more in line with the concept of gender harmony. This means that women are encouraged to engage in the public sphere and contribute to development. Women's participation in the labour market is aimed at the economy, but the state's gender ideology does not recognise this, let alone respond seriously. If the responsibility for caring for children and the family remains with women alone, equality in participation in the labour market will not be achieved. According to the author, this ideological tug-of-war means that a gender-just transformation has not been at the centre of state's policy and efforts to change care policy.

Researchers see the importance of advocating for changes in policies on marriage that dichotomise women's (domestic) and men's (public) roles, as this role standardisation is the basis for denying or excluding recognition of paid and unpaid care work. In addition, the existence of a roadmap for economic care that is oriented towards the transformation of gender justice is very important. This roadmap should promote gender-equitable care work policies, including: the availability of

support for women working in the public sector through the provision of comprehensive care services, not only for children, but also for the elderly, disabled, and family health. The roadmap should emphasise the recognition and security of care workers, including domestic workers. It should also include men's participation in paid and unpaid care work, including parental/family leave for new-born care and child health care.

## Bibliography

ASEAN. 2021. "ASEAN COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK ON CARE ECONOMY", *asean.org*, accessed on 12 November 2023, at <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/8.-Final-ASEAN-Comprehensive-Framework-on-Care-Economy.-20-Oct-2021.pdf>.

Beghini, V., Umberto, C., & Pozzan, E. 2019. *Quantum Leap For Gender Equality: for Better Future of Work for All*. International Labour Organization: Geneva.

Blair-Loy, M., Hochschild, A., Pugh, A. J., Williams, J.C., & Heidi. 2015. "Stability and Transformation in Gender, Work, and Family: Insights from the Second Shift for the Next Quarter Century", *Community Work & Family*, Vol. 18(4). DOI:10.1080/13668803.2015.1080664.

Chopra, D. & Krishnan, M. 2022. "Care is not a Burden: a 7-4-7 framework of action for operationalising the Triple R", *Gender & Development*, Vol. 30(1-2), pp. 35-57. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1352074.2022.2066265>.

Eddyono, S. W. 2019. *Women's Empowerment in Indonesia: A Poor Community in Jakarta*. Routledge: UK.

Eddyono, S. W. 2022. *Mendorong Lingkungan Kerja Perawatan yang Adil Gender*. Oxfam: Jakarta.

Hadiz, L. & Eddyono, S. W. 2004. *Pembakuan Peran Gender dalam Kebijakan-kebijakan di Indonesia*. LBH APIK: Jakarta.

House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI). 2022. Academic Paper of the Draft Law on Mother and Child Welfare (RUU KIA).

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2018. *Care Work and Care Jobs, For the Future of Decent Work*. ILO: Geneva.

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2019. *Quantum Leap For Gender Equality, for Better Future of Work for All*. ILO: Jakarta.

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2022. "Intervensi Pemerintah Diperlukan untuk Kepatuhan terhadap Hak Maternitas", accessed on 15 November 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/info/public/pr/WCMS\\_834805/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/info/public/pr/WCMS_834805/lang--en/index.htm).

Kabeer, N. 2008. *Paid Work, Women's Empowerment and Gender Justice: Critical Pathways of Social Change*. LSE Research Online: UK. [https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/53077/1/Kabeer\\_Paid-work\\_Published.pdf](https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/53077/1/Kabeer_Paid-work_Published.pdf).

Kompas. 2022. "RUU KIA Diharapkan tak Bikin Buruh Perempuan jadi Dipersulit Kerja", *national.kompas.com*, accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2022/06/24/06100661/ruu-kia-diharapkan-tak-bikin-buruh-perempuan-jadi-dipersulit-kerja>.

Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA). N.d. "Rencana Strategis 2020-2024", *kemenpppa.go.id*, accessed on 18 November 2023, at <https://rb.kemenpppa.go.id/6-permen-pppa-tentang-renstra-kementerian-pppa-2020-2024/>.

Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA). 2023. "KemenPPPA: Daycare Ramah Anak Pendukung Produktivitas Perempuan Bekerja", accessed on 10 November 2023, at

<https://www.kemenpppa.go.id/index.php/page/read/29/4373/kemen-pppa-daycare-ramah-anak-pendukung-produktivitas-perempuan-bekerja>.

Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA). Regulation of the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection No. 5/2015 on the Provision of Gender-Responsive and Child-Friendly Work Facilities in the Workplace.

Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA). Regulation of the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection No. 12/2022 on the Implementation of Child Friendly District/City.

Power, K. 2020. "The Covid-19 pandemic has increased the care burden of women and families", *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy*, Vol. 16(1), pp. 67-73. DOI:10.1080/15487733.2020.1776561.

Republic of Indonesia. Law Number 1 Year 1974 on Marriage.

Republic of Indonesia. Law Number 52 Year 2009 on Population and Family Development.

Republic of Indonesia. Presidential Regulation (PERPRES) Number 25 Year 2021 on Child Friendly District/City Policy.

UN Women, D. Snyder - Policy Brief, 2020 - *gbvguidelines.org*. COVID-19 and the care economy: Immediate action and structural transformation for a gender-responsive recovery

UN Women. 2020. "Whose Time to Care? Unpaid Cares and Domestic Work During Covid-19", accessed on 17 November 2023, at [https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Whose-time-to-care-brief\\_0.pdf](https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Whose-time-to-care-brief_0.pdf).

Villanueva, J. et al. 2020. *CARE MATTERS: Taking action on unpaid care and domestic work in ASEAN*. Oxfam Briefing Paper: Oxfam International.

Wieringa, S. 2015. "Gender Harmony and the Happy Family: Islam, Gender and Sexuality in Post-Reformasi Indonesia", *Southeast Asia Research*, Vol. 23(1), pp. 27-44. <https://doi.org/10.5367/sear.2015.0244>.

Yeates, N. 2005. "A Global Political Economy of Care", *Social Policy & Society*, Vol. 4(2), pp. 227-234. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1474746404002350>.

## (Endnotes)

- 1 See ASEAN. 2021. "ASEAN COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK ON CARE ECONOMY", *asean.org*, accessed on 12 November 2023, at <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/8.-Final-ASEAN-Comprehensive-Framework-on-Care-Economy.-20-Oct-2021.pdf>.

- 2 A similar debate emerged and was discussed at the Unpaid Care workshop, organised by Oxfam in consultation with civil society, on 8 September 2022 and 11 October 2022..
- 3 See Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA). 2023. "KemenPPPA: Daycare Ramah Anak Pendukung Produktivitas Perempuan Bekerja", accessed on 10 November 2023, at <https://www.kemenpppa.go.id/index.php/page/read/29/4373/kemen-pppa-daycare-ramah-anak-pendukung-produktivitas-perempuan-bekerja>.
- 4 See International Labour Organization (ILO). 2022. "Intervensi pemerintah diperlukan untuk kepatuhan terhadap hak maternitas", accessed on 15 November 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/info/public/pr/WCMS\\_834805/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/info/public/pr/WCMS_834805/lang--en/index.htm).



## Supporting the Labor: The Phenomenon of Waithood and Unpaid Care Workforce in the Perspective of Social Reproduction

Alfiatul Khairiyah<sup>1</sup> & Muhammad Aminullah Thohir<sup>2</sup>

Department of Sociology, Gadjah Mada University<sup>1&2</sup>  
Jalan Sosio Yustitia Nomor 1, Karang Malang, Catur Tunggal, Sleman, DI Yogyakarta<sup>1&2</sup>

alfiatulkhairiyah1097@mail.ugm.ac.id<sup>1</sup> & muhammadaminullahthohir@mail.ugm.ac.id<sup>2</sup>

Manuscript Chronology: received on 31 October 2023, revised on 23 November 2023, accepted on 24 December 2023

### Abstract

The construction of unpaid care work as the responsibility of women has contributed to the emergence of the postponing marriage phenomenon (waithood) among youth, especially women. On the other hand, care work is an integral part of the reproductive workforce, related to productive work. Furthermore, care work also contributes to reproducing the workforce in serving the interests of capital accumulation. The mechanization of women's roles in creating a workforce surplus makes women work excessively and hinders economic access. It argues that the financial pressures and the burden of work indirectly lead to the delayed marriage phenomenon. This financial pressure and the burden of care work indirectly contribute to the postponement of marriage. This study adopts a perspective of Social Reproduction Theory by utilizing qualitative research methods and a literature study approach. This study analyzes the relationship between capitalism, care work, and the recent phenomenon of waithood. The results indicate that women have been supporting the workforce through their care work, and this occurs systemically as a consequence of the capitalist system, which has led to the postponement of women's marriages.

Keywords: care work, capitalism, social reproduction, waithood

### Introduction

Unpaid care work has created labour supply and indirectly led to the phenomenon of marriage postponement among young people. Marriage has often been perceived as an obstacle to young people's career and economic advancement. Self-realisation is identical to one's independence from marriage. Whether we admit it or not, unpaid care work in the family is one of the obstacles. What is forgotten about family care work, however, is the production process behind it. Care work has always created an invisible labour supply, and, on the other hand, unpaid care work has created a fear of marriage.

The phenomenon of young people delaying marriage (waithood) is widespread in many countries, including Indonesia. Since the end of the 20th century, young people have tended not to marry immediately. Since the end of 2022, young people have been having a tendency not to get married immediately. This can be seen from data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (*Badan Pusat Statistik, BPS*) in 2022, which shows an increasing trend in the percentage of young people with an unmarried status. The marriage rate over the last 10 years has fallen from 1.79 million marriages to

1.7 million marriages in 2022. Delaying marriage is not unique to Indonesia. According to Pew Research Centre, the number of people living without a partner is increasing in America. About 61 per cent of Americans under the age of 35 do not have a partner (Inhorn & Smith-Hefner 2021).

Waithood has had an impact on demographic and socio-economic changes because delaying marriage affects the birth rate. Waithood has changed demographics and caused the birth rate to fall. Total Fertility Rates (TFRs) have been declining in many countries since 1980, including in the Muslim world (Inhorn & Smith-Hefner 2021). The decline in birth rates will certainly affect population growth and the availability of labour in a country.

The phenomenon of waithood is closely linked to economic and political systems that force young people to delay marriage. Economic phenomena such as personal financial independence lead young people to choose career advancement over marriage. In other cases, family's economy may also be one of the reasons for delaying marriage. The economic constraints of the family, such as parents, make young people to delay marriage to reduce the burden of the Sandwich Generation.

Sandwich Generation itself refers to individuals who have the burden of caring for their young and adult children, as well as caring for their elderly parents (Chisholm 1999), so today's young people are living in waitthood to ease their burden in the future.

Economic pressures of the family go hand in hand with young people's care responsibility towards their parents. In this care work, women are often involved in long-term care as caregivers in both formal and informal systems based on kinship or friendship (Polivka 2017). Meanwhile, family care work is still widespread in Indonesia. Due to the lack of social security and inadequate infrastructure in terms of health and care facilities, among others, young people, especially women, cannot avoid domestic care work.

On the other hand, today's economic uncertainty is also putting pressure on priorities, with people choosing to pursue a career first and improve their financial situation. Increased economic uncertainty is felt by many young people, especially in urban areas (Thieme 2018), and this is causing them to choose to delay marriage. In the midst of the economic constraints, young people, especially women, who are burdened with unpaid care work, are finding it increasingly difficult to access paid work. Many women have to withdraw from paid work because of the need to care for family members (Elson 2017).

The marginalisation of women in the paid workforce due to this unpaid care work has indirectly paved the way for the development of inequalities in income, employment, and mobility (Lightman & Kevins 2021). The gaps in the economy in terms of income, employment, and mobility then have the potential to cause people, especially women, to delay marriage. This is also exacerbated by the burden of care.

The care work imposed on women is closely linked to the process of social reproduction. Women with economic constraints and caring and educational responsibilities have contributed indirectly to both formal and informal work, whether directly in the labour force or through unpaid work that has contributed to the production of labour. Thus, care work has subsidised the production of goods and labour (Bhattacharya et al. 2017). This has encouraged young people, especially women, to delay marriage in order to take on the burden of care work and contribute to the family economy.

From the perspective of social reproduction theory, the unpaid work that women have been doing has helped the process of the capitalist system.

Starting with women taking care of their parents so that they have good health and can work well, taking care of children so that they can go to school and become good labourers, even when women become labourers themselves. The multiple challenges and burdens of family care lead women to delay marriage. Unpredictable family responsibilities often hinder educational progress and employment prospects. This can delay socially expected youth transitions (Day & Evans 2015), including marriage. After all, young people want to complete their education, get a decent job, find a partner, and prosper. However, the responsibilities and aspirations of raising and caring for a family lead young people to delay marriage as a sign of their transition to social adulthood.

The phenomenon of delaying marriage is ultimately a phenomenon shaped by the capitalist system. This research seeks to answer the main question of how the capitalist system tacitly uses care work to influence the phenomenon of delaying marriage. This phenomenon is discussed from the perspective of social reproduction theory to see how care work supports the capitalist system and creates burdens and fears for young people, especially women, to enter into marriage.

## Research Methodology

The methodology used in this research is a literature review with a descriptive qualitative approach. This method is used as a critical analysis step in relation to the phenomenon of waitthood and its relation to care work and the capitalist system. Using Social Reproduction Theory (SRT) perspective, the authors will critique the phenomenon through readings of various available literature such as journals, research findings, news, and other supporting documents. The authors first conducted a review of SRT as an analytical tool to examine women's care work, both the factors that encourage it and who benefits from it, and its impact on marriage delay, particularly for women. The research results include a critical narrative of the capitalist system that has formed a natural labour force in the household in the form of women, departing from gender injustice in employment itself (Ferguson 2020), as well as a critical narrative of unpaid care work and its relationship to the formation of the phenomenon of waitthood. The authors also used the ILO's 5R concept of recognition, reduction, redistribution, reward, and representation (ILO 2019) to respond to the issue of waitthood, which is also linked to women's unpaid care work.

## Understanding Care Work and Social Reproduction

The majority of unpaid care work is done by women. This unpaid care work is imposed on women to look after their families, either husbands or children as labourers or potential labourers. Women spend more time than men on caring, raising, cooking, cleaning, and being responsible for children and the elderly. Some of this is known as unpaid care work.

In a capitalist society, unpaid care work imposed on women is a form of dehumanising women and does not liberate them (Ferguson 2020). According to Ferguson, women have a responsibility to produce labour that is useful to the capitalists. Women are used by the capitalists to care for and produce labour without being paid. This is because there is still a patriarchal mentality. This mentality assumes that women are inferior to men and ultimately dependent on paid labour performed by men. Ultimately, the fact that women become care workers for men is the cause of capitalism and patriarchy.

Care work contributes to the physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of others (Duffy et al. 2013). This includes both unpaid and paid care work. Paid care work, such as domestic workers (DWs), and unpaid care work, such as care work provided voluntarily by housewives. However, Federici explains that even paid domestic workers are still the responsibility of the employer, not the capitalist or the state. This means that women are still responsible for care work, whether paid or unpaid (Federici 2020).

Paid and unpaid care work has been gendered and imposed on women. Care work has influenced the way men and women work in everyday life. For example, the gap in paid production work, which is still dominated by men, leaving the majority of women in unpaid care work in the household. Gaps such as differences in access to work or opportunities for men and women in the paid production sector have systematically placed men and women in "different spaces". The gender-biased labour market system has positioned women in unpaid care work, which then becomes an agent of social reproduction for the formation of a new workforce. This makes it difficult for women to participate in the Indonesian labour force. This is evidenced by a survey conducted by the *BPS* (2023), which explains that female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is only 54.42 per cent, compared to 83.98 per cent for men. Research by Utomo (2018) also shows that female labour force participation has stagnated at only 51 per cent. It can be concluded that the female LFPR has not increased significantly from the 1990s to 2023.

If the gender-biased economic system has always kept women out of paid work and relegated them to unpaid care work, then women's unpaid care work is also capable of maintaining a capitalist-controlled economic system. Unpaid care work turns women into reproductive machines for the operation and circulation of goods and labour production. Women's daily activities, such as caring for children, parents, and family members, are essentially efforts to care for potential paid labourers. This means that women's care work is actually reproductive work in the capitalist labour process of production.

Even in paid work, women are often engaged in care work, which includes caring, domestic work, nursing, and more. This feminisation of care work further impoverishes women and does not liberate women in the world of work, be it paid or unpaid care work. This is because even in paid care work, workers are often denied rights such as leave, and even their wages are often below the minimum wage. The National Network for Domestic Workers Advocacy (JALA PRT) also mentions that the average wage of domestic workers in DKI Jakarta is only IDR1,200,000-IDR 1,500,00, while in Semarang, Yogyakarta, Makassar, Surabaya and Medan it is only IDR800,000-IDR1,000,000 (Sinambela 2023). According to Federici, even unpaid care work is vulnerable to violence (Federici 2020), be it physical, psychological, economic, or social. On closer examination, the position of vulnerability can be doubled by the lack of wages and protection. In addition, care work, which is commonly done by women, is not recognised as work and does not have clear wage regulations. Care work becomes informal work and is not even recognised, which makes women's conditions even more vulnerable.

What needs to be emphasised in unpaid care work is the maintenance of the workforce or potential workforce. Care work contributes to building and maintaining a labour force that cannot be subsidised by the market (Duffy et al. 2013). In this case, unpaid care work is linked to the market because it affects the production of a quality workforce. Qualified labour is an important element in the production of goods, so the availability of good labour and the generation of qualified labour benefits the market. Labour is an important aspect of the process of capital accumulation.

The social construction of women and men in the division of labour is an important part of this research. The gendered construction of labour also results in women being excluded from production and paid work and becoming unpaid care workers. This is related to the authors' approach, Social Reproduction Theory

(SRT), which asks: How does care work contribute to the maintenance/production of labour? Who benefits most from care work? How has care work produced labour and ensured that a child can become a good labourer and work generation? that invisibly supports the productive labour process of capitalism. In the Marxian tradition, the theory of social reproduction also questions the added value that certain groups provide in this reproductive system (Larastiti 2020). Then, who and what work has provided this added value?

Women as unpaid care workers have been seen as subjects who help to restore what has been consumed in the production process in order to sustain life (Larastiti 2020). In this case, social reproduction uses family as a basis for analysis to see how women are oppressed. Women in the family have to work every day to provide good food for the family, to ensure the health of the family by providing clean water and other facilities to maintain health. In fact, women can work even harder to ensure that their families are well fed. Especially for rural women who depend on natural resources in the midst of the climate crisis. Maintenance will be more difficult and require greater efforts than before. This is social reproduction, which means creating, maintaining, and restoring labour for capitalist interests (Bhattacharya et al. 2017). Maintenance work, including taking care of labour, is reproductive work at the stage of keeping the labour system in good working order, together with its availability. Work that ensures that labour is in the best possible condition to work as paid labour.

Gender segregation makes it difficult for women to access productive work. Ultimately, women work as unpaid care workers, ensuring that their family members are able to work properly, whether in the plantation sector, in factories and offices, or in other jobs. Social reproduction unravels how women's oppression in the family sphere is reinforced by the capitalist system of production (Ferguson 2020). This theory looks at the labour relations of production and reproduction in the capitalist production process that deprives women of their work. Women perform unpaid care work for the benefit of capitalism by caring for capitalist-owned labour. This oppression of women is perpetuated along with the dynamics in the relationship between social reproduction and the process of capital accumulation.

Social reproduction is closely linked to capitalism. The work of social reproduction is a way of creating labour. Labour itself is the productive power to produce capital goods. Care work is one of the things of social reproduction that maintains labour, such as preparing

food and washing clothes for capitalist-owned labour. It is these basic tasks that support the continuation of work of the labourers. At the same time, however, this social reproduction has provided a supply of labour to support the process of capital accumulation (Ferguson 2020), with basic tasks being performed and strategies for maintaining the lives of family members.

So, the questions above relate to: Who benefits from unpaid care work? How is this work produced? The answer lies in the Social Reproduction Theory (SRT). SRT believes that the production of goods and services and the production of life are integrated (Bhattacharya et al. 2017). All three operate within a patriarchal capitalist system. Capitalism exploits the patriarchal social system by oppressing women in order to make more profit from oppressing women. The patriarchal capitalist system slowly oppresses women through their unpaid care work. These are women's everyday activities, which many are unaware have contributed significantly to the production of goods and services. Women have done invisible and undervalued work on the side-lines of their busy lives (Fernandes et al. 2023).

The exploitation of women by capitalism is carried out through care work. Care work as one of the social reproductions full of oppression of women can be seen from its impact on women's vulnerability. In unpaid care work such as housewives, oppression can be seen in the double burden or overwork that women do without pay. In the capitalist mode of production, this exploitation of women in unpaid care work is highly profitable. Capitalism exploits women to create and maintain labour without having to pay them directly. Therefore, unpaid care work is highly profitable for capitalism.

### **Workload and Vulnerability of Women in Care Work**

The gender gap in reproductive work results in women having an excessive workload and even a double burden. In a patriarchal system, productive work is dominated by men, while women are often not involved. Women's workload is in care work, domestic work, education, and other household work. However, women have also begun to engage in productive work to meet the needs of the family, which is not enough if they rely solely on their husband's wages. Women are known to have a triple burden, including a productive burden, a reproductive burden, and a social burden. The productive burden on women arises because women also play a role in the family economy. It is not uncommon for women to engage in wage labour and to work in the formal and informal sectors to support their livelihoods. So far,

however, the majority of women work in the informal economy, with more flexible working hours that enable them to carry out their reproductive work properly.

The reproductive burden is the care and domestic work assigned to women in the household. Women's marital status has always been associated with their roles between care and work (Zilanawala 2016). Care and domestic work seem to be inextricably linked to women's work. The responsibility for the family's food security, the availability of clean water, the family's health, and other facilities to meet the family's needs is given to women. In addition, women's responsibilities extend not only to their husbands and children, but also to caring for parents or the elderly in the family.

Family's health services often depend on women's unchanging care work, which is seen as strengthening kinship and motherhood. This assumes that it is women, or mothers, who are most responsible for caring for both the family and the community (Jakimow et al. 2019). Therefore, women's unpaid care work sometimes constrains women's paid work to the point of excluding women from the labour market. Women are the primary human resource in the family and the family is the primary unit for social reproduction. Women's non-economic contributions to the family are greater than those of their husbands due to their gendered domestic roles, such as caring for their husbands, children, and organising the household both before and after work (Tjandraningsih 2018).

For reproductive work, women have more time to work but earn less than men. Women's use of time depends on the social norms that shape the family and influence the balance between work and care in the household (Charmes 2022). Women's time for work, study, rest, and self-care as a necessity and leisure are all constructed and encourage women to engage more in unpaid work and care work.

Women's high commitment to reproductive work determines the well-being of others. Through their care work, women provide hidden surplus value to wage labour. Women maintain the entire household in exchange for wage labour under the control of capitalism (Felt & Sinclair 1992). However, care work is yet to be recognised as such. In fact, care work has the same vulnerability as other paid work. The vulnerability of care workers can be physical, psychological, economic, and even sexual. This vulnerability is exacerbated by the lack of clear regulations to protect care workers, such as social security, wage regulations, health insurance, and

others. Reproductive work is also inherently women's work, favouring a patriarchal world (Irawaty 2017).

The unequal division of labour in the family results in women carrying out domestic and care work. The domestication of women shows that efforts to subordinate women have begun within the family institution. Women become identical to caring, nurturing, and kinship. Meanwhile, the burden on women in the social environment lies in their involvement in organic community activities, such as *arisan*, cultural and religious rituals, and other activities that are also often imposed on women, such as preparing food throughout the day, which takes time. This is particularly true for women living in rural areas, where community solidarity is strong. Women's three workloads run simultaneously. As a result, women are overburdened in different areas of work, especially the burden of care. This overwork also prevents women from accessing economic resources and wage employment opportunities.

From the SRT perspective, care work is described as the shadow of slavery. This slavery causes excessive and even double work for women, which keeps women away from welfare. This also means that women spend all their time working, both for the family and for society, producing and reproducing, and have no free time to improve their knowledge through learning or discussion. Unlike men, who still have free time to learn and discuss with their groups. Women work relatively more hours than men, but have relatively lower welfare than men.

### Women in the Trap of Capitalism

Women have been oppressed from the era of slavery to capitalism. From the era of slavery to capitalism, individuals had control over the lives of others through the ownership of resources or capital. Engels explains that the oppression of women is also consistent with the concept of private and family property rights in the history of the development of society's mode of production (Engels & Untermann 2021). The capital accumulation pattern of production means that families have to pass on their wealth or capital to their sons, who will later start new families. Women later become part of the family headed by their husband or father. This is what makes women become the property (private property) of their husband or father as an effort to process social reproduction. Engels further explains that women experience oppression in the process of capital accumulation because women become a property. As a result, women do not have equal opportunities in the

division of labour. In the era of slavery, women were used as the property of the family as slaves for agricultural labour and pleasure. In the era of capitalism, women became the property of the bourgeoisie as labour and reproductive labour.

Patriarchy is also used by the capitalist system to reduce production costs in order to make more profit (Ferguson 2020). Capitalism and patriarchy are two intertwined elements. This is also evident in women's lower wages, types of work, and employment opportunities. The value of women's labour is reduced or diminished due to biological factors such as menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding (Rahayu 2017). In practice, leave for menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding is made difficult by factory owners. When women have their period, they often have to continue working because of the difficulty in getting leave. If they are unable to work, they choose to take time off with a pay cut. Maternity leave is also only one month (Mailoa 2022). As a result, female workers often resign when they become pregnant without receiving severance pay, or even have a miscarriage while at work.

The capitalist system is reluctant to give wages to women workers who are on leave because they are not doing production work that benefits them. If they are not working in the production of goods in the factories because they are on leave, they are not considered by the capitalist system and do not receive wages. As a result, nursing and breastfeeding are the responsibility of the women themselves, with no involvement of the factory owner. Another option after leaving the factory is to become a home-based worker, who works for the factory and carries out production activities from home so as not to leave the care work. However, home-based workers are not covered by Law No. 13/2003 on Manpower and Law No. 11/2020 on Job Creation, leaving them vulnerable to the lack of decent and safe work guarantees. This vulnerability is influenced by poor working conditions, inadequate Occupational Health and Safety (OHS), and the lack of protection and social security for women home-based workers (Rifyana 2019), such as the storage of dangerous work equipment, such as flammable and toxic substances in workers' homes where children may play with them.

In the end, capitalism uses the patriarchal system of capital accumulation to its advantage by denying women workers the right to do care work. However, on the other hand, care work is also exploited by the capitalist system as a labour production machine. This has much to do with the physical, psychological, and social condition

of women, including their increasingly vulnerable economic situation. Women become subjects who are crushed by capitalism from different sides. Women should have the right to menstrual and maternity leave, which should be paid either directly by the factory or subsidised by the state, so that women can continue to earn an income while caring. This is an effort to enable women to continue to earn an income while caring.

### **Unrecognised Care Work**

The main goal of capitalism is the accumulation of capital. In the process of capital accumulation, capitalism uses the strategy of primitive accumulation to transform the feudal social system into capitalism. Through primitive accumulation, the peasants as landlords (the means of production in the feudal era) are usurped by the bourgeoisie class (Marx 2006). This primitive accumulation allows the bourgeoisie to control the land (the means of production) and turns peasants, fishermen, indigenous peoples, who are deprived of the means of production, into labour for the bourgeoisie. But for Silvia Federici, primitive accumulation also concerns women. Women are deprived of control over their bodies by capitalism for the purpose of producing labour for the capitalists. As a result, women are deprived of their freedom and live in the shackles of capitalist control over their bodies.

The deprivation of women's bodies by capitalism makes women live in oppression. Federici presents three forms of deprivation of women's bodies (Federici 2009). *First*, the gendered division of labour that puts women's work and reproductive functions into the reproduction of labour. *Second*, the establishment of a new patriarchal order based on the exclusion of women from paid work and their subordination to men. *Third*, the control of the body in the form of the mechanisation of women's bodies for the production of new labour. This gendered division of labour means that women are ultimately restricted to working on matters related to the reproduction of labour. Meanwhile, reproductive labour is not included in paid work and is not considered work. However, reproductive labour is important for the accumulation of capital because it creates new labour for capitalism.

Labour is an advantage to capitalism. Women were so instrumental in creating labour that in the mid-16th century, governments in Europe impose penalties on women who use contraception, have abortions, and are infertile. Women were not allowed to limit the growth of the labour force. A large population is a source of social wealth for capitalism. In the era of early capitalism, labour

power greatly influenced the wealth of the bourgeoisie, so the production of labour could not be stopped at any cost. This also proves that women were highly controlled by the state and used as servants for capitalism with the aim of accumulating capital.

Women are used not only as objects of labour production, but also as caretakers of unpaid labour. Both as children and as wives in patriarchy, women are required to do domestic or household work. Women do the work of cleaning the house and preparing the needs of their father or husband after and before working in the factory. Women perform services for their father or husband, such as making them food, tea, or coffee, washing their clothes, and caring for them when they are sick. Indirectly, women care for the labour of the owners of capital. However, women do not receive any reciprocal wages from the owners of capital, even though they have taken care of their labourers. In the capitalist system, care work is not considered to be part of factory production and does not have to be paid.

In the capitalist system, only production in factory is considered an activity that creates use and exchange value. Factory goods that can be sold as having use value are created by labourers, which in the early capitalist era was predominantly male. Women were forced to stay at home to create and care for the labourers, but such work was considered to have no economic value and was not categorised as labour (Federici 2009). This leaves women without any resources as they never get paid for the work they do for their families. This condition ultimately makes women subordinate to men due to differential access to capital and consequently patriarchy is never eradicated.

The development of capitalism allows women to enter the public sphere to do factory work. Indonesia's garment industry is dominated by women, according to International Labour Organisation's (ILO) report from 2022 (ILO 2022). This phenomenon shows that in this era, Indonesian women can become a workforce like men. However, the findings of the ILO report (2022) show that women workers also experience pay gaps and inequality in their careers. The fact that women work also does not fully indicate that women are empowered and have freedom. In a capitalist society, it is observed that women work because the husband's income is insufficient for the needs of the family. Ironically, women are required to participate not only in productive work, but also in reproducing the family, including unpaid care work.

The situation of women working as care workers is not unique. Families with sufficient income tend to choose to hire domestic workers to do care work. However, when a family hires a domestic worker, they have to pay her a wage that comes out of the family's own pocket. Families have to incur additional costs to pay domestic workers who do care work in order to maintain labour and capitalism. This means that even if a woman does not perform care work for her family and can hire a domestic worker, she still has to pay for the care work out of her own pocket to hire a domestic worker.

### **Women in Care Work and Production Work**

Women's work in caring for and creating labour is ultimately to prepare labour commodities for the capitalists. In the context of patriarchal capitalism, women cannot be separated from care work, which means producing and maintaining labour for capitalism. The fact that women work does not remove their oppression, on the contrary, it increases their burden. Women perform productive and unpaid care work for the benefit of capitalism, but receive nothing in return.

The condition of women, who are increasingly oppressed by capitalism, makes women face more difficulties every day. For women, the only work they can do is care work and reproductive work. However, this requires women to find husbands who have a lot of capital and eventually submit to their husbands because the capital belongs to their husbands. It also worries women when their husbands have affairs or abuse them, but they cannot ask for a divorce or fight back. Infidelity also occurs when one party is dependent on the other (Munsch 2015). If they ask for a divorce, it will leave women with no capital at all, which in turn will have to do productive work. A study published in *The Conversation* also mentions that women have more financial difficulties after divorce than men (Hitchings & Douglas 2023). This is because women also have to do care work. In the end, this is why women refuse to be dependent, because the fear of being cheated on or divorced forces them to do productive work.

Production work will also take up a lot of women's time. From the morning before sunrise, they have to do maintenance work such as cooking and washing. Then, from morning to evening and even into the night, they do production work for the capital-owning class. When they return home, they continue to do unpaid care and reproductive work in their spare time. This is how women really live under the control of capitalism. They cannot

be free and have to work all the time for the benefit of capitalism itself. These concerns then lead women to delay marriage due to domestic care, excessive workload, and economic pressure. There is no division of labour between men and women in the family.

Women experience gender inequalities in production and care work. The distribution of care work is more heavily weighted towards women, which also affects women's access to productive work - which is not in line with the ILO's 5R framework. Even when women are in paid production work, they continue to do care work. The most burdensome thing is when production work takes a very long time through endless overtime schemes. Women automatically have less rest time due to long production hours. They also have to do unpaid care work at home after work. Women are oppressed by the unfair distribution of work and long working hours. This cannot be separated from the system of capitalism, which is responsible for the use of overtime for its workers, including women workers, and the use of the patriarchal system, which still makes women do unpaid care work.

### **Capitalism Creates Waithood**

Young women in Indonesia, especially in urban areas, understand the problems they face in situation of patriarchal capitalism. Young women in urban areas have more access to education than those in rural areas (Lisnasari 2023). This allows women in urban areas to learn about their problems. However, this understanding creates fear as well as an attempt by women to survive the oppression of patriarchal capitalism by delaying marriage. As reported by *Kumparan*, two psychologists, Dian Wisnuwardhani and Reynitta Poerwito, explain that young people have financial, social, and conflict fears about marriage (Ramadhan 2023). How women already have an idea of their marital situation in terms of the economy, social responsibilities such as caring, and even conflicts that will arise.

Women are also overshadowed by the increasing demands of life. Women often play an important role in managing family finances. The needs of young women today are also increasing, such as housing, clothing, food, make-up, and so on to support their lives. The costs of marriage and caring for children are also very high. For women, this makes it clear that if they start a family, they will also have to work hard to earn a wage that will meet their and their family's needs and provide for the care of their family.

A number of studies have shown that married women do care work and this often leads to women not working. A survey by BPS in 2023 explains that the LFPR of women is only 54.42 per cent, while that of men is 83.98 per cent. This shows that there are still many women who do not work. This is due to patriarchal conditions that force women to do unpaid care work. When women give birth, they often stop working because of the difficulties of maternity leave. Caring for children, especially breastfeeding, can only be done by women. As a result, men end up working and women are highly dependent on the wages their husbands earn.

Women who are highly dependent on their husbands' wages are vulnerable to their husbands' power relations because they feel that their husbands can support the family and control their wives (Cameron 2014). This makes women think twice about starting a family and leads to the phenomenon of waithood. They delay marriage and starting a family because they want to find economic stability first so that they are not dependent on their husbands (Wulandari 2023). Singerman, the initiator of the concept of waithood, also explains that delaying marriage and childbearing is due to economic and political factors, such as inadequate employment opportunities, which lead young people into waithood (Singerman 2007). In the context of women, it is also common to delay marriage to pursue education and career. In conclusion, waithood itself is a period of waiting to focus on delaying marriage and having children due to high economic needs.

Waithood is on the rise in Indonesia. Students in Yogyakarta prefer education and work to marriage (Hasan 2019). In 2017, BPS showed that the level of happiness of people who are alone (not married) is higher than those who are married, especially women (Andita 2017). Referring to Singerman's definition (2007), women will focus on their education and career. In the era of capitalism, education and career are important. Improving one's education also means improving one's standard of living, hoping to get a better job so that one's career will be better and one's economic problems will be solved in the future because of one's higher education and career.

Women carry the burden of productive and caring work. This is the reason why women engage in waithood (Kara & Mullings 2023). High economic needs such as housing, children's school fees, etc. have also increased over the years. This means that young people need a stable economy for their future lives. However, the lack of

decent jobs is also a threat, so it is important to focus on improving one's educational status and career in order to have a decent economic life. In the end, it is these harsh conditions that lead women to choose waithood.

Waithood is a personal choice. One of the things that capitalism does in society in the cultural aspect is individual problem solving. Capitalism creates a narrative so that the problems that arise or are experienced by society can be solved by themselves, one of which is women choosing waithood. Waithood itself is also often associated with Western culture. The West has long been known for its capitalist system, which places all problem-solving on the individual, making the capitalist system irresponsible. Waithood is also an attempt by women to overcome their fear of failure in marriage. This failure is particularly common in the era of late capitalism. Capitalism has intervened in the culture and behaviour of individuals (Durham 2021) without them being aware of it. In the economic context, the high cost of living and the lack of job opportunities cannot be separated from the current economic system. Capitalism will create inequality among people because the distribution of the means of production is owned by a few people. As a result, wealth is owned by only a few groups, and market price conditions and employment are in their hands. This shows that waithood emerges because of the capitalist situation, which has made women worry about their lives both because of the patriarchal social and economic context and because it creates personal life choices.

Choosing waithood is not without consequences for women. The patriarchal context depicts women as needing to have a husband. There is still a negative stigma attached to unmarried women, such as 'old maids' (Mustikasari 2018). Women's efforts to waithood have also led to an evolving meaning of gendered violence that has continued to evolve (Musahwi et al. 2022). Thus, even in deciding to delay marriage, women are in a vulnerable position to be stigmatised by society. Stigma is psychological violence against women that can lead to further violence.

For the country, this waithood phenomenon could also lead to a sex recession. A sex recession will put a greater strain on the productive workforce in the coming years due to the lack of new labour. For capitalism, the potential reduction of the labour force is an obstacle to the process of production. Reproductive labour is necessary for the continuation of the production of productive labour as future workers. Therefore, according to the state, waithood is also a phenomenon to be taken seriously. To marry or not to marry is ultimately a decision

that is indirectly driven by the capitalist system. In this case, waithood is also a choice tacitly created by the capitalist system. The burden of unpaid production and care work, which often falls on women, and the difficulty of accessing decent employment have led women to choose to wait to marry and have children. Waithood not only embodies the delay of youth aspirations in pursuing educational and career goals, but also highlights the gendered nature of family and societal expectations (Inhorn & Smith-Hefner 2021). This aspect of waithood reflects gender inequality, as women often experience a double burden. The concept of waithood is not simply a delay in reaching traditional milestones of adulthood, but is strongly linked to gendered expectations and unpaid care work, with complex social challenges and implications.

### Closing

Patriarchal capitalism puts women in a vulnerable position to do production and unpaid care work as social reproductive work. The oppression of women is closely linked to the inequality of capital ownership, both in the family and in the social system that produces class differentiation. Women are oppressed by being deprived of their bodies, which are biologically capable of bearing children and producing labour. This makes women the subject of creating, nurturing, and caring for children to become labour for capitalism.

Care work is not taken into account by capitalism because it does not produce its goods. In the end, although women help capitalism by maintaining and caring for the workforce, they are never taken into account and are not paid. The lack of access to capital in the form of wages will ultimately make women dependent on their husbands and unable to free themselves from the domination of their husbands.

The impact of the neglect of care and paid work imposed on women has led to the phenomenon of waithood, the postponement of marriage for economic reasons. Indonesian women are focusing on careers and education in order to achieve a better economic life. Waithood emerges because of the oppression of capitalism, which forces women to live this way. This is underpinned by the gendered conditions of production work, the unpaid care work associated with women, social realities of high cost of living, and the lack of employment opportunities. This situation alienates women from productive work because of the demands placed on them for unpaid care work.

Women must mobilise to demand recognition of care work. This demand is in line with the ILO's 5Rs framework, which provides for full recognition and guarantees for the practice of care work, in particular the recognition of women who have done care work. This includes recognising the domestic division of labour as supporting productive work - no longer imposed only on women. Therefore, the emergence of waitthood as an economic cause can be reduced. Women can take care of their families and still be paid and given health insurance and protection by the state or the capitalists.

## Bibliography

- Andita, L. 2017. "Generasi Milenial Cenderung Menunda Pernikahan", *femina.co.id*, accessed on 30 October 2023 at 22.03 WIB, at <https://www.femina.co.id/sex-relationship/generasi-millennial-cenderung-menunda-pernikahan>.
- Bhattacharya, T., Fraser, N., Mohandesi, S., & Teitelman, E. 2017. *Social Reproduction Theory, Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression*. Pluto Press: London.
- Cameron, P. 2014. *Relationship Problems and Money: Women Talk about Financial Abuse*. WIREWomen's Information: West Melbourne.
- Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS). 2022. "Tingkat Partisipasi Angkatan Kerja Menurut Jenis Kelamin (Persen), 2020-2022", accessed on 15 November 2023, at <https://pagaralamkota.bps.go.id/indicator/6/384/1/tingkat-partisipasi-angkatan-kerja-menurut-jenis-kelamin.html>.
- Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS). 2023. "Jumlah Penduduk Berumur 10 Tahun ke Atas menurut Kelompok Umur, Jenis Kelamin, dan Status Perkawinan, INDONESIA, 2022", accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://sensus.bps.go.id/topik/tabular/sp2022/193/0/0>.
- Charmes, J. 2022. "Variety and Change of Patterns in the Gender Balance between Unpaid Care-Work, Paid Work and Free Time across the World and over Time: A Measure of Wellbeing?" *Wellbeing, Space and Society*, Vol. 3(February). DOI:10.1016/j.wss.2022.100081.
- Chisholm, J. F. 1999. "The Sandwich Generation", *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*, Vol. 8(3), pp. 177-191. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1021368826791>.
- Day, C. & Evans, R. 2015. "Caring Responsibilities, Change and Transitions in Young People's Family Lives in Zambia", *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, Vol. 46(1), pp. 137-52, accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43613105>.
- Duffy, M., Albelda, R., & Hammonds, C. 2013. "Counting Care Work: The Empirical and Policy Applications of Care Theory", *Social Problems*, Vol. 60(2), pp. 145-67. DOI:10.1525/sp.2013.11051.
- Durham, D. 2021. "Adulting and Waiting: Doing, Feeling and Being in Late Capitalism", *Sosyoloji Dergisi*, Issue 41-42, pp. 1-23, accessed on 17 November, at <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/sosder/issue/65879/1028091>.
- Elson, D. 2017. "Recognize, Reduce, and Redistribute Unpaid Care Work: How to Close the Gender Gap", *New Labor Forum*, Vol. 26(2), pp. 52-61. DOI:10.1177/1095796017700135.
- Engels, F. & Untermann, E. 2021. "The Origin of The Family, Private Property and The State", *Politics and Kinship: A Reader*, Vol. 217(23). DOI:10.4324/9781003003595-17.
- Federici, S. 2009. *Caliban and The Witch; Women, The Body and Primitive Accumulation*. Third edit. Autonomedia: New York.
- Federici, S. 2020. *Beyond the Periphery of the Skin: Rethinking, Remaking, and Reclaiming the Body in Contemporary Capitalism*. PM press: New York.
- Felt, L. F. & Sinclair, P. R. 1992. "Everyone Does It': Unpaid Work in a Rural Peripheral Region", *Work, Employment & Society*, Vol. 6(1), pp. 43-64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/095001709261003>.
- Ferguson, S. 2020. *Women and Work; Feminism, Labour, and Social Reproduction*. edited by F. Publication. Pluto Press: New York.
- Fernandes, M., Lupo, L., Benya, A., Dedeoğlu, S., Mezzadri, A., & Prügl, E. 2023. "Social Reproduction, Women's Labour and Systems of Life: A Conversation", *Dialogues in Human Geography*. doi:10.1177/20438206231177072.
- Hasan, A. M. 2019. "Waitthood' & Mengapa Jomblo Usia 30-an Kini Jadi Fenomena Global", accessed on 30 October 2023 at 21.30 WIB, at <https://tirto.id/waitthood-mengapa-jomblo-usia-30-an-kini-jadi-fenomena-global-dd5V>.
- Hitchings, E. & Douglas, G. 2023. "Many Divorcees end up with nothing or only Debt after Divorce – New Study", *The Conversation*, accessed on 22 November 2023 at 07.56 WIB, at <https://theconversation.com/many-divorcees-end-up-with-nothing-or-only-debt-after-divorce-new-study-216665>.
- Inhorn, M. C. & Smith-Hefner, N. C. 2021. *Waitthood; Gender, Education, and Global Delay in Marriage and Childbearing*. Berghahn: New York.
- International Labour Organization (ILO). 2019. *Care Work and Care Jobs for The Future of Decent Work*. ILO: Geneva.
- International Labour Organization (ILO). 2022. "Pernyataan Sikap Hari Perempuan Internasional 2022 - Industri Garmen Indonesia Perangi Ketidaksetaraan Gender dan Berdayakan Pekerja Perempuan", accessed on 30 October 2023 at 16.25 WIB, at [https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/info/public/pr/WCMS\\_839061/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/info/public/pr/WCMS_839061/lang--en/index.htm).
- Irawaty, D. 2017. "Pekerja Rumah Tangga di Antara Paradoks Politik Gender dan Politik Developmentalisme: Studi Kasus dari Indonesia Era Orde Baru", *Jurnal Perempuan*, Vol. 22(3), pp. 4-5. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.34309/jp.v22i3.193>.
- Jakimow, T., Dewi, K. H., & Siahaan, A. Y. 2019. "The Ethics of Social Care in Indonesia: Women's Perspectives on Care in Politics, Development and Policy", *Asian Studies Review*, Vol. 43(2), p. 276. DOI:10.1080/10357823.2019.1586830.
- Kara, H. & Mullings, B. 2023. "Navigating Wait Space in Uncertain Times: Young Women and Precarious Labour in Turkey", *Antipode*, Vol. 55(4), pp. 1047-1067. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12880>.
- Larastiti, C. 2020. "Sagu dan Krisis Reproduksi Sosial Orang Kaiso", *Jurnal Wacana Transformasi Sosial*, Vol. 38.
- Lightman, N. & Kevins, A. 2021. "'Women's Work': Welfare State Spending and the Gendered and Classed Dimensions

- of Unpaid Care”, *Gender and Society*, Vol. 35(5), pp. 778-805. DOI:10.1177/08912432211038695.
- Lisnasari, A. 2023. “Pendidikan bagi Perempuan di Pedesaan masih sangat Rendah dan Timpang - Bagaimana Solusinya?”, *the Conversation*, accessed on 22 November 2023 at 09.36 WIB, at <https://theconversation.com/pendidikan-bagi-perempuan-di-pedesaan-masih-sangat-rendah-dan-timpang-bagaimana-solusinya-202747>.
- Mailoa, M. 2022. “Realita Cuti Melahirkan Ibu Pekerja”, *news.detik.com*, accessed on 30 October 2023 at 13.23 WIB, at <https://news.detik.com/x/detail/intermeso/20220626/Realita-Cuti-Melahirkan-Ibu-Pekerja/>.
- Marx, K. 2006. *Kapital Vol 1*. Hasta Mitra: Bogor.
- Munsch, C. L. 2015. “Her Support, His Support: Money, Masculinity, and Marital Infidelity”, *American Sociological Review*, Vol 80(3). DOI:10.1177/0003122415579989.
- Musahwi, M., Anika, M. Z., & Pitriyani, P. 2022. “Fenomena Resesi Seks di Indonesia (Studi Gender Tren ‘Waithood’ pada Perempuan Milenial)”, *Equalita: Jurnal Studi Gender dan Anak*, Vol. 4(2), pp. 204-220. DOI:10.24235/equalita.v4i2.12905.
- Mustikasari, W. 2018. *Menunda Pernikahan, sebuah Pilihan Hidup Perempuan Masa Kini*. Universitas Gajah Mada: Yogyakarta.
- Polivka, L. J. 2017. “Women and the Crisis of Care in the United States”, *Generations*, Vol. 41(4), pp. 29-35, accessed on 17 November 2023, at <https://claudepeppercenter.fsu.edu/women-and-the-crisis-of-care-in-the-united-states/>.
- Rahayu, R. I. 2017. “Di Mana Situs Penindasan Perempuan dalam Kapitalisme? Eksplorasi Marxisme dalam Reproduksi Tenaga Kerja”, *Indoprogress*, accessed on 15 November 2023, at <https://indoprogress.com/2017/03/dimana-situs-penindasan-perempuan-dalam-kapitalisme-eksplorasi-marxisme-dalam-reproduksi-tenaga-kerja/>.
- Ramadhan, A. 2022. “Banyak Pemuda Menunda Nikah, Kenapa Sih?”, *kumparan.com*, accessed on 22 November 2023 at 09.26 WIB, at <https://kumparan.com/kumparannews/banyak-pemuda-menunda-nikah-kenapa-sih-1zWqux1b13r/full>.
- Rifyana, E. P. 2019. “The Vulnerability of Occupational Health of Women Home Workers: A Study in Labor-Intensive Industries in Penjaringan, North Jakarta”, *Jurnal Perempuan*, Vol. 24(3), pp. 177-192, accessed on 15 November 2023, at <https://indonesianfeministjournal.org/index.php/IFJ/article/view/347/317>.
- Sinambela, N. M. 2023. “Upah Pekerja Rumah Tangga di RI Minim, Hanya Sekitar Rp 800 ribu - Rp 1,5 Juta”, *kumparan.com*, accessed on 15 November 2023, at <https://kumparan.com/kumparanbisnis/upah-pekerja-rumah-tangga-di-ri-minim-hanya-sekitar-rp-800-ribu-rp-1-5-juta-1zh0RVDVVuM>.
- Singerman, D. 2007. “The Economic Imperatives of Marriage: Emerging Practices and Identities among Youth in the Middle East”, *Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper*, No. 6. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1087433>.
- Thieme, T. A. 2018. “The Hustle Economy: Informality, Uncertainty and the Geographies of Getting By”, *Progress in Human Geography*, Vol. 42(4), pp. 529-48. DOI:10.1177/0309132517690039.
- Tjandraningsih, I. 2018. “Working, Housekeeping and Organizing: The Patriarchal System in Three Women’s Living Spaces”, *Jurnal Perempuan*, Vol. 23(4), p. 227. DOI:10.34309/jp.v23i4.273.
- Utomo, A. J. 2018. “Revisiting the Trends of Female Labour Force Participation in Indonesia”, *Jurnal Perempuan*, Vol. 23(4), p. 249. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.34309/jp.v23i4.274>.
- Wulandari, R. 2023. “Waithood: Tren Penundaan Pernikahan pada Perempuan di Sulawesi Selatan”, *Emik*, Vol. 6(1), pp. 52-67. <https://doi.org/10.46918/emik.v6i1.1712>.
- Zilanawala, A. 2016. “Women’s Time Poverty and Family Structure: Differences by Parenthood and Employment”, *Journal of Family Issues*, Vol. 37(3), p. 369. DOI:10.1177/0192513X14542432.



## New Masculinities: The Redistribution of Care Work in Feminist Perspective

Abby Gina Boang Manalu<sup>1</sup> & Iqraa Runi Aprilia<sup>2</sup>

Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Humanities, University of Indonesia<sup>1</sup> & Jurnal Perempuan<sup>2</sup>  
Jalan Prof. Dr Selo Soemardjan, Pondok Cina, Beji, Depok, West Java 16424<sup>1</sup> and  
Jalan T. B. Simatupang kav. 23-24, South Jakarta, DKI Jakarta 12430<sup>2</sup>

abby.gina07@ui.ac.id<sup>1</sup> and iqraa@jurnalperempuan.com<sup>2</sup>

Manuscript Chronology: received 8 December 2023, revised 11 December 2023, accepted 24 December 2023

### Abstract

Gender inequality in the workplace is rooted in patriarchal norms within families, institutions, and states. Gender roles exclude women from job opportunities, promotions, equal income, and more. Care work, associated with women, often forces them to choose between a career and family caregiving. However, the feminist perspective advocates for the redistribution of care work involving men. This research emphasizes the importance of changing men's understanding and practices in care work to achieve gender equality in the workforce. Through in-depth interviews, the study critiques and synthesizes challenges in care work redistribution, shares successful practices, and recommends practical and conceptual suggestions to ensure men's involvement in caregiving within the workplace context.

Keywords: care work, masculinity, redistribution, family-friendly policies, paternity leave

### Introduction

Indonesia has made some progress on gender equality. However, this has not yet translated into an increase in women's participation in the labour market. Marriage remains the strongest predictor of women leaving the labour force. Trends in Indonesia's labour force participation rates suggest that the gender gap in labour force participation remains wide. Female Labour Force Participation (FLFP) has stagnated at around 52 per cent over the past two decades, lower than the male FLFP of around 85 per cent. Indonesia's female FLFP is much lower than that of other East Asian countries (World Bank 2020).

The data in Table 1 show that although there has been a slight increase in women's FLFP over time, the gender gap is still very large at almost 30 per cent per year.

The main factors in women's absence from the labour market are marriage and childbearing. Marriage reduces the participation of all women except those with higher education. In urban areas, a married woman is 25 per cent less likely to be working or looking for work than a single woman. Gender norms and the division of labour are among the challenges to women's participation. They are often overburdened with unpaid care work and domestic responsibilities, which limit the time available to participate in other productive economic work and result in their exclusion from promotion and placement in strategic career positions (Halim et al. 2018; Mason 2022). Another issue found is that they often do not return to work due to a lack of family commitment to share the care workload, and also due to a lack of flexible working hours (Cameron et al. 2018). Women often face a dilemma between paid work and care work. A number of studies show that women sacrifice more of their careers and take on more responsibilities than their male counterparts (Becker & Moen 1999; Singley & Hynes 2005). This suggests that some serious problems with women's participation in the labour force, namely

**Table 1. Labour Force Participation Rate in Indonesia by Gender in the Last 5 Years**

Year	Male	Women
2018	82,80	51,80
2019	83,25	51,81
2020	82,41	53,13
2021	82,27	53,34
2022	83,87	53,41

Source: Sakernas/BPS

gender gaps in women's participation in the labour force, occur during the childcare years and that strong cultural norms perpetuate that women are responsible for more care work because of their gender or the assumption that women earn relatively low incomes and are not the main breadwinners in the family (Bittman et al. 2003; Johansson 2011; Peutere et al. 2017).

These gender stereotypes, which then become gender beliefs, are even manifested in state policy, namely Law No. 1 /1974 on Marriage, which perpetuates many gender norms and does not favour women. This situation shows that there is an urgent need to redistribute unpaid care work so that women can have equal opportunities in the world of work. There is also a need to deconstruct the meaning of care work so that unpaid care work can be shared equally in communities and families. One of the ways in which the redistribution of care work can be promoted is through the active participation of men. The World Bank (2020) notes that efforts have been made in Indonesia to change cultural norms in terms of policy and practice in order to achieve a more equitable distribution of care work.

This study aims to shed light on the redistribution of unpaid care work, which includes the sharing of care responsibilities among family and community members. A number of previous studies have talked about the attachment of care work to women. However, they have emphasised only the female aspect and paid little attention to the perceptions and practices of care work redistribution involving men. However, discussions on gender equity in the world of work include the understanding that there needs to be a shift in perceptions and practices of the distribution of responsibilities that takes into account paid work, family, nurturing, and care work (Peutere et al. 2017; O'Brien & Wall 2017).

The main question to be answered in this research is how men's involvement in the redistribution of care work relates to changes in the meaning and ideal of masculinity. Changes in the meaning of masculinity mean that the roles of men and women are not dichotomous or women (domestic) and men (public). This means that efforts to redistribute care work can be accepted by men through a new understanding of masculinity, that men can contribute to the domestic sector. Using a feminist perspective, this research will show how the norms and practices of redistributing care work are crucial not only

for achieving gender equality, but also for stimulating normative changes in concepts of masculinity and femininity.

## Research Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative approach, including a literature review and in-depth interviews with relevant stakeholders. The research focuses on the urgency of assessing men's participation in care work as a crucial element in achieving gender equality in the context of the world of work. Through in-depth multi-stakeholder interviews, the research aims to explore concrete practices and efforts to promote men's participation in care work. By applying a feminist lens to the analysis of this phenomenon, the research will examine the implementation of policies and initiatives that support men's active role in family care, including paternity leave policies and gender equality campaigns in the workplace.

This research also aims to provide insights into how changes in the redistribution of care work involving men can be an important aspect of achieving gender equality in Indonesia. It is hoped that a deeper understanding of the role of men in the context of care work will provide a strong basis for promoting positive change towards a more equal and inclusive work environment.

A number of feminist theories argue that gender inequality can only be addressed by examining family structures, as this is where gender roles are perpetuated (Hook 2006; Okin 1989). The thinking of a number of feminist philosophers has recognised the importance of involving men in promoting gender justice in relation to women's participation in the labour market.

This research interviewed a range of representatives of relevant parties, namely academics involved in advocating gender equality policies in paid and unpaid care work; civil society organisations involved in efforts to change social understandings and practices related to men; trade unions; small businesses; multinational companies; and state institutions that oversee a range of gender equality policies. This research focuses on several aspects, including policies related to men's involvement in unpaid care work, their implementation, challenges, and good practices. For ethical reasons, the identities of the interviewees are written in accordance with the agreement of the authors and the interviewees.

**Table 2. Identity and Description of the Interviewees**

Source	Agency
Nur Hasyim	Founder of <i>Aliansi Laki-Laki Baru</i>
Kokok Herdhianto Dirgantoro	CEO Opal Communication (Start Up with family friendly policy best practices)
Elly Rosita Silaban	President of <i>Konfederasi Serikat Buruh Seluruh Indonesia (KSBSI)</i>
Andy Yentriyani	Chief Commissioner of the National Commission on Violence Against Women ( <i>Komnas Perempuan</i> )
SS	Industrial Relations Officer (PT XYZ)
Sri Wiyanti Eddyono	Lecturer at Faculty of Law of Gadjah Mada University (UGM) and Policy Expert

This research does not aim to provide an overview of the situation of men’s participation in care work. The focus of the paper is to show the situation of men’s participation in unpaid care work in the context of formal employment. The implications of the research do not capture the challenges and knowledge related to the dilemmas of work, family and care work in the context of informal and other workers.

**Feminism: Understanding and Unravelling the Gender Dimensions of Care Work**

Susan Moller Okin (1989) argues that the institution of the family is the axis on which gender structures are maintained. According to her, the gender assumption that men’s primary role is to earn money while women take care of the family is unfavourable and even detrimental to women. For Okin, the structure of the world of work actually assumes that a worker has a wife at home who cooks, cleans the house, and looks after the children. This understanding underpins various practices that perpetuate the double burden on working women. Not only are they expected to do productive work, but they are also expected to do reproductive work.

A number of feminist scholars have argued that the distribution of domestic work, as well as the elimination of gender roles, is one of the conditions for gender justice in the world of work. For Okin (1989), the distribution of domestic work, including parental leave, must be equitable. Meanwhile, according to bell hooks (1984), best known for her book *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Centre*, we cannot stop at the effort to share care work equally with men, but it is important to change our perception of what domestic work is. According to hooks, we are internalised to value the work traditionally associated with men, while devaluing the work associated with women.

According to hooks, this internalisation takes place from the nurturing stage, when boys and girls begin to form perceptions of care work. Boys believe that care work is women’s work and tend to rely on women for fulfilment. Meanwhile, girls feel that the work is forced and required of them, leading to a sense of reluctance and constraint. In fact, care work is a skill that everyone should have, master, and do. Care work should be seen in terms of its contribution to individual wellbeing, the promotion of aesthetic development, and the reduction of distress (hooks 2015, p. 105). Supporting the internalised idea of the ideology of care work, Nancy Chodorow (1978) also argues for the importance of dual care, provided by both men and women, in promoting gender equity. This idea of dual care serves as a reminder of the need for men to be meaningfully involved in care work - particularly caregiving.

According to Okin and Chodorow, in order to ensure gender justice in the world of work, labour policies should neither disadvantage primary caregivers nor assume that primary caregivers are women (Okin 1989; Chodorow 1978). So far, in our efforts to achieve gender justice in the world of work, we have often been trapped in the assumption that women’s status and functions are in the realm of production or productive work that is public. In fact, women’s status and function also exist in the realm of reproduction, child socialisation, and sexuality (Mitchell in Tong 2009). If this is not discussed, the urgency of gender justice issues in the world of work will not address the needs of women.

Family leave after the birth of a child should be equitably distributed and should assume that every worker (male or female) has caring responsibilities; and should present flexible working as the norm in the workplace. The most widely recognised traditional family leave is maternity leave, where women are guaranteed

paid and unpaid leave during their maternity period. Feminist discourse has focused on the inclusion and redistribution of care work for men. This has been linked to efforts to normalise a new egalitarian masculinity, for example through efforts to increase paternity leave (Peutere et al. 2017; Schouten 2019).

In order to achieve gender justice in the world of work, the relationship between work and care responsibilities in relation to paid or professional work needs to be examined. Aspects such as state policies; institutional workplace practices; definitions and practices of masculinity are three areas that this research seeks to examine from a feminist perspective. The matrix of domination needs to recognise the different forms of challenge at each of its levels. According to Collins & Bilge (2016), the entanglement between macro and micro levels of oppression needs to be unravelled and addressed.

Through the lens of feminism, this research shows that the implications of the division of paid and unpaid labour from policy to everyday practice are not mutually exclusive. Culturally, childcare and care work responsibilities are strongly associated with women. A number of studies have shown that working women are more responsible for both than men (Peutere et al. 2017, p. 549). The division of labour in the family reflects how gender relations are organised in specific cultural, economic and political contexts (Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard 2010; Bühlmann et al. 2010).

A number of previous studies or findings also show that the existence of paternity leave policies, for example, has a positive impact on men's involvement in unpaid care work in the family (Hook 2006). Two aspects that will be of interest and analysed in this research are how family-friendly and affirmative policies affect the practice of men's involvement in unpaid care work. Firstly, the research highlights how affirmative policies affect the understanding and practice of sharing care responsibilities. Secondly, the research analyses ideas and practices of masculinity in relation to the redistribution of care work.

### Family Friendly Affirmative Policies

Okin in Mason (2022) argues that it is important to make radical improvements/changes in policy and law, including marriage law. The definition of roles in the household needs to be redefined. Both argue that paternal responsibility should be upheld. In addition, employment policies should not assume that women

are the primary carers of children (Mason 2022, p. 46). A number of studies have shown that government intervention can reduce the gender division of labour (Peutere et al. 2017; Schouten 2019). The question is, what about Indonesia? Do we have family-friendly policies, and are we working to change social meanings and practices around the division of labour in care?

Affirmative action is an umbrella term for a range of public policies designed to increase the representation of under-represented groups through a range of direct assessments/measures. Affirmative action can take the form of quotas, minimising barriers for vulnerable groups, active recruitment, and others. Three common justifications for affirmative action are to redress past wrongs; to ensure equal distribution to vulnerable groups; and to compensate for harmful prejudice (Mason 2022, pp. 43-44).

Family-friendly policies aim to support both female and male workers in balancing work and care responsibilities, especially for parents (Kameran & Moss 2009; ILO 2014; Moss 2015). In the Indonesian context, there is Law No. 52/2009 on Population and Family Development, which has the potential to promote men's participation in unpaid care work, although its implementation is far from expected.

In general, maternity leave was the first form of affirmative action, followed by day-care, and in the last 20 years paternity leave policies have been introduced around the world. Paternity leave is a policy designed to encourage male participation in the care of new-born children. In the Indonesian context, the two-day paternity leave has not demonstrated the state's sensitivity or commitment to ensuring changes in the understanding and practice of the gender division of labour within the family (Ariyani 2017). Labour Law No. 13/2003 only provides for two days of paternity leave,<sup>1</sup> suggesting that there is no serious commitment to the redistribution of care work. Nur Hasyim, an activist with the civil society organisation Aliansi Laki-Laki Baru (ALB), says Indonesia's paternity leave policy is ineffective.

What can you do with 2 days? 2 days for paternity leave. The labour process for example, I think the labour process alone can take time and then not to mention when the wife goes through the 40-day postpartum process. Not to mention starting breastfeeding and so on (Nur Hasyim 2023, interview 21 October).

The discourse on increasing paternity leave in public policy is part of an affirmative action to improve the division of domestic labour between married couples.

This is also done to demonstrate the role of men as fathers in the world of work and to remove the stigma of care work (Peutere et al. 2021, p. 549; Schouten 2019). In the draft Law on Mother and Child Welfare (RUU KIA), there is a discourse on increasing maternity leave to 6 months and paternity leave to 40 days. This effort should be appreciated as RUU KIA has increased the duration of maternity leave from 13 weeks to 40 weeks (6 months). Maternity leave has been brought in line

with the minimum standard of ILO Convention No. 183 of 2000, which is 14 weeks. It is also important to note that the term has been changed to paternity leave. The change in terminology opens up opportunities for a redistribution of care responsibilities for fathers in childcare. Nevertheless, RUU KIA still raises a number of criticisms because it still contains articles that legitimise the traditional role of women. The problematic articles in RUU KIA are as follows:

**Table 3. Problematic Articles in RUU KIA**

Article	Contents	Analysis
1 paragraph 1	Mother and child welfare is a condition that ensures the fulfilment of the rights and basic needs of mothers and children in the family, which are physical, psychological, social, economic, and spiritual, so that they can develop optimally through adaptation, relationships, growth, affection, and resolution according to <b>social functions in the development of community life.</b>	The narrative of social function in society will return women to the private sphere and care work as work that is not recognised, let alone paid for.
1 paragraph 3	Mother is a woman who conceives, gives birth to, breast-feeds and/or <b>raises, nurtures and/or cares for a child.</b>	There is a point about raising children, but all the leave arrangements are for women after childbirth. There is no parental leave - time to care for a sick child, for example.  RUU KIA is designed to respond to maternal mortality and stunting, so those who will benefit are women with "traditional" choices and roles, ignoring the plural identities of caregivers..
4 paragraph 1 J	Receive <b>family economic empowerment</b> assistance.	<b>Family economic empowerment</b> assistance means that women have not been made subjects in RUU KIA.  So far, social assistance in Indonesia is paid in the name of the head of the family (husband) if it refers to the Marriage Law.
10 paragraph 1	<b>Every mother must:</b> a. maintain personal health during pregnancy; b. safeguarding the survival and development of the child from the womb; c. have periodic pregnancy health checks; d. nurture, educate, and protect the child with affection; e. strive for breastfeeding for at least 6 (six) months unless there are medical indications, the mother dies, or the mother is separated from the child; f. provide the child with the cultivation of the value of faith in God Almighty and ethics; g. provide balanced nutrition for the child; h. provide an environment that supports the child's growth and development; and i. periodically check the health of the mother and the child at health facilities.	Specifying maternal duties would lead to the state dictating women's choices. This is contrary to women's right to freedom of choice and expression. The article also fails to take into account the plural experiences, limitations, and constraints of each woman depending on her context and situation. It also confines the role of childcare and education to women alone and does not offer any new breakthroughs in egalitarian parenting.
10 paragraph 2	The obligations referred to in paragraph 1 shall be fulfilled and <b>borne jointly by the mother and the father</b> for the benefit of the child, with the support of the family and the environment.	Details of the support provided by fathers need to be developed so that implementation does not clash with societal norms of a traditional division of labour.

Source: Processed by the authors based on RUU KIA 2022

According to Sri Wiyanti Eddyono, the country's gender ideology influences the policies that are produced:

"When we talk about gender ideology, actually the policy cannot be separated from the gender ideology of the state. Currently, there are still laws that are very strategic, but they have a very traditional concept of the division of roles of men and women, and this will certainly affect the regulation of the labour sector" (Sri Wiyanti Eddyono 2023, interview 1 November).

On the other hand, it must be understood that in many countries, including Indonesia, affirmative policies on care work still exclude informal workers (O'Brien & Wall 2017, p. 5). The Labour Law and RUU KIA, which talk about maternity and paternity leave, still do not take into account the redistribution of care work and informal worker groups, as well as different definitions of non-formal work.

Based on all the interviews, it can be concluded that affirmative action should be linked to efforts to change people's attitudes and behaviour, accompanied by budget/investment in care work and clear measurement and monitoring mechanisms. Otherwise, the policy intended as affirmative action is merely a formality without significant impact on changing the status of the targeted/advocated group (Andy Yentriyani; Nur Hasyim; & Elly Rosita Silaban 20-23, October interview).

Interestingly, although efforts to promote a fair redistribution of care work are far from satisfactory in terms of public policy, a number of good practices have been initiated by institutions, organisations, and the private sector. An interview with the CEO of a start-up company revealed that the company's policy on paternity leave was designed to promote gender equality in the workplace.

In 2015, we introduced six months' maternity leave for employees, and in 2017 we introduced one month's paternity leave. We allow employees to bring their child to the office. Everyone continues to receive the same salary and phone credit as if they were working. If the conditions at home are not adequate, (the child) can be brought to the office. There is a place for the child to rest, so he/she can work while looking after the child. ... My office policy is that if a male employee does not take paternity leave, I even make a note that he will not be promoted. We have a principle that workers belong to their families. Apart from the economic aspect, there is also the aspect of happiness, which should not be marginalised. They are not only the servants of the capitalists. This means that they also have families that need

to be taken care of with love (Kokok Herdhianto Dirgantoro 2023, interview 22 October).

The paternity leave policy in Kokok's company was developed by reflecting on his own and his wife's experience as an employee in another company. The pregnancy experience was particularly difficult for his wife, but the company had no empathy or affirmative policy to respond to the situation. Struggling to balance paid work and caring responsibilities, his wife decided to quit her job. The implications of a single income were not easy for a family, but the lack of support from the office made the decision a forced one.

This situation is highlighted by data from the World Bank (2022), which shows that without support and protection from the state and the workplace, women workers are often forced to choose between their careers and their care responsibilities (Hook 2006; Peutere et al. 2017). In Indonesia, there are still few companies that offer policies to help workers transition to parenthood, so it is not uncommon for low-income couples to be forced to sacrifice their paid work.

According to Kokok, the affirmative policy can be implemented in his company because there is a good will and commitment on the part of the company to provide a humane working situation and environment. In addition, in Kokok's case, the small size of the company makes it possible to provide salaries and benefits to employees who take parental leave. The larger the company, the higher the budgetary aspect of supporting maternity/paternity leave and childcare facilities. Therefore, government investment is required in the form of budgets, day-care facilities, and maternity insurance (O'Brien & Wall 2017).

In the Indonesian context, this public investment has not been prioritised by the government or companies. In fact, if we expect only corporate responsibility and commitment, it will be very difficult to achieve justice for women workers. Support for care responsibilities should be shared and a joint responsibility between the state and the private sector (Elly Rosita Silaban 2023, interview 23 October).

A multinational company in Indonesia has also made efforts to promote gender equality in the workplace. The company employs 60 per cent women out of a total workforce of 22,000.

We have a company policy on caring. There is the term primary caregiver and there is the term secondary caregiver. Primary caregivers are those who give birth to

a child or care for a child and take full responsibility for the child. An example would be an adoptive parent who decides to adopt a child or who has ongoing responsibility for the child. Another example is a husband who replaces his wife who dies during childbirth or illness, is imprisoned, or dies in the postpartum period, leaving the wife unable to provide care. The employee who takes over these care responsibilities is classified as the primary caregiver because he or she is the full-time caregiver for the child. For example, if he is the primary caregiver, he is entitled to 4.5 months of paid primary caregiver leave. Then the option to continue is 1.5 months unpaid. If before it was 3 months paid + 3 months unpaid, now it is 4.5 months paid + 1.5 months unpaid (SS 2023, interview 30 October).

According to SS, his company has introduced paid primary caregiver leave for both women and men in order to support an egalitarian work situation. The term "primary caregiver" is an attempt to redefine caring responsibilities in a way that does not, as has been argued, imagine only women as the subject (Okin 1989; Mason 2022, p. 46). The recognition of caring responsibilities for both women and men in policy is a manifestation of the normalisation of the idea that this is work that can be done by either men or women. This definition suggests that caring is not necessarily the domain of women.

Further, SS also mentioned that the majority of employees and workers take paid caregiver's leave, but rarely take unpaid leave. This suggests that financial considerations and forms of financial security also influence how employees respond to caregiver's leave policies. Meanwhile, related company policies are as follows:

In the past, male workers took 5 working days of paternity leave, we have unpaid paternity leave that can be taken for 3 months. So, 3 months plus 5 days. But it's rare that anyone takes it because it's unpaid. So even if they do, they usually only take a little bit. So, they rarely take the full three months. The maximum I see here that has taken 56 days is 28 people (SS 2023, interview 30 October).

The 28 people who took the maximum paid paternity leave (56 days) in the first six months or so after it was introduced at the end of 2022 represented about 10 per cent of male employees who were eligible to take paternity leave (SS 2023, interview 30 October).

The issue of leave duration is important. This relates to the amount of time men have to engage in care work, particularly caring, and the impact on the sustainability of the employee's work. Care leave policies, which are intended to promote egalitarian parenting, should not instead lead to companies being reluctant to hire women, women being excluded from promotions,

women being harassed at work and women's position in the world of work being weakened. On the other hand, it should also be noted that the granting of paternity leave is also linked to an understanding and skills related to domestic responsibilities. Otherwise, leave, which is intended to ensure an egalitarian division of care work, has the potential to perpetuate gender inequalities and vulnerabilities, such as men's demands to be served; women's dependence on the support of uncooperative partners, leading to violence and gender injustice (Gheaus & Robeyns 2011).

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows that paternity leave is also linked to their high involvement in unpaid work within the family, be it domestic work or childcare. From 2021, Switzerland will be the first country to introduce 2 weeks of paid paternity leave, with the aim of bringing it into line with 14-17 weeks of paid maternity leave (ILO 2021). With the harmonised duration of paternity and maternity leave, Switzerland is one of the few countries where unpaid care work is equally distributed (Durrer 2019).

Parental leave is also linked to income or wage factors. In this case, time spent in paid work reduces time spent on domestic work, including care, for both women and men, and vice versa. A person's share of household income also affects their share of household responsibilities (Bianchi et al. 2000; Cunningham 2007; Moss & Deven 2015). The division of family and work care responsibilities can vary depending on financial considerations, the workplace, culture, and national policies that influence it (Peutere et al. 2017).

Komnas Perempuan supports male comrades who take paid leave when their wives give birth. But the challenge is whether those who take leave actually redistribute care work. It is also necessary to ensure that these men are trained (to do care work and childcare). If it is just leave without support and without a change of attitude, it will not be effective (Andy Yentriyani 2023, interview 25 October).

Based on in-depth interviews conducted with a number of relevant parties, there are several aspects that need to be considered. In the design and creation of affirmative public policies on care work, attention needs to be paid, among other things, to: aspects of the definition and subjects responsible for care; the duration of leave in relation to the commitment and contribution of care work that can be done; the linkage of leave with public investment in balancing paid work and care responsibilities; and the multiplication of comprehensive policy studies.

According to Mason (2022, pp. 43-48), affirmative action is an attempt to “treat” systemic injustice and institutional oppression of vulnerable groups. The starting point is to recognise the diversity of vulnerabilities and concrete situations of those responsible for providing care. Policies aimed at justice must have the flexibility and capacity to recognise plural situations of vulnerability and inequality.

### **Masculinity and Men’s Caring Responsibilities**

In recent decades, many feminists have come to believe that men’s role-making and care-giving experiences have a significant impact on gender equity in the family, contribute to children’s development (Lamb 1981 in O’Brien & Wall 2017), influence men (Chodorow 1978; Parke 1996 in O’Brien & Wall 2017) and contribute to women’s empowerment, the achievement of gender equality and wider social change (Pleck 1985; Okin 1989). As Sara Ruddick states, “the most revolutionary change we can make to motherhood is to involve men in every aspect of childcare” (1983, p. 89).

A number of studies in countries where paid paternity leave has been introduced have highlighted a number of problems. Fathers build emotional closeness and self-satisfaction in their interactions with their children. On the other hand, there are also cases where men feel uncomfortable and disrupted in their masculine identity when doing care work (O’Brien & Wall 2017). Although the intended policy situation in some Scandinavian countries is not the same as in Indonesia, a similar dilemma arises in the case of parental leave for primary and secondary carers in SS’ company. Idealised masculinity is perceived as conflicting with caring responsibilities.

When it comes to paternity leave, in the factory, if it’s a male employee, the consideration is that he doesn’t have to work overtime or that his income will be reduced if he takes paternity leave. In the office, it’s more about their existence, that their place is in the office and it feels awkward if they’re not working. Some employees who took paternity leave said that they felt uncomfortable doing caring work for too long... This situation arises because their role is to earn money and come home without sharing the housework, so they are suddenly told every day to look after the baby, do other housework, and so on. This is not a situation they like. This is more or less what we found (SS 2023, interview 30 October).

Nur Hasyim, of *Aliansi Laki-Laki Baru (ALB)*, said there was a need to normalise attachment and emotional involvement of children in care work.

In some workshops, mothers were seen as more dominant than fathers in building a bond with their children. Another issue is usually related to the self-image of fathers, which is associated with responsibilities related to finances, such as paying for children’s school fees and other school needs. Many fathers feel responsible for such things (Nur Hasyim 2023, interview 21 October).

In the feminist dimension, ways of thinking about gender roles, everyday practices, and the relationship between care and social justice become the framework for analysing the situation of the division of labour in care work in Indonesia. Affirmative measures such as parental leave, without a change in attitudes, are not effective in achieving gender justice in family and work.

Even if there is paternity leave, the dependency on the mother or mother-in-law is a bit problematic. I also remind workers not to rely too much on their parents and in-laws. They (men) must be able to prepare milk, change nappies, bathe their own children. Men must also be able to cook simple meals for themselves and their wives. With these skills, paternity leave is really useful for the wife (Kokok Herdhianto Dirgantoro 2023, interview 22 October).

Elly Rosita Silaban made a similar point in an interview. She said that in a dialogue on workers’ rights, a group of women workers wanted paternity leave. Meanwhile, the men’s group did not respond positively to this offer because they did not consider this leave to be important or relevant to them. In society, the idea that care is the domain of women leads to a rejection/dismissal of the division of care work that is regulated in the policies of companies/business communities. Therefore, efforts to develop policies should be accompanied by constant efforts to change gender norms and practices in society.

We need to change the mindset. Men need to understand that caring for family members is their responsibility too. We need to remove the stigma that men’s contribution to care work is just a favour or out of pity - and not a responsibility. For this to happen, women also need to be able to negotiate wisely, openly and more widely. Conversely, women also need to have an understanding of sharing domestic work... We still find that men who do care work are stigmatised by the community, including family, neighbours and even their own wives. For example, they are bullied for being men under their wives’ armpits & for doing inappropriate work... How can we change this stigma? I think it starts with us and our families. By modelling the husband’s involvement to the children, we teach that it is normal and natural for men to be able to take care of the household (Elly Rosita Silaban 2023, interview 23 October).

Some conservative couples and families still hold the gender ideology that children are better cared for

by mothers than by fathers or other parties, such as nurseries, domestic workers and others (Mason 2017, p. 47). This view can be held by both men and women. As Silaban (2023) noted in an interview, in some situations women are often suspicious of men or others doing care work. As a result, women often decide to give up paid work and become full-time housewives. Meanwhile, men involved in care work feel unappreciated and excluded.

The gendered division of labour is internalised by both men and women. Mistrust, belittlement and exclusion of male involvement in care work are also commonplace (Oakley 2018). The State of the World's Father's (STWF) report shows that in 16 out of 17 countries surveyed, 70-90 per cent of men reported that they felt responsible for domestic care work - as did their partners (wives) (STWF 2023). However, the social structure of unavailability of paternity leave, lack of support and a sense of devaluation (stigma against men with domestic work) prevent them from doing so.

This is also seen in the way that interactions within the day-care centre tend to be exclusive to women, without considering that working men also need these facilities. There is still a stigma that men are interlopers or aliens in the care arena (Doucet in O'brien & Wall 2017 p. 17). However, we also need to highlight the importance of gender-responsive care in order to deconstruct the dichotomy between female and male gender roles in care.

Challenging the ways in which men negotiate old and new masculinities needs to be addressed in policy making, institutional practices and individual actions in "undoing gender". Wall & Leitão (2017) state that it is important to promote a general consensus around the idea of a new masculinity, which is about the ideal of a caring father who is not only involved in education and responding to the public world, but also a masculinity that is involved in emotional growth and development. This new idea of masculinity is important as a keyword for challenging traditional masculinity. This is confirmed in the Indonesian context.

There have been a number of social transformation efforts to promote men's involvement in care work. Reflective and critical dialogue is one way of dismantling sexist thinking.

For example, in workshops run by ALB in a number of rural areas, male participants were asked to talk about how they remembered their fathers. The majority of participants said that the father figures they remembered tended to be negative: cold, strict, harsh, and distant. Although they

appreciated their father's contribution to the person they are today, the majority of male participants did not want the same pattern of parenting (Nur Hasyim 2023, interview 21 October).

This means that awareness and opportunities for social transformation are indeed open if supported by education, training, and a supportive system.

Extended families tend to believe that caring roles are not suitable for men. There are still many assumptions that men are incompetent, that it is better for a man not to bathe a baby so as not to cause harm. This is a way of excluding men from caring responsibilities. In one of our trainees' stories, it was considered *pamali* for a man to wash dishes or hold a baby in Lombok, but there was one man from the father's class. He defied *pamali* by carrying his baby in public. This shows that carrying can be done by anyone (Nur Hasyim 2023, interview 21 October).

Interestingly, this practice of an ALB's "champion" was followed by several other men. This practice demonstrates the "doing" and "undoing" of gender, showing that gender equality in relation to caring responsibilities depends not only on policy and normative contexts, but also on the agency and personal perspectives of social actors themselves (Butler 2004; Walby 1997 in O'brien & Wall 2017). The previously rigid boundaries of the gendered division of labour are slowly changing. Gender is an action that is continuously imitated and repeated, resulting in a natural and self-reinforcing effect. This means that as knowledge, socialisation and the performativity of egalitarian care work increases, we are in the process of transforming to understand fluid and egalitarian notions of masculinity and femininity.

The understanding and practice of caring responsibilities also need to be understood through the lens of intersectionality. Men's situations are highly pluralised in terms of education, occupation, social class, age, geographical location and their various interrelated aspects that shape one's identity, consciousness, meaning, choices and actions, including views on how to engage in childcare (Johansson 2011).

Actually, if we look at it, there is a tendency for gender practices to change. But we need to use an intersectional lens because men's experiences are not homogeneous; they are plural. In one study I saw that the male group, the alpha parents (those aged 20 to 30), have different parenting patterns. Those who live in big cities and not with their parents tend to practice co-parenting and a more equal sharing of caring responsibilities (Andy Yentriyani 2023, interview 25 October).

Rather than excluding men from caring, it is important to build supportive systems and new understandings of

the benefits of caring. Not just financial, but also in terms of love, building relationships with children, happiness, wellbeing, and personal development (Lewis et al. 2009; O'Brien & Wall 2017).

Men's happiness index increases because it is important to show or make visible the incentives for men's involvement in care work for men themselves - not just economic incentives (Nur Hasyim 2023, interview 21 October).

This sub-discussion argues that there is a close relationship between gender justice in the family and women's participation in the public sphere. Traditional interpretations of masculinity and femininity are still an obstacle to promoting recognition of care work, reduction of care work and equal redistribution. However, based on the expertise and work experience of a number of research participants, it can be argued that in addition to policy, issues such as: agency; performativity and normalisation of new masculinities; and recognition and valuing of care work are important things to intervene in to promote social transformation that is equitable for all.

## Closing

The literature review, supported by interviews with relevant stakeholders, shows that equal opportunities and gender equity in women's participation in paid work exist at the intersection of domestic and public life.

A number of feminist theoretical propositions, and their application in the form of affirmative policies on the distribution of care work, are seen as having a significant impact on changing people's attitudes and behaviours towards the gendered division of labour (Schouten 2019). A number of interviewees also agreed that social justice for women in terms of access to and sustainability of paid work requires a range of government interventions. These include affirmative policies that rewrite the definition of women and men in an egalitarian way. Care responsibilities need to be defined in ways that do not necessarily refer to women, but recognise other situations, such as fathers as primary carers, adoptive parents, relatives, and other carers.

In the Indonesian context, efforts are being made to develop an affirmative policy for care work in RUU KIA. It is important to note that this policy needs to be accompanied by a budget that is geared towards investment in care. RUU KIA has yet to provide social security that emphasises that a person taking parental leave should not be discriminated against, dismissed, excluded from career advancement, or have their income reduced. In addition, support in the form of day-care and

more flexible working hours is needed to ensure that women and men can combine care and paid work in a sustainable way.

RUU KIA has the potential to achieve gender justice if it is formulated in an inclusive way. However, if it is formulated without a breakthrough in defining new femininities and masculinities, it has the potential to perpetuate gender and class inequalities and the exclusion of informal workers.

A number of good practices to change the definition and practice of the division of care work have been carried out by companies and civil society organisations and institutions. Although the impact is not large and generalised, there are at least good examples that can be replicated and scaled up. The practice of training to generate understanding and action on "new masculinities" shows that gender roles can be eroded through education and training.

All interviewees pointed to the importance of agency in supporting social transformation. Firstly, in everyday family practices, the performativity of new masculinities can have an impact on teaching the next generation and the surrounding male community to recognise and value the importance of care work. Secondly, it is important to generate the idea of shared care that allows for the reduction and redistribution of care work from women to men and others who may be involved. Thirdly, it is important to consider the interconnectedness of care work and the economy, so that it can generate rewards or even incentives/social guarantees to do this work safely and properly. Finally, there is the question of how to promote appropriate affirmative action without slipping into exclusion of identity diversity, class bias and gender bias. It is hoped that the four conclusions above will simultaneously promote women's FLFP.

This research certainly has limitations in revealing men's personal experiences of care work. Suggestions for future research can include more personal experiences of men about the redistribution of care work in an effort to support social transformation. As recommendations for the sustainability of the redistribution of care work in an effort to increase women's FLFP; 1) The importance of recognition and appreciation of care work, and the importance of reducing and redistributing care work from women to men and/or to other parties who may be involved; 2) Forms of recognition and reward can be through KPPPA policies and programmes supported by various stakeholders; 3) The importance of disseminating "good practices" related to changing the definition and practice of the division of care work by companies and

civil society organisations and institutions; 4) Campaigns for understanding and acting on “new masculinities” to show that gender-equitable role sharing can be achieved through changing attitudes and redefining concepts of masculinity and femininity.

## Bibliography

Ariyani, D. 2017. “Paternity Leave (Cuti Ayah): Apa, Bagaimana, dan Untuk Apa?”, *YINYANG Jurnal Studi Islam Gender dan Anak*, Vol. 12(2), pp. 351-366. DOI:10.24090/yinyang.v12i2.2017.pp351-366.

Becker, P. E. & Moen, P. 1999. “Scaling Back: Dual-earner Couples’ Work-family Strategies”, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, Vol. 61(4), pp. 995-1007. <https://doi.org/10.2307/354019>.

Bianchi, S. M., Sayer, L. C., Milkie, M. A., & Robinson, J. P. 2012. “Housework: Who Did, Does or Will Do It, and How Much Does It Matter?”, *Social Forces; A Scientific Medium of Social Study and Interpretation*, Vol. 91(1), pp. 55-63. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sos120>.

Bühlmann, F., Elcheroth, G., & Tettamanti, M. 2010. “The Division of Labour among European Couples: the Effects of Life Course and Welfare Policy on Value-practice Configurations”, *European Sociological Review*, Vol. 26(1), pp. 49-66. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcp004>.

Bittman, M. et al. 2003. “When Does Gender Trump Money? Bargaining and Time in Household Work”, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 109(1), pp. 186-214. <https://doi.org/10.1086/378341>.

Butler, J. 2004. *Undoing Gender*. Routledge: New York.

Cameron, L., Contreras S. D., and Rowell, W. 2018. “Female Labour Force Participation in Indonesia: Why Has It Stalled”, *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, Vol. 55(2), pp. 157-192.

Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS). 2023. “Tingkat Partisipasi Angkatan Kerja Menurut Jenis Kelamin 2018”, *bps.go.id*, accessed on 23 November 2023, at <https://www.archive.bps.go.id/indicator/40/2200/3/tingkat-partisipasi-angkatan-kerja-menurut-jenis-kelamin.html>.

Chodorow, N. 1978. “Mothering, Object-Relations, and the Female Oedipal Configuration”, *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 4 (1), p. 137. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3177630>.

Collins, P. H. & Bilge, S. 2016. *Intersectionality*. John Wiley & Sons: New Jersey.

Cunningham, M. 2007. “Influences of Women’s Employment on the Gendered Division of Household Labour Over the Life Course: Evidence From a 31-Year Panel Study”, *Journal of family issues*, Vol. 28(3), pp. 422-444. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X06295198>.

Durrer, S. 2019. “Gender Equality in Switzerland”, *ohchr.org*, accessed on 19 December 2023, at [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Development/SR/visit-to-switzerland/foge\\_GE.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Development/SR/visit-to-switzerland/foge_GE.pdf).

Gheaus, A. & Robeyns, I. 2011. “Equality-Promoting Parental Leave”, *Journal of Social Philosophy*, Vol. 42, pp. 173-191. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9833.2011.01525.x>.

Halim, D., Johnson, H., & Perova, E. 2017. “Could Childcare Services Improve Women’s Labour Market Outcomes in Indonesia?”, *East Asia and Pacific Gender Policy Brief No. 1*, accessed on 19 December 2023, at <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/855851490958133680/pdf/113927-BRI-PUBLIC-EAP-abstract-sent.pdf>.

hooks, b. 2015. *Feminism is for Everybody*. Routledge: New York.

Hook, J. L. 2006. “Care in Context: Men’s Unpaid Work in 20 Countries, 1965-2003”, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 71(4), pp. 639-660. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240607100406>.

House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI). 2022. Academic Paper of the Draft Law on Mother and Child Welfare (RUU KIA).

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2000. “C183 - Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)”, accessed on 11 December 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:55:0:::55:P55\\_TYPE,P55\\_LANG,P55\\_DOCUMENT,P55\\_NODE:REV,en,C183,/Document](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:55:0:::55:P55_TYPE,P55_LANG,P55_DOCUMENT,P55_NODE:REV,en,C183,/Document).

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2014. “Extending Childcare Services to Workers in the Informal Economy: Policy Lessons from Country Experiences”, accessed on 23 November 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/genericdocument/wcms\\_737555.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/genericdocument/wcms_737555.pdf).

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2021. “ILO Global Care Policy Portal”, accessed on 19 December 2023, at <https://www.ilo.org/globalcare/?language=en#home>.

International Labour Organization (ILO). 2022. “Care at Work in Indonesia Investing in Leave and Care Services for a More Gender Equal World of Work”, accessed on 13 November 2023, at [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-jakarta/documents/publication/wcms\\_867840.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-jakarta/documents/publication/wcms_867840.pdf).

Johansson, T. 2011. “Fatherhood in Transition: Paternity Leave and Changing Masculinities”, *Journal of Family Communication*, Vol. 11(3), pp. 165-180. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15267431.2011.561137>.

Kammerman, S. B. & Moss, P. (Eds.). 2009. *The Politics of Parental Leave Policies: Children, Parenting, Gender and the Labour Market* (1st ed.). Bristol University Press: UK. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt9qgmq0>.

Lachance-Grzela, M. & Bouchard, G. 2010. “Why Do Women Do the Lion’s Share of Housework? A Decade of Research”, *Sex Roles*, Vol. 63, pp. 767-780. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-010-9797-z>.

Mason, E. 2022. *Feminist Philosophy*. Routledge: New York.

Moss, P. 2015. “There are Alternatives! Contestation and Hope in Early Childhood Education”, *Global Studies of Childhood*, Vol. 5(3), pp. 226-238. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2043610615597130>.

Moss, P. & Deven, F. 2015. “Leave Policies in Challenging Times: Reviewing the Decade 2004-2014”, *Community, Work & Family*, Vol. 18(2), pp. 137-144, DOI: 10.1080/13668803.2015.1021094.

Oakley, A. 2018. *The Sociology of Housework*. Bristol University Press: United Kingdom.

O'Brien, M. & Wall, K. 2017. *Comparative Perspectives on Work-Life Balance and Gender Equality Fathers on Leave Alone*. Switzerland: Springer Nature.

Okin, S. M. 1989. "Justice, Gender, and the Family", *Hypatia*, Vol. 8 (1), pp. 209-214, <https://doi.org/10.1111/S0887536700005584>.

Peutere, L., Rautava, P., & Virtanen, P. 2017. "Domestic Responsibilities as Predictors of Labour Market Attachment Trajectories in Men and Women", *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, Vol. 37(9/10), pp. 536-554. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-04-2016-0039>.

Peutere, L., Rosenström, T., Koskinen, A., Härmä, M., Kivimäki, M., Virtanen, M., Ervasti, J., & Ropponen, A. 2021. "Length of Exposure to Long Working Hours and Night Work and Risk of Sickness Absence: A Register-based Cohort Study", *BMC Health Services Research*, Vol. 21(1), p. 1199. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-021-07231-4>.

Pleck, J. H. 1985. *Working Wives, Working Husbands*. Sage: Beverly Hills, CA.

Republic of Indonesia. Law Number 1 Year 1974 on Marriage.

Republic of Indonesia. Law Number 13 Year 2003 on Labour.

Republic of Indonesia. Law Number 52 Year 2009 on Population and Family Development.

Ruddick, S. 1983. "Pacifying the Forces: Drafting Women in the Interests of Peace", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society Women and Violence*, Vol. 8(3), pp. 471-89. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3173948&gt;>.

Schouten, G. 2017. "Citizenship, Reciprocity, and the Gendered Division of Labour: A Stability Argument for Gender Egalitarian Political Interventions", *Politics, Philosophy and Economics*, Vol. 16 (2), pp. 174-209. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470594X15600830>.

Schouten, G. 2019. *Liberalism, Neutrality, and the Gendered Division of Labour*. Oxford University Press: New York.

Singley, S. & Hynes, K. 2005. "Transitions to Parenthood: Work-Family Policies, Gender, and the Couple Context", *Gender & Society*, Vol. 19(3), pp. 376-397. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243204271515>.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). 2023. "Supporting Equal Parenting: Paid Parental Leave", [oecd-ilibrary.org](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/8f056391-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/8f056391-en), accessed on 19 December 2023, at <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/8f056391-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/8f056391-en>.

Tong, R. 2009. *Feminist Thought*. Routledge: USA.

Van der Gaag, N. et al. 2023. "State of the World's Fathers 2023 Centering Care in a World in Crisis", [equimundo.org](https://www.equimundo.org), accessed on 3 October 2023, at <https://www.equimundo.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/State-of-the-Worlds-Fathers-2023.pdf>.

Wall, K. & Leitão, M. 2017. "Fathers on Leave Alone in Portugal: Lived Experiences and Impact of Forerunner Fathers" in O'Brien, M., Wall, K. (Eds.), "Comparative Perspectives on Work-Life Balance and Gender Equality Fathers on Leave Alone", *Life Course Research and Social Policies*, Vol. 6, pp. 45-67. Switzerland: Springer Open: Switzerland. DOI:10.1007/978-3-319-42970-0\_4.

World Bank. 2020. *Indonesia Country Gender Assessment: Investing in Opportunities for Women*. World Bank: Washington DC.

World Bank. 2022. "Nearly 2.4 Billion Women Globally Don't Have the Same Economic Rights as Men", [worldbank.org](https://www.worldbank.org), accessed on 23 November 2023, at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/03/01/nearly-2-4-billion-women-globally-don-t-have-same-economic-rights-as-men>.

## (Endnotes)

- 1 Paternity leave in the terminology: Law No. 13/2003 on Manpower does not mention the term paternity leave. Rather, it refers to 2 days of leave to accompany the wife during childbirth, although in some journals and news reports the 2 days of leave in question are taken from the term paternity leave.
- 2 "In accordance with the provisions of Law No. 13/2003 on Manpower, paternity leave is granted for 2 days with full pay". See Ariyani, D. 2017. "Paternity Leave (Cuti Ayah): Apa, Bagaimana, dan Untuk Apa?", *YINYANG Jurnal Studi Islam Gender dan Anak*, 12(2): p. 364.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:redaksi@jurnalperempuan.com) for guidance.

YAYASAN  
**YJP**  
JURNAL  
PEREMPUAN

Alamanda Tower, 25th Floor,  
Jalan T.B. Simatupang kavling 23-24,  
Jakarta Selatan  
Telepon: (62) 21 2965 7992



**International  
Labour  
Organization**

