

# Evaluating the Policy and Program on Gender Mainstreaming Through the Role of Woman Farmer Group in Easi Pay Barsha Pump Program in Waingapu Sumba, Indonesia

Kadek Wiwik Indrayanti\*, Dewi Astutty Mochtar

*University of Merdeka Malang, Malang,*

*\*Corresponding author email: Indonesia kadek.wiwik@unmer.ac.id*

**ABSTRACT.** Sumba is one of the driest area in Indonesia and it's difficult for the people to get water during the dry season, as to get water, they have to travel as far as 3-7 Km. With the initiation of Barsha pump program in 2017 and 2019, the water problem can be solved. The objectives of this paper are to identify and evaluate the role of Women Farmer Group (WFG) in the operation of the Barsha pump, and to identify and to evaluate policy and program on Gender Mainstreaming (GM) to improve the capacity of WFG. The method for data collection was done by using questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Gender analysis then applied to analyze the findings. The result shows that the role of farmer group is surprising because farmer can access water and run the obligation to pay 20% from their farm production to the manager of the pump. The obstacles faced by WFG are in the access to get seeds, and the credit facility and support for weaving products. In addition, the patrilineal system that affects WFG and the society in general make them unable to improve their capacity, both in the farmer community and in their households. They still don't have program and policy with gender perspective hence the ongoing programs are also not optimized. The lack of understanding on concepts in GM, such as gender budgeting and gender focal point, compounded with the lack of budget, human resource, and cultural factor. To solve this condition, there must be a cooperation and socialization of GM by using human rights and local wisdom approaches.

**Keywords:** Role of WFG, Policy and Program on GM, and Barsha pump.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The condition of woman farmer in every part of the world is still far from the chance to enjoy equality and justice. The root of the problem lies in the patriarchal norm and system, and to fix this, it needs approach from the policy [1]. Agricultural development efforts that do not address persistent gender gaps. Yet clear guidelines for addressing the needs of both men and women in different environments and agricultural systems are still lacking [2].

To achieve gender equality, the Government of Indonesia has stated the policy in Presidential Decree No. 9/2000 on Gender Mainstreaming [3]. The Presidential Decree contains instructions ranging from the level of Minister to the level of Regent/Mayor to implement gender mainstreaming. Policies and programs on Gender Mainstreaming (GM) have been implemented for 20 years ranging from Ministerial level to regional government level, but they still need to be evaluated because the results are still not optimal.

The condition of women in agricultural sector is not much different. Access to loan, limited participation, formal granting of land, and the patterns of control on cultivated land are still in the

hand of the husbands, but agricultural works are done by women [4]. Agricultural Equipment and Machinery (AEM) are mostly designed to be used for male farmers, but rarely compatible for women [5].

The cooperation program between the State Minister for Woman Empowerment and Child Protection have been signed on a memorandum of understanding with the Minister of Agriculture. The cooperation aims to improve women's capacity in terms of access, opportunities, participation in decision making and control over resources, and the benefits of development results [6].

Sumba is one of the driest areas in Indonesia. People experience difficulty in obtaining water, especially during the dry season. Since 2017 the Barsha pump program has been carried out by a consortium between Radio Max Waingapu Foundation, Delft University-Netherland, A Qysta and Merdeka University, Malang. Until 2019, there were 10 Barsha pump units installed and their water had been used by several members of the farmer group. Of the 10 farmer groups, there are 2 groups of women farmers who benefit from the pump [7]. Not all government institutions have and implement programs with a gender perspective. By looking at one indicator, that all heads of offices in the district are men [8].

This article studies the role of Woman Farmer Group (WFG) with the barsha pump program, the obstacles they experience, evaluation on Gender Mainstreaming policies and programs within government institutions, and provides guidance material for capacity empowerment with a gender perspective

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The method used is qualitative descriptive because it examines the role of Woman Farmer Group and the role of government institutions in implementing policies and programs on GM. The data was collected using open-ended and close-ended

questionnaires and Focus Group Discussions were carried out within the agency and the farmer groups. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the implementation of FGD was carried out in accordance with health protocols.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The operation of the barsha pump through the Easy-Pay program carried out by Radio Max Waingapu Foundation was granted to 10 farmer groups, where 2 of them were Woman Farmer Groups (WFG). The farmer groups who received the barsha pump project donation were as follows:

**TABLE 1.** The Location farmer groups

NO	NAME OF LOCATION / VILLAGE
1	Waikudu - Mbatakapi Village – East Sumba
2	Mbatakapi 01 - Mbatakapi Village – East Sumba
3	Mbatakapi 02 - Mbatakapi Village – East Sumba
4	Kalu – Prailu Village – East Sumba
5	Tabundung – East Sumba
6	Taupopu – Wanokaka (West Sumba)
7	Mondulambi – Lewa Tidas East Sumba
8	Watumbaka – Watumbaka Village – East Sumba
9	Mangili – East Sumba
10	Laipandak – East Sumba

From those 10 farmer groups, there were 2 woman farmer group that received the Barsha pump support, they were:

**TABLE 2.** The Name of farmer groups

NO	NAME OF FARMER GROUP
1	Woman Farmer Group – Mbatakapi
2	Tapa Wala Badi

The benefits of barsha pump operations were very large for women, because through the Easi-Pay program, farmers did not have to invest the initial money for water capital, purchase of seeds, etc. Farmers could focus on starting works without worrying about the initial capital which usually psychologically will hinder farmers' desire to work. Women used to carry water from the river. With the Easi-Pay project utilizing the Barsha pump, water become available for the field and the time was faster for watering hence there was more time for the members of Woman Farmer Group (WFG) to do other works at home or in the group/community.

The form of the agreement, between the Foundation and the farmer group that had been carried out, so as not officially recorded in a note or formal document. They built mutual agreements on the basis of mutual trust between them. Farmer groups could

fulfill their obligations by paying 20% to the foundation with money they earn from selling crops. This proves that if a program is made by providing equal access and opportunities to both sexes, it will have a positive impact. The beneficiaries of the barsha pump program were all genders. However, in general, the decisions making process in the field work are still dominated by male farmers. The influence of women in making decisions is still low, both within the family and in the agricultural community. It is similar to the results of studies by Akter, et.al and Hutajulu on the role of women in agriculture [9, 10].

Before the initiation of barsha pump program, during the dry season women were practically unable to work on their fields and gardens. However, since the operation of the barsha pump in 2018, all farmers in the dry season have been able to work in their fields and produce crops. The foundation helps farmers to

sell the products/crops from their fields and gardens while the assistance from the government is still uncertain.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Barsha pump operations have stopped so that farmers' fields and gardens are currently not producing. Other activities are weaving and cooperative activities. The income from weaving handicraft is very supportive for women, especially during the dry season. They can sell their woven fabrics within 2 months, and able to sell 2 fabrics to earn up to 2-4 million Rupiah. The marketing strategy they carried out is still traditional, where the customers should come to the groups. The work carried out by Woman Farmer Group to help the family finances is not only one activity but many. What is needed is access to a loom, which still is difficult to be obtained.

Observing these conditions, it is necessary to empower the relevant agencies and the participation of the village head to provide assistance in the form of threads and non-manual weaving tools because it will have an impact on women's production and income, including WFG. The Village Fund program should be channeled for the development of women's economic potential. However, thread assistance is only given once in the sense that the program is not sustainable. The influence of women in decision making is still low in both the agricultural community. Although there are findings stated that the role of housewives in carrying out daily activities, making decisions, carrying out agricultural activities, and increasing income is more dominant than men [11].

The conditions in government institutions, especially in terms of access and control in making policies are still centered on the leadership, where all of whom are held by men. Women have not been given equal opportunities to access and participate in determining policies and programs. Furthermore, the groups that benefit from the implementation of the policies and programs for the community have not been widely enjoyed. Of the 5 government institutions, only the Agency for Woman Empowerment and Children Protection and the Family Planning Agency that understands policies and programs with gender perspective. Almost all agencies do not really understand the concept of gender budgeting, gender focal points and regulations related to women and children.

The obstacles faced by police agencies and institutions are in the forms of low budgets, limited human resources, and barriers in cultural and technological aspects. Therefore, in the future, to improve conditions in government institutions, it is

necessary to provide materials on Gender Mainstreaming.

Likewise, the participation of the community, both from non-governmental organizations, academics, and village officials as gender focal points is highly needed to implement gender mainstreaming programs. They need to have an understanding of the concept of gender concepts to assist the government in dealing with gender issues that occur in society such as inequality and gender discrimination. Because the benefits that can be achieved in using GM are as follows: 1) Development of policies and programs will be successful because they take into account the reality of both sexes in listing skills, not half-sided to male only; 2) Equal treatment and equal distribution of power, resources, and decision making opportunity between men and women; and 3) The government and other stakeholders will be able to respond to the needs of both sexes in their respective sectors [12].

As one of the strategies for accelerating GM at the regional level, it is necessary to increase the capacity in each government institution. The existence of a gender mainstreaming module material as one of the socialization materials for agencies and other institutions aims to build capacity among institutions to achieve gender justice and equality. The provision of understanding on the concepts of gender includes creating programs with a gender perspective using the cultural and traditional approaches of the people of Sumba itself. This commitment should be started from the leadership ranks through practical development and training programs aimed at other institutions and stakeholders. In line with studies conducted in African countries [13]. In addition, local governments need to be given an understanding that women's rights are part of human rights as an effort to achieve gender equality and justice, in line with the concept of The High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), how to encourage government agencies and stakeholders to integrate the concept of gender and human rights through policy formulation, program development and implementation of activities [14]. Agricultural development decision-makers and project designers need to design with gender in mind. Equipping them with tools and knowledge of innovative gender-transformative practices and intervention options and creating accountability for serving women and men will be key [2]

So that in the material for gender mainstreaming, it can be used as a reference for conducting outreach covering several basic things, which is understanding of GM, human rights, the foundation of international and national policies on GM, and gender issues

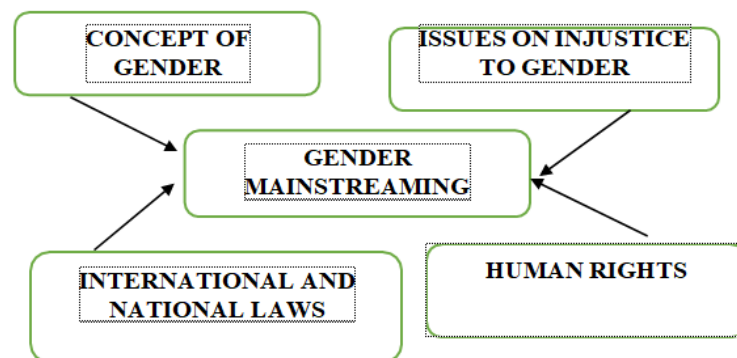


FIGURE 1. Gende Mainstreaming

#### 4. CONCLUSION

With the operation of the barsha pump with the Easy-pay program, access to water for farmers in the dry season is resolved. The impact, which was directly enjoyed by Woman Farmer Groups, was the increase in income. However, access to loan and assistance from the government which provided continuously has not been widely enjoyed. This is understandable because the understanding of GM is not widely acknowledged and understood by local government circles. Policies and programs with a gender perspective within the agencies have not yet been implemented. Some other obstacles are including lack of budget, limited human resources, and traditional barriers.

The recommendation from this paper is to provide module for socializing materials on GM to government agencies and stakeholders to deal with gender issues that occur in society and within government agencies.

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