



Policy Innovation from Bottom: The Bargaining Position of Acehnese Women Through Musrena and Musrenbang in Banda Aceh

Masrizal Masrizal¹, Rizanna Rosemary¹, Saifuddin Saifuddin¹, Akmal Saputra², Muna Yastuti Madrah³, Mohd Yusri Ibrahim⁴

¹Universitas Syiah Kuala, Kota Banda Aceh, Aceh 23111, Indonesia

²Universitas Teuku Umar, Kabupaten Aceh Barat, Aceh 23681, Indonesia

³Universitas Islam Sultan Agung, Kota Semarang, Jawa Tengah 50112, Indonesia

⁴University Malaysia Terengganu, Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu 21300, Malaysia

ARTICLE INFORMATION	A B S T R A C T
Received: January 24, 2025 Revised: June 05, 2025 Available online: July 30, 2025	This study explores the bargaining position of Acehnese women in public policy forums through their participation in Musrena (Women's Development Planning Forum) and Musrenbang (General Development Planning Forum) in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Using a contemporary feminist ethnographic approach, the research documents how the Balee Inong community—a grassroots women's network—engages with the state planning apparatus to influence gender-responsive budgeting and development agendas. Data were collected through field observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies involving key stakeholders at village and city levels. Findings indicate that Musrena serves as an effective platform for amplifying women's voices in formal planning processes, offering both structural and symbolic space for women's political engagement. The institutionalization of Musrena through local regulations has significantly enhanced women's visibility and agency, particularly in negotiating budget allocations and shaping gender-equitable policies. Furthermore, the study reveals how historical narratives, religious values, and local wisdom interact with state mechanisms to produce a uniquely Acehnese model of participatory development. The research highlights the potential of localized feminist strategies in transforming hierarchical planning systems into more inclusive, bottom-up processes. It contributes to global discourses on gender budgeting, feminist governance, and community-based planning innovations.
KEYWORDS	
CORRESPONDENCE	
Name: Masrizal Email: masrizalfisip@usk.ac.id	

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's women's movement has historically adopted global frameworks such as Women in Development (WID) and Women and Development (WAD), which aim to integrate gender equity into development agendas. These frameworks emphasize the importance of addressing structural barriers that inhibit women's participation in public spheres. The legacy of pioneers such as R.A. Kartini, who championed women's literacy and emancipation, continues to inspire contemporary feminist activism in the country. However, patriarchal norms remain a pervasive obstacle that limits women's access to decision-making spaces (Husna, 2016; Masrizal et al, 2019; Nurjanah, 2003; Partini, 2013). In Aceh, this challenge is compounded by religious-cultural traditions that reinforce gendered expectations, thereby restricting women's mobility and agency in the public domain (Saadawi, 2011; Sari, 2013; Srimulyani, 2009). For instance, forums such as Musrenbang—Indonesia's participatory development planning process—are often dominated by male actors, making it difficult for women to effectively voice their aspirations (Masrizal, 2017a; Syahputri, Veni Nella, 2017)

The issue of women's participation in public life has gained significant global attention, with many countries formulating diverse strategies to enhance women's roles in governance and development. From legal reforms to institutional innovations, these efforts reflect a shared recognition of the importance of gender equity in the public sphere. In Indonesia, similar patterns can be observed, where national frameworks have sought to integrate women into formal development planning. This article aims to contextualize such global trends by examining how Acehnese women engage with public planning institutions,

highlighting both the challenges they face and the innovative pathways they have carved to claim political space.

The 1975 World Conference on Women in Mexico City marked a pivotal moment in global gender discourse. Attended by delegates from nearly every region—including the Americas, Europe, Australia, China, and Southeast Asia—the conference addressed fundamental issues related to women's roles in development and proposed international benchmarks to evaluate women's capacity-building (Bayyurt & Çaha, 2020; Soeyono, 2014). The resulting policy framework, known as Women in Development (WID), emphasized integrating women into development processes by enhancing their economic productivity. However, WID was later criticized for failing to challenge structural inequalities and was thus deemed insufficient in transforming women's conditions. In response, subsequent conferences introduced the Women and Development (WAD) approach, driven largely by Marxist-feminist critiques, which aimed to address the root causes of women's subordination within the development agenda (Fakih, 2008; Masrizal et al, 2019; Soeyono, 2014).

In Indonesia, the implementation of development planning deliberations (Musrenbang) remains highly hierarchical and bureaucratic. At the village level, the schedule and structure of Musrenbang are typically determined by the Regional Development Planning Agency (BAPPEDA). These meetings are often conducted at local gathering points such as the *meunasah* (village mosque) or community halls, usually held in two sessions—one in the morning and another in the afternoon—lasting approximately three to four hours. However, in practice, Musrenbang tends to operate as a formalistic and technocratic exercise, primarily fulfilling administrative requirements rather

than fostering genuine participatory planning (Masrizal, 2016; Tim UNFPGI dan PPKK UGM, 2013; Tresiana & Duadji, 2016)

The formalistic and technocratic nature of Musrenbang is evident in its reliance on rigid table-format templates mandated by BAPPEDA. As a result, planning outputs tend to prioritize physical infrastructure—such as fences, village offices, and road construction—over social development initiatives. Due to the hierarchical structure of Musrenbang, proposals submitted at the village level are often forwarded to higher levels without substantial revision or contextual adaptation. This top-down flow creates several challenges. First, development programs approved at the grassroots level are frequently not accommodated at the district or city level. Second, many proposals merely replicate projects from previous years, disregarding the evolving and specific needs of the community. Third, the limited involvement of women in these forums contributes to persistent gender insensitivity in development priorities.

The Balee Inong, a grassroots women's organization in Banda Aceh, emerged in response to the structural exclusion of women from formal development planning processes. Comprised primarily of housewives who are active in majlis ta'lim (Islamic learning circles), the group recognized the urgent need to formalize women's voices within Musrenbang forums. Confronted with the limited space for women's participation, Balee Inong initiated strategic engagement with local government, particularly the mayor's office. This collaboration eventually led to the issuance of a mayoral regulation that institutionalized the Musrena—a parallel forum specifically designed to accommodate women's aspirations within the broader framework of participatory development.

Musrena was established to promote more gender-equitable urban planning in Banda Aceh. It adopts a hybrid planning model that integrates both bottom-up and top-down approaches. Functioning as a dedicated platform for village-level women, Musrena facilitates direct communication between grassroots participants and policymakers in formulating development action plans. Through Musrena, women are able to articulate their needs and concerns in ways that are formally acknowledged in Musrenbang processes. Its presence also influences the allocation of the Village Budget (*Alokasi Dana Gampong* or APBG), where a portion is earmarked based on proposals emerging from Musrena forums. At the broader state level, Musrena has become an important indicator for measuring women's participation in planning, implementation, monitoring, and benefit-sharing within local governance structures.

Musrena operates in two directions. At the community level, it strengthens women's capacity to participate in development planning. At the state level, it serves as a channel for integrating women's aspirations into formal policy frameworks. By amplifying women's voices, Musrena enables grassroots concerns to influence government programs and decisions. Its legitimacy is reinforced by the Mayor's Regulation (Perwal No. 52 of 2009), which institutionalizes Musrena as part of the participatory governance structure in Banda Aceh. This innovation has received national recognition for advancing women's participation in development. Furthermore, the mayor has supported the formalization of Balee Inong—a local term for women's associations—as a key actor in sustaining the Musrena initiative (Masrizal, 2017a).

Balee Inong represents a form of localized wisdom rooted in Acehese cultural and religious traditions. Initially established in

Banda Aceh, this community-based women's forum expanded to include 18 organizations across nine sub-districts. To institutionalize and monitor the integration of women's voices, the Banda Aceh Regional Development Planning Agency (BAPPEDA) introduced the e-Musrenbang Dictionary in 2015—an information system designed to track government budgeting processes. Within this framework, village funds (*Alokasi Dana Gampong*) allocate approximately 10% to Balee Inong/Musrena activities and the remaining 90% to general village development, administered by village officials (Masrizal et al, 2019).

Building on the above context, this article advances three key propositions. First, it explores Balee Inong as a grassroots women's movement that engages in collaborative governance through the Musrena and Musrenbang platforms. Second, it examines the bargaining position of Balee Inong members—primarily ordinary housewives—in influencing development planning and budgeting processes. Third, it analyzes the enabling and constraining factors that shape the participation of Balee Inong in Musrenbang, which remains the highest state forum for local planning and fiscal allocation. In doing so, this article aims to contribute to broader debates on participatory governance and policy innovation from below, with a focus on gendered agency in post-conflict and decentralized contexts.

To situate this study within broader academic discussions, it is important to reflect briefly on the existing body of literature. Although this study does not employ a bibliometric methodology, a preliminary exploration of international literature using open-source mapping tools such as VOSviewer indicates a notable absence of empirical research on grassroots women-led planning mechanisms in post-conflict Muslim societies. While global discourses on gender budgeting and participatory development are abundant, there is limited scholarly attention to localized initiatives such as Musrena, which emerge from community-based Islamic women's associations like Balee Inong. This study therefore contributes a grounded and context-specific insight into gendered governance innovation from below.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the agency and participation of women in the Musrena and Musrenbang forums in Banda Aceh. Qualitative methods are particularly suited to understanding complex social phenomena as they unfold in natural settings, allowing for in-depth exploration of participants' experiences and meanings (Creswell 2010; Lincoln, Y. S., & Denzin, N. K. 1994; Septiawan Santana K 2010). Data were collected directly from participants in their socio-cultural context, enabling a grounded interpretation of gender dynamics, local governance, and community-based policy initiatives.

The focus on Balee Inong as a grassroots social movement within the Musrena and Musrenbang arenas is grounded in its strategic role in amplifying women's voices in local governance. Observing the group's engagement in these formal spaces allows for deeper insight into how women articulate their ideas, negotiate gendered authority, and foster both internal cohesion and external coordination. Their participation is not only about inclusion but also about navigating power dynamics—where women's perspectives are acknowledged, understood, and at times accepted by male-dominated institutions.

This study specifically examines three interrelated dimensions of women's participation in local planning forums. First, it explores how the Balee Inong community acts as a

grassroots social movement collaborating with the Musrena and Musrenbang mechanisms. Second, it investigates the bargaining position of Balee Inong members—primarily housewives—in articulating their voices within these planning arenas, from the village to the city level, while navigating local cultural norms. Third, the study identifies the driving forces and constraints faced by the Balee Inong in participating meaningfully within the Musrenbang forum, which is widely regarded as the most authoritative arena for state-level planning and budgeting.

This research adopts an ethnographic approach in collecting data, with an emphasis on contextual immersion rather than classical anthropological fieldwork. As noted by Vidich and Lyman (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Lee-Koo, 2012b), ethnography in social research allows for the nuanced exploration of meaning in everyday life, especially within marginalized groups. However, this study does not employ a “pure” ethnographic model. Rather, it utilizes a feminist-informed ethnography to understand how community-based women’s groups navigate public participation. The aim is to uncover shared knowledge and social practices that enable women—particularly housewives—to transition from the domestic sphere to active engagement in public and political spaces (Hesse-Biber, 2012; Zoonen, 2012).

This study draws on the framework of contemporary feminist ethnography as articulated by Mary Kay Thomson 1985 in (Reinharz, 1992). Thomson identified three key patterns used in feminist ethnographic research: (1) documenting the lives and activities of women; (2) understanding women’s experiences from their own perspectives; and (3) conceptualizing women’s behavior as expressions shaped by their social context. These principles guide the analytical lens of this research in highlighting the agency of Balee Inong members. A similar orientation was used by Annette Weiner (1976) in (Shulamit Reinharz 1992) who demonstrated how Trobriand women possessed symbolic, structural, and functional power in regulating their communities. This theoretical grounding supports the recognition of Acehese women’s contributions not as peripheral but as integral to community governance and social reproduction.

Building on these feminist ethnographic principles, this study emphasizes two strategies that are particularly relevant for understanding the Balee Inong community: first, documenting women’s daily lives and community roles, and second, interpreting their experiences from their own standpoint. The first principle is essential for capturing the richness of women’s roles within community settings. Lyn Lofland, in her critique of androcentric biases in community studies, emphasized the need to systematically record women’s activities, which are often overlooked in conventional sociological research (Shulamit Reinharz 1992).

The second principle highlights the importance of viewing women not merely in relation to men, but as subjects of their own lived realities. George Simmel (1858–1918) noted the historical neglect of women’s self-perceptions in mainstream social thought. In contrast, Canadian sociologist Dorothy Smith calls for a standpoint epistemology—research that begins from the lived experiences of women themselves (Reinharz, 1992; Sartorius, 2014).

Sociologist Judith Stacey emphasizes that feminist ethnographers must treat women as principal narrators of their own experiences, rather than as objects of inquiry (Reinharz, 1992). This approach foregrounds women’s voices as authoritative sources in understanding social realities. Consequently, this study positions women—especially members

of the Balee Inong—as key informants in tracing the dynamics of gendered participation in planning forums. Furthermore, feminist ethnography insists that women’s behavior must be understood within its social context. Rather than attributing actions to biological traits, personality, or class alone, it interprets women’s agency as situated and relational. Irene Dabrowski’s research on working-class women exemplifies this perspective, revealing how women’s experiences and roles are shaped through marriage, kinship, and structural positioning.

Data collection techniques in this study included participant observation, in-depth interviews, documentation analysis, and, where appropriate, focus group discussions (FGDs). These methods were selected to enable deep engagement with the lived realities of the participants. As Atkinson and Hammersley (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994) assert, understanding social life requires the researcher to become part of the reality being studied. This principle of immersion guided the fieldwork process, allowing the researcher to capture both verbal and non-verbal expressions of women’s agency within the Musrena and Musrenbang forums. The use of documentation—including local regulations, community records, and Musrena archives—served to triangulate findings and enrich the ethnographic narrative.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The fieldwork revealed a number of compelling findings that illustrate the dynamic role of women in post-conflict Aceh, particularly in shaping gender-equitable development programs. The study specifically addresses how women have emerged as a new force in public and civic life, redefining traditional gender hierarchies in Acehese society. Historically, Aceh has been recognized for its legacy of female leadership, positioning women not merely as participants but as central agents of social transformation. This tradition becomes even more significant when contextualized within the prolonged history of conflict—from colonial resistance, through the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) era, to the traumatic aftermath of the 2004 tsunami. In such a complex socio-political landscape, the reassertion of female agency highlights the resilience and continuity of women’s roles in rebuilding communities and advocating for inclusive governance.

Despite the numerous challenges faced by Aceh, the province has emerged as a significant site of women’s active involvement in post-conflict development. One of the clearest manifestations of this agency is the establishment of the Musrena—a gender-affirmative version of the Musrenbang (development planning meeting). The Musrena, implemented consistently from 2007 to 2018 in Banda Aceh, provides space for grassroots-level women to voice their aspirations through a structured process, beginning from village-level pre-Musrena to sub-district and city-level planning. Although the integration of Musrena outputs into formal government programs (SKPK) has not shown significant increases, the initiative represents a vital innovation in participatory planning. It continues to serve as a platform for women to express their ideas and participate in shaping gender-responsive urban development (Masrizal, 2016; Ratnawati, 2016). This finding resonates with studies on gender-inclusive governance, which emphasize the importance of institutional mechanisms in enabling marginalized voices to influence policy (Cornwall & Gaventa, 2000). As such, Musrena not only reflects a procedural adaptation but also reaffirms women’s substantive roles in post-conflict civic rebuilding.

Furthermore, the implementation of Musrena has drawn attention from various stakeholders interested in participatory planning. Its model has been studied, adapted, and proposed for replication in different contexts due to its unique approach to gender-sensitive development (Masrizal, 2016, 2017b). Beyond its procedural function, Musrena serves as a continuous learning space for women—particularly those at the grassroots level—to voice their aspirations and contribute to gender-equitable urban development planning. This aligns with broader findings that emphasize the transformative potential of participatory institutions in empowering marginalized groups when embedded in supportive political and cultural environments (Dasion, Madrah, & Mukhijab, 2023).

Balee Inong (community One of the most significant grassroots women's movements in Banda Aceh is the Balee Inong community, which emerged in a city severely affected by the 2004 earthquake and tsunami, along with Aceh Barat, Aceh Jaya, and Aceh Besar. Despite the devastation, the collective efforts of local institutions—including government bodies, universities, and NGOs—fostered a recovery process that actively involved women. This revitalization positioned Banda Aceh not only as the provincial capital but also as a renewed hub for education, governance, and the economy. The Balee Inong initiative exemplifies the spirit of female self-reliance that extends beyond those in formal education (from elementary to college) and includes village women who benefit from informal educational programs provided by local, national, and international institutions. These findings resonate with feminist recovery theory, which highlights the role of community-based empowerment in post-disaster contexts (Dennis & Pienaar, 2023) and confirm the centrality of localized knowledge in rebuilding inclusive development agendas.

The historical legacy of women's autonomy in Aceh continues to shape their agency today. During the prolonged conflict with the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), many women were left to manage households alone while their husbands joined the resistance. These women simultaneously served as caregivers and economic providers, maintaining family survival amid political violence. Their resilience was further tested by the 2004 tsunami, which claimed the lives of spouses, children, and extended family members. Despite these compounded traumas, Acehese women demonstrated remarkable strength and determination to restore household economies. Their responses reflect not only survival strategies but also an embedded cultural narrative of female independence, aligning with gendered disaster recovery literature that recognizes women as central actors in both immediate survival and long-term reconstruction (Fordham, 1998; Bradshaw & Fordham, 2013).

Balee Inong (BI) stands out as one of the key grassroots women's communities in Banda Aceh that has actively voiced women's perspectives in local development. Established in 2007, BI originated from household mothers' associations who regularly gathered in *Julo-Julo* (monthly women's meetings) across various subdistricts, initially facilitated by both local and international NGOs. These early formations emerged in three villages—Lamjabat, Lampaseh Aceh, and Punge Jurong—within the Meuraxa subdistrict. Over time, the community expanded, establishing branches in almost every *gampong* (village) in Banda Aceh, with coordination at the *kemukiman* (cluster of villages) level. The organic growth of BI reflects not only women's strong social networks but also their increasing capacity to influence

participatory governance mechanisms at multiple administrative layers.

Today, the Balee Inong community is widely recognized as a valuable asset in nearly every village in Banda Aceh due to its positive and sustained contributions to local governance. Its presence is increasingly acknowledged by village heads (*keuchik*), subdistrict leaders, and even municipal officials. The community's evolution from grassroots initiative to strategic partner in development planning reflects the institutionalization of women's voices in governance. This shift is illustrated by testimonies from Balee Inong leaders across Neusu Aceh, Geuceu Meunara, and Lamjamee, who noted:

“We now feel that our involvement is genuinely needed by the keuchik and even the subdistrict heads—not to mention members of the local council. They now consider us partners in program planning and in voicing women's aspirations for capacity-building at the village level.”

This demonstrates a critical shift in gender dynamics: from token inclusion to meaningful participation in public decision-making processes. Such progress aligns with global trends in participatory governance where community-based women's organizations are increasingly acknowledged as co-creators of development agendas (Ahdiah, 2013).

The growing participation of women through the Balee Inong community illustrates a significant transformation in gender relations in Aceh. Women are no longer seen as passive beneficiaries but as indispensable stakeholders in local development. Their involvement is increasingly institutionalized through collaborative mechanisms with village and municipal actors. Where women were once excluded or marginalized from formal planning forums such as Musrenbang, they are now actively awaited participants, especially when discussing gender-responsive programs that address the specific needs of women. As of today, Balee Inong has expanded into 18 active groups across nine districts in Banda Aceh, serving as a vital platform for sustaining inclusive, community-driven development. This shift represents not only a spatial expansion but also a cultural reorientation in local governance—where women's voices are no longer peripheral but central to planning and implementation.

Institutional Recognition of Balee Inong: Legalizing Women's Voices in Aceh's Public Sphere

The institutionalization of Balee Inong's role in development planning has been significantly strengthened through legal recognition at both local and national levels. In Banda Aceh, this formalization is evident in a number of key regulatory frameworks, including the Mayor's Decree No. 52 of 2009 on Musrena, the Gender Qanun of Banda Aceh City, and the city's Strategic and Development Plans (2017–2022), all of which explicitly promote gender-responsive governance. These local policies align with broader national legislation supporting participatory and gender-equitable development—such as Law No. 25/2004 on the National Development Planning System (SPPN), Law No. 32/2004 on Regional Government, and Law No. 7/1984 on the ratification of the CEDAW Convention. Additionally, presidential and ministerial directives, including Presidential Instruction No. 9/2000 on Gender Mainstreaming and the Joint Circular of Bappenas and the Ministry of Home Affairs (2007), have further reinforced the commitment to institutionalize women's voices in planning. This multi-level legal framework illustrates that Balee Inong and the Musrena process are not merely grassroots initiatives, but are firmly

embedded within the formal apparatus of governance—transforming the role of women from marginal actors to recognized agents of public development.

The alignment of Musrena with both local and national legal frameworks has provided the women's movement in Aceh with a strong institutional foundation in the public sphere. This institutional empowerment resonates with Aceh's historical legacy of female leadership, which has long been rooted in acts of political defiance and social mobilization. As early as 1599, Admiral Keumalahayati led a battalion of over 2,000 war widows, the Inong Balee, in armed resistance against foreign invaders. Later, Sultanah Safiatuddin (1641–1675) became the first female monarch in Southeast Asia, governing with authority and recognition. In the modern colonial period, Tjut Nyak Dien (1896–1910) led a guerrilla campaign against Dutch forces, becoming a national heroine of Indonesia. These historical trajectories reveal that the formal recognition of women's participation in governance today—through instruments like Musrena—is not an anomaly but a continuation of Aceh's long-standing tradition of female agency and leadership (Farid Wajidi, 2008; Lee-Koo, 2012a; Ozay, 2011; Sufi, 1994).

Musrena Forum as a Site of Women's Bargaining Power in Development

Since its inception in 2009, the Musrena forum in Banda Aceh has been held annually every February as a dedicated platform for women to articulate their development aspirations. This event brings together a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including representatives of Balee Inong communities, members of the PKK (Family Welfare Movement), local government officials from Banda Aceh City, all SKPDs (regional work units), city council members (DPRK), subdistrict heads, village leaders (*keuchik*), and women-focused NGOs. The collaborative nature of this multi-stakeholder forum underscores its strategic role in amplifying women's voices in local planning and institutionalizing their bargaining power in development discourse.

Musrena activity was facilitated by Bappeda, and the Head of Bappeda. Since its inception in 2009, the Musrena forum in Banda Aceh has been held annually every February as a dedicated platform for women to articulate their development aspirations. This event brings together a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including representatives of Balee Inong communities, members of the PKK (Family Welfare Movement), local government officials from Banda Aceh City, all SKPDs (regional work units), city council members (DPRK), subdistrict heads, village leaders (*keuchik*), and women-focused NGOs. The collaborative nature of this multi-stakeholder forum underscores its strategic role in amplifying women's voices in local planning and institutionalizing their bargaining power in development discourse.

Following the initial discussions held during Musrena, each region appoints two female representatives to bring forward their proposals at the city-level Musrenbang, which is typically convened at Banda Aceh City Hall or the Bappeda meeting hall. These representatives, selected through grassroots deliberations, articulate community-driven aspirations in coordination with local stakeholders, including the DPRK, subdistrict officials, and *keuchik* (village heads). Such coordination is essential to ensure that proposed programs are aligned with existing budgetary mechanisms and can be monitored by designated district operators responsible for overseeing implementation. This multi-level process reflects how Musrena strengthens women's

bargaining capacity—not only to voice needs, but also to influence final budget allocations in gender-responsive planning.

Gender Budgeting Advocacy in the Public Sphere: Musrena and Musrenbang in Banda Aceh

Gender budgeting advocacy in Indonesia began gaining traction in 2001, led by national and regional members of the Gender Budget Analysis Forum, a coalition of NGOs working to promote gender-responsive public finance. At the national level, the Forum advocated for policy mandates requiring the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) to allocate 30% of the national budget for education, 15% for health, and 5% for women's empowerment (Decree No. 6 of 2002). In Banda Aceh, these national efforts found local expression through the issuance of Mayoral Regulation No. 52 of 2009 (Perwal Musrena), which mandates that 5% of each local government unit's (SKPD) budget be allocated to gender-equitable programs, reinforcing the institutionalization of gender budgeting at the municipal level.

Musrenbang, as an annual development planning forum mandated by national legislation, serves as a platform for community members at the village level to identify local challenges and set short-term development priorities. This process exemplifies a bottom-up approach to planning that seeks to ensure community needs are integrated into formal development agendas. To enhance outreach and improve system transparency, Bappeda Banda Aceh has introduced an online Musrenbang system. This initiative includes capacity-building sessions involving subdistrict and *keuchik* (village head) representatives, as well as women's groups across Banda Aceh, to familiarize them with the digital platform.

Although the Musrena forum had been conducted since 2009, its impact on influencing gender-sensitive budget allocations only became evident around 2015. According to Bappeda Banda Aceh reports, the city introduced an e-Musrenbang budget dictionary that allocates an indicative ceiling of IDR 200 million per village. Of this, 10% is earmarked for programs run by Balee Inong and the PKK (Family Welfare Movement), while the remaining 90% is allocated for gampong-level development activities managed by village officials across Banda Aceh's 90 villages.

To this day, gender-focused budgeting in Banda Aceh continues to receive dedicated funding, particularly for community-based women's organizations operating at the village level. This ongoing support demonstrates that Musrena has served as a strategic forum for city authorities to implement gender-responsive development programs. However, some scholars argue that Musrena may eventually become obsolete if the mainstream Musrenbang process fully integrates gender perspectives and effectively accommodates the needs of women across all sectors (Masrizal, 2018; Ratnawati, 2016).

The strengthening of the community of women at the level of the grassroots will give a positive impact on the development of the city of Banda Aceh, as the findings of which explains that women who work in the economic sector, nor the hawkers from the city of Banda Aceh, which sell in the market Peunayong, market Ulee Kareng and Aceh market strongly supports the GDP (gross regional domestic product) in Banda Aceh (Hatta, 2015)

The underlying strength is the strength of the concept of kinship that formed among its members. For example, in the economic field, this community has a group of businesses in each country by using the concept of collective responsibility pattern (Masrizal, 2016). When viewed pattern of development mimics

the pattern of mission formation of community Grameen Bank developed in the study Muhammad Yunus in Banglades explains that the eradication of poverty, the provision of education, health services, employment opportunities for the poor, gender equality by empowering women and ensuring the welfare of the elderly, all the social objectives that a commitment of Grameen Bank (Yunus, 2017). Grameen bank is not a non-usury, Grameen bank disburses three types of loans and credit to burden each with different interest rates, among others: First, livelihood loans with interest rates of 20%. Second, housing loans with interest rates of 8% and a third, higher education credits family children Grameen borrowers with an interest rate of 5% (Muhammad Yunus, 2017; Yunus, 2007).

The women's movement as social agents played by individuals who construct around them (village), it would be interesting if viewed from the perspective of feminist studies. Irwan Abdullah with the approach of postfeminism explains that social relations are no longer a top-down but are horizontal involving synergistic relationships and partnerships between men and women. Women act as agents of social processes because of women as a major actor in life (Abdullah, 2006; Pannilage, 2013). Moreover, the village or the area has had a historical value of the women's movement since the colonial period to the present. Aceh is a unique area thick with his Islam (Srimulyani, 2009). However, it must also be recognized that the value of religion is the heart of the social and cultural life of Acehese society, for a married woman then demanded to always submissive and obedient to her husband as head of the family (Ilyas, 2015). As explained in the Qur'an Surah An-Nisa verse 34 which means "... The man is a leader (*qawwaamum*) on women because Allah has preferred some of them (men) over others ..." means that the so that women can be directed by her husband.

Factors that are now being contemplated by the community of women's centers in the mission is in the political community, in particular the involvement of women in political parties up to the Banda Aceh city council building is still lacking, for example, since inception Musrena until now women's representation on the board is still lacking. The point is politically Aceh today women still lag men, although there are laws that regulate their quota of 30% women in the legislature, but the fact that women in Aceh are still far from these achievements. Reality legislative elections in 2024-2029, the Aceh provincial level women only 8% of the total 81 seats, while at the level of district/city, particularly in Banda Aceh Women represented only 4 or 13% of the total 31 elected seats in the legislature, since the period of 2024-2029 to the present of the total number of board members 31 seats based on that Musrena be as a new political force for women Cities Banda Aceh (KIP Banda Aceh, 2024). Specifically for female community Balee Inong hope these next three female representatives in the city council of Banda Aceh. So the presence of Musrena forum will also be pursued in a bargaining position Musrenbang the basic values of answering the needs of women. So hopes women will continue to get more public space than now. since from the period 2009-2014 to the present of the total number of board members 31 seats based on that Musrena be as a new political force for women of Banda Aceh (Komisi Independen Pemilihan, 2019).

Musrena as an Innovation-based Development Planning Women in Development.

Innovation-based development planning women that are excellent in the full involvement of women in Banda Aceh in Musrena forum, even this forum has been getting a lot of rewards

from the provincial government, central to international. Some of the awards that are, among others: Gender Awareness Award from the German government (2008), Innovation Musrena-APEKSI Become Best Practice (2011), Government of Banda Aceh was awarded IGA thanks to the program and E-Performance Musrena. Furthermore, the Ministry of Planning / Bappenas RI set Banda Aceh city government as a pilot project for Open Government Indonesia (OGI), which is also one of the priority programs of President Jokowi. Moreover, Banda Aceh is also expected to participate actively in the Open Government Partnership (OGP) globally, is one of the main assessments Musrena program. The many innovations obtained by the Government of Banda Aceh cannot be separated from the active community of women's centers in their communities to make beneficial not only at the level of their areas as well as to support the city government.

CONCLUSION

The Musrena Forum represents a grassroots innovation in gender-equitable development planning. As a platform initiated by women in Aceh, Musrena provides a critical space for women to articulate their needs and actively participate in shaping development priorities. While national-level forums such as Musrenbang often overlook gender-specific concerns, Musrena addresses this gap by offering a more inclusive and community-driven mechanism. This study highlights three key findings. First, Musrena functions as a medium for advancing the women's movement by fostering mutual understanding between men and women, and by elevating the dignity and agency of Acehese women—particularly in Banda Aceh. Second, the forum provides strategic entry points for women in accessing village development funds (ADD/ADG), which have historically been dominated by male actors. Since 2015, Musrena has enabled women to manage up to IDR 20 million per village across 90 villages, amounting to a total of IDR 1.8 billion in gender-responsive budgeting. This fiscal access has translated into greater visibility of women's economic demands and their transformation into political identity. Third, Musrena and Musrenbang together constitute complementary arenas through which women can voice their aspirations, both individually and institutionally. These participatory spaces contribute directly to the realization of gender equality goals within the broader framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

REFERENCES

- Abdullah, I. (2006). *Sangkan Paran Gender* (Cet. 3). Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Ahdiah, I. (2013). Peran-Peran Perempuan dalam Masyarakat. *Jurnal Academica*, 05(02), 1085–1092.
- Atkinson, P., & Hammersley, M. (1994). Handbook of qualitative research. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, pp. 248–261.
- Bayyurt, N., & Çaha, H. (2020). Determination of women's voting behavior; A machine learning approach in the Turkish political arena. *International and Multidisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.17583/rimcis.2020.5027>
- Bradshaw, S., & Fordham, M. (2013). Women, Girls and Disasters. In *Dfid*.
- Cornwall, A., & Gaventa, J. (2000). From users and choosers to makers and shapers: Repositioning participation in social policy. *IDS Bulletin*, 31(4), 50–62. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1759-5436.2000.mp31004006.x>
- Creswell, J. W. (2010). Mapping the developing landscape of mixed methods research. *SAGE handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research*, 2(0), 45–68.

- Dasion, A. G. R., Madrah, M. Y., & Mukhijab. (2023). *Tiga Diskursus Kuasa Dalam Sosiologi : Max Weber, Karl Marx, dan Michael Foucault*. Yogyakarta: Jejak Pustaka.
- Dennis, F., & Pienaar, K. (2023). Refusing recovery, living a 'wayward life': A feminist analysis of women's drug use. *The Sociological Review*, 71(4), 781-800. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00380261231175729>
- Denzin & Lincoln. (1994). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE Publication.
- Fakih, M. (2008). *Analisis Gender dan Transformasi Sosial*. Yogyakarta: Insist Press.
- Farid Wajidi (Ed.). (2008). *Aceh Bumi Srikandi*. Banda Aceh: Pemerintah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.
- Fordham, M. H. (1998). Making women visible in disasters: problematising the private domain. *Disasters*, 22(2), 126-143. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-7717.00081>
- Hatta, K. dkk. (2015). *Modul Pemberdayaan Perempuan (sebuah analisa Balee Inong dan Relasi Sosial)*. Banda Aceh: WDC Banda Aceh kerjasama Ford Foundation.
- Hesse-Biber, S. (2012). *The Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Husna, C. A. (2016). Partisipasi Politik Perempuan Dalam Pembangunan Aceh Pasca Konflik. *Jurnal Public Policy*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.35308/jpp.v2i1.681>
- Ilyas, Y. (2015). *Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Al-Quran (Studi Pemikiran Para Mufasir)*. Yogyakarta: ITQAN Publishing.
- KIP Banda Aceh. (2024). *Laporan Hasil Pemilu 2024-2029*. Banda Aceh.
- Komisi Independen Pemilihan, A. (2019). *Hasil Pemilu Anggota DPRK Banda Aceh Tahun 2014-2019*. Banda Aceh.
- Lee-Koo, K. (2012a). *gender at the crossroad of conflict: tsunami and peace in post-2005 Aceh* (Vol. 101). <https://doi.org/10.1057/fr.2011.54>
- Lee-Koo, K. (2012b). Gender at the crossroad of conflict: tsunami and peace in post-2005 Aceh. *Feminist Review*, 101(1), 59-77. <https://doi.org/10.1057/fr.2011.54>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Denzin, N. K. (1994). The fifth moment. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 1, 575-586.
- Masrizal. et all. (2019). The Bargaining Position of Women in Village Fund Management in Balee Inong. *Opcion*, 35. No.89, 514-532.
- Masrizal. (2016). Tinjauan Sosiologis Perencanaan Pembangunan Berbasis Kamus E-Musrenbang. *JSPH*, 1(1), 29-39. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.17977/um021v1i12016p029>
- Masrizal. (2017a). Musrena and E-Musrenbang Dictionary-Based Development Planning Against Gender Perspective Policy. *Procedia - Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research (ASSEHR)*, 81(Icosop 2016), 152-159.
- Masrizal. (2018). Gerakan Sosial Balee Inong Berbasis Komunitas Melalui Ranah Musrena dan Musrenbang. In Brahma Putra Pratama (Ed.), *Comicos 2018: INOVASI, KOMUNIKASI, KOLABORASI "Strategi dan Kajian Membangun Masyarakat Kreatif di Era Digital"* (pp. 903-930). Yogyakarta: Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta.
- Masrizal, M. (2017b). Musrena and E-Musrenbang dictionary based Development Planning Against gender perspective policy. *Atlantis Press*, 81(Gender and Developmen), 152-159.
- Muhammad Yunus, K. W. (2017). *A World of Three Zeros (The New Economic of Zero Poverty, Zero Unemployment, and Zero Net Carbon Emissions)*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Nurjanah. (2003). *Perempuan dalam Pasungan: Bias Laki-laki dalam Penafsiran*. Yogyakarta: LKiS.
- Ozay, M. (2011). Women as Rulers Phenomenon in Southeast Asian Islamic Society: The Queens of Aceh. *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization*, 1(3), 142-151.
- Pannilage, U. (2013). *Role of Women In Rural Development*. Srilanka: Gamana (Guarantee) Ltd.
- Partini. (2013). *Bias Gender dalam Birokrasi*. Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana.
- Ratnawati, O. S. dan. (2016). Model Musyawarah Rencana Aksi Perempuan (MUSRENA) Responsif Gender di Kota Banda Aceh. *Palastren*, 09 No.1, 161-187.
- Reinharz, S. (1992). *Metode-metode Feminis dalam Penelitian Sosial*. Jakarta: Women Research Institute.
- Saadawi, N. El. (2011). *Perempuan dalam Budaya Patriarki*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Sari, R. (2013). *Women's Participation in Local Politic in Aceh (A Case Study)*. Flinders University Australia.
- Sartorius, K. C. (2014). Introduction. In *Deans of Women and the Feminist Movement* (pp. 1-18). New York: Palgrave Macmillan US. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137481344_1
- Septiawan Santana, K. (2010). *Menulis Ilmiah Metode Penelitian Kualitatif (Edisi Kedua)*. Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia.
- Soeyono, N. N. (2014). Gerakan Perempuan di Amerika. *Jurnal Perempuan*.
- Srimulyani, E. (2009). Nyai dan Umi dalam Tradisi Pesantren di Jawa dan Dayah di Aceh : Achieved and Derivative Power. *Jurnal Masyarakat & Budaya*, 11(1), 51-64.
- Sufi. (1994). *Sejarah Kotamadya Banda Aceh*. Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Kebudayaan.
- Syahputri, Veni Nella, C. I. L. (2017). Partisipasi Masyarakat Gampong Dalam Pembangunan Pasca Lahirnya Undang-undang Desa NO. 6 Tahun 2014 di Kabupaten Aceh Barat. *Jurnal Sosiologi USK*, 1(2).
- Tim UNFGI dan PPKK UGM. (2013). *Policy Brief, Partisipasi Perempuan dalam Pembangunan : Mengurati Musrena Banda Aceh*. Yogyakarta.
- Tresiana, N., & Duadji, N. (2016). Kegagalan pemaknaan 'Lembaga Musyawarah Perencanaan dan Pembangunan Desa ' dalam mewujudkan Deepening Democracy Failure of understanding ' Village Development and Planning Consensus Institution ' in realizing deepening democracy. 29(4), 191-203.
- Yunus, M. (2007). *Bank Kaum Miskin*. Jakarta: Marjin Kiri.
- Yunus, M. (2017). *A World of Three Zeros : The New Economic of Zero Poverty, Zero Unemployment, and Zero Net Carbon Emission*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Zoonen, L. Van. (2012). *Feminist Media Studies*. Netherland: SAGE Publication Ltd.

