



Protection of Women and Children in Crisis: Post-Disaster Social, Economic, and Political Support and Barriers to Palu

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the support and obstacles in protecting women and children in crisis situations, focusing on the socio-economic and political conditions influencing Central Sulawesi Provincial Regulation No. 3 of 2019 on the Protection of Women and Children from Violence after the 2018 earthquake, tsunami, and liquefaction in Palu City. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, 15 purposively selected informants representing the pentahelix elements were involved. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using the socio-economic and political variables of Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) policy implementation model, following the stages of data condensation, display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2014). Secondary data analysis employed bibliometric mapping via VOSviewer. Findings reveal that limited economic resources remain the primary barrier to preventing and addressing violence, while entrenched customary norms and unresponsive bureaucracy heighten vulnerability. Positive drivers include community participation, women's organizations, media engagement, and progressive regulations, though private sector involvement remains limited. Public opinion largely supports the policy, yet political elite attention is inconsistent. The study concludes that effective post-disaster protection requires sustained funding, consistent political commitment, and cross-sectoral coordination, recommending stronger public-private partnerships and greater community engagement to ensure long-term protection for vulnerable groups.

INTRODUCTION

Women are most vulnerable to discrimination during natural disasters and after. They are also vulnerable to being victims of physical and mental violence, sexual violence, victims of forced marriage, and even human trafficking. They are often helpless when confronted with close family and state officials as perpetrators of these immoral acts. Violence against women and girls is a global pandemic experienced by 1 in 3 women in the world. There are 1 in 14 women (7.2%) in the world who report having experienced sexual violence from a partner other than their partner, while almost 1 in 3 women (30%) have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner. Overall, 35.6% of women worldwide have experienced sexual violence by non-partners, physical or sexual violence from intimate partners, or a combination of both. The risk of violence tends to increase in divorced women, and natural and non-natural disasters further exacerbate the vulnerability of families in a culture of violence (Dahie et al., 2023; Dawa & Genene, 2022; Ebert & Steinert, 2021; Walker-Descartes et al., 2021).

The earthquake with a magnitude of 7.4 followed by a tsunami, and liquefaction that hit Palu City, Donggala Regency, Sigi Regency, and Parigi Moutong Regency, Central Sulawesi Province on September 28, 2018. It also had a physical and psychological impact on the victims. Gender-based violence against women and children is a derivative impact of the disaster, namely harassment (such as spying and recording victims), sexual violence (rape and attempted rape), physical violence and child marriage. The Learning Circle for Women recorded 61 cases of violence against women, while the Central Sulawesi Women's Equality Struggle Group (KPKPST) found 54 cases a few months after the earthquake in Palu City. The Sikola Mombine Foundation stated that in December 2018-December 2019. There

were 37 cases of gender-based violence against survivors in Palu, including 15 cases of sexual abuse, 10 cases of domestic violence, 2 cases of family violence, 2 cases of rape, 2 cases of sexual violence, and 2 cases of child abuse. Meanwhile, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) stated that in November 2018-January 2019, there were 57 cases of sexual harassment and violence against female survivors in Palu, or an average of 1 sexual harassment occurred in 2 days (Putri & Garnesia, 2019; Samodro, 2019). The number of cases is estimated to be more and not reported by victims because of shame, trauma, not wanting to prolong the case or avoiding stigma as a cause of violence. Temporary housing (huntara) is one of the locations of violence against women and children of earthquake survivors in Palu City (Htun & Jensenius, 2022; Mas'udah, 2022).

Based on the Palu City Government's report during the 10-month emergency response period (September 2018-June 2019), the Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing, State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and non-governmental organizations have established 5,208 emergency shelters in 51 shelters in Palu City. This number can accommodate 7,325 families. However, there are 2,117 rooms among them that are inhabited by more than one family. This condition makes the shelter crowded and does not provide a sense of security and comfort for residents, especially women and children. Huntara also does not have partitions or rooms. As a result, activities throughout the day can be witnessed by all family members. The absence of privacy spaces for parents and children has an impact on the vulnerability of physical and sexual violence, because residents are easily ignited by emotions and exposed to pornography and pornography.

On-site this shelter, the existence of public toilets or bathrooms has also not provided safety and comfort for women and children. These facilities are vulnerable to sexual harassment because they are not fully enclosed and have holes easily. A high

school student cursed the perpetrator when she realized she was being peeked at in a public bathroom. Residents also found the teenager recording a video of a mother in a public bathroom. Cases of spying on female survivors in refugee camps are indeed high, even according to the KPKPST, there have been 5 cases of spying at once at the location of houses of worship in West Palu District (Ayomi, 2019). Sexual harassment of female survivors has the potential to be greater considering that there are 127 distribution points in the evacuation locations of victims in Palu City. Referring to the Decree of the Governor of Central Sulawesi Number: 360/302/BPBD-G. ST/2019 concerning the Determination of Data on the Impact of Natural Disasters of Earthquakes, Tsunamis, and Liquefactions in Central Sulawesi Province Phase III, there are 11,165 families or 40,738 survivors in Palu City. As of May 2019, 6,655 people are still occupying *Shelter Emergency* due to limited shelters (Arshandi, 2019).

Another form of violence that occurred after the September 28, 2018 disaster was child marriage, generally experienced by girls. The decision to marry a child is not solely because of an out-of-wedlock pregnancy, but of the family's economic urgency. Like the case of Nadoli, 16 years old, who is married to a 50-year-old widower. Before getting married, the future husband promises a dowry in the form of a house, cow, and motorcycle. In the period of October 2018-October 2019, Libu Perempuan recorded 33 child marriages in evacuation sites, while KPKPST recorded 34 cases and Sikola Mombine documented 4 child marriages. The Palu City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office (DP3A) confirmed the surge in child marriage after the Palu earthquake. In 2018, there were 129 child marriages or 2.29% of 5,630 marriages. The number of child marriages increased in 2019, namely 179 cases (3.06%) of 5,842 marriages (Putri & Ganesia, 2019).

The Central Sulawesi Provincial Government has Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of the Protection of Women and Children from Violence. This regional regulation regulates protection efforts for victims in terms of prevention, the provision of follow-up referral services, and the strengthening and development of institutions that provide protection services for women and children who need special protection. This regional regulation details the forms of violence against women and children, namely physical, psychological, sexual, and domestic neglect. The parties expected to play a role are the relevant regional apparatus, community institutions, the business world, and the mass media. As a result of the study, this policy has not been optimally implemented to protect women and children from post-earthquake, tsunami, and liquefaction violence in Palu City, especially during Phase I Reconstruction (February 23, 2019-February 23, 2021) and Reconstruction II (February 10, 2022-2024). There are at least two factors that cause this. *First*, the elites have not maximized the socialization of regional regulations, both in formal meetings and official information channels. *Second*, the involvement of the community, non-governmental organizations, academics, the business world, and the mass media after the earthquake shows the great support of the community in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction efforts. However, this role has not been maximized by the local government to minimize violence against women and children in Palu City.

The substantive implementation of public policy is an effort so that a policy can achieve its goals. Donald S. Meter and Carl E. Van Horn (1975) developed the *top-down* in analyzing the implementation of a policy, that is, policies that are compiled and

determined from above to be implemented at the lower level. This model also equates policy implementation with a linear line of public policy, implementation, and public policy performance. One of the aspects that affects public policy according to this model is the social, economic, and political conditions of policies (Meter & Horn, 1975; Nugroho, 2018).

To compare the previous research and this study, the author uses bibliometric analysis. Through the analysis of VOSviewer using the keyword co-occurrence method, two main visualizations were produced, namely overlay visualization or research time trends and network visualization or the structure and relationship of themes (Figure 1). The map builds on a collection of reputable international publications that address post-disaster gender issues, revealing the interconnectedness of concepts, development trends, and research focuses. First, in the visualization overlay map, there are three research times. In the early period (2020–2021), it was dominated by research focusing on Covid-19 issues, violence, children, and climate change, which described the initial response to the pandemic and global environmental issues. The medium period (2022–2023) shows a shift in attention to the topics of disaster management, human rights, liquefaction, and disaster risk reduction, which shows the integration of natural disaster issues and human rights within a gender framework. Meanwhile, in the latest period (2024–2025), the emphasis is on policy implementation, health policy, and women's health, indicating a more policy-oriented research direction with a focus on the implementation of health protection and intervention programs.

Second, in the network visualization map, seven research clusters are mapped. (1) Red clusters related to women's and children's issues (women, children, child marriage, climate change policies) that emphasize social and environmental dimensions; (2) Purple clusters related to sexual violence (sexual violence, rape, domestic violence) and humanitarian contexts; (3) Green clusters related to disasters and mental health (disaster, depression, disaster risk reduction); (4) Blue cluster is gender-based violence, disaster management, liquefaction; (5) Orange clusters are the impact of pandemics or non-natural disasters (covid-19, crisis management, democracy); (6) Yellow clusters describe policy implementation and women's health policy; and (7) Brown clusters related to mitigation and disaster impacts. From these clusters, the keywords 'gender-based violence' and 'violence against women' became the center of connectivity that linked various issues from all clusters, showing that the topic of gender-based violence after the disaster is a common thread of cross-field research.

From the 70 research articles collected by the authors during 2020-2025, the research trend is evolving from focusing on disaster response to strengthening health policies and services for women. Topic trends connect the fields of gender, health, public policy, climate change, and disaster management. While *gap* research is still limited in studies that integrate *Policy Implementation* with an evaluation of the effectiveness of gender-based post-disaster interventions at the local level, especially in disaster-prone areas such as Indonesia. In addition, the link between women's protection policies and post-disaster social, economic and political conditions is also relatively rarely explored. Meanwhile, this research is specifically focused on social, economic, and political conditions in implementation Regional Regulation of Central Sulawesi Province Number 3 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of the Protection of Women and Children from Acts of Violence post-earthquake, tsunami,

and liquefaction in Palu City (Febriandi et al., 2021; Saenab & Hamsinah, 2020; Suswandari et al., 2022)

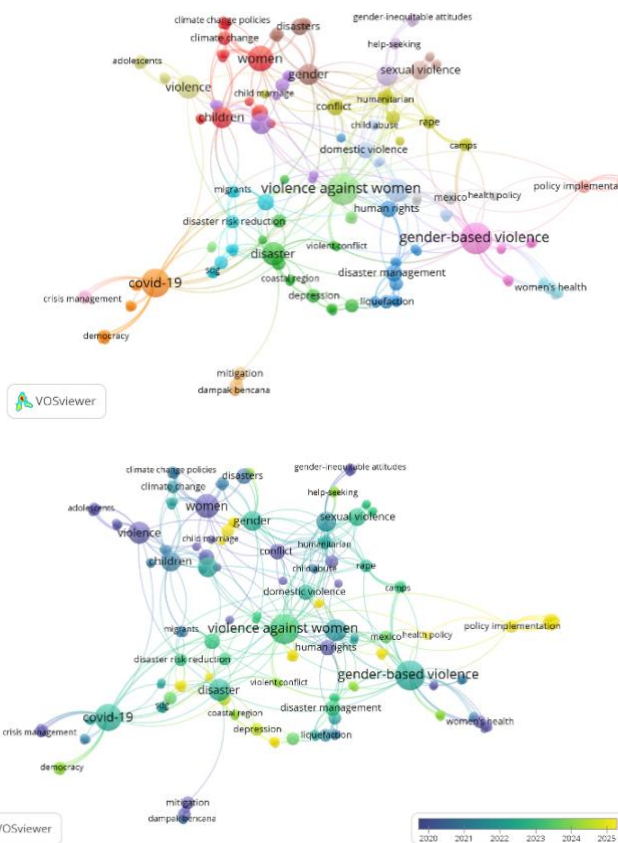


Figure 1 Bibliometric Analysis of Post-Disaster Gender Issues

This article seeks to answer the research question: how to form support or barriers to protect women and children in crisis situations, especially from the social, economic, and political conditions of policies after the earthquake, tsunami, and liquefaction of September 28, 2018 in Palu City, Central Sulawesi. The problem of this research departs from the fact that the disaster not only causes physical damage, but also worsens the vulnerability of women and children to various forms of violence. This challenge is increasingly complex due to the limited programs, coordination, and resources of local elites, both at the level of politicians and bureaucrats. The focus of the research is directed at the form of real support from stakeholders (*pentahelix*) which includes local government officials, community groups, mass media, business actors, and academics in implementing the policy of Implementing the Implementation of the Protection of Women and Children from Post-Disaster Violence. Ideally, support from various levels of society in Palu City can cover the role gaps or weaknesses of local government responses, so as to create more comprehensive, sustainable, and equitable protection for these vulnerable groups.

METHOD

This article is external research that uses a qualitative descriptive approach to explore in depth the experiences and perspectives of stakeholders related to the implementation of post-disaster women and child protection policies in Palu City. This approach was chosen because it is able to record the informant's narratives, detailed stories, expressions, and native language, which are necessary to comprehensively understand

the social, political, and economic context. A total of 15 informants were selected purposively with the following criteria: (1) involved in the preparation of Regional Regulation of Central Sulawesi Province Number 3 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of the Protection of Women and Children from Violence, (2) playing a role in the recovery of victims of the earthquake, tsunami, and liquefaction on September 28, 2018, and (3) representing elements *Pentahelix*, namely local governments, communities, mass media, business actors, and academics (Muhyi et al., 2017; Prasetyo et al., 2022). Furthermore, the research informants are presented in the following table.

Table 1 Research Informant

N	Representative	Position	Initials (Age)	Interview Time
1	Local Government	Chairman of Commission IV for People's Welfare of the Central Sulawesi DPRD 2019-2024	AP (65)	Monday, 10 June 2024
2		Head of UPTD for the Protection of Women and Children (PPA) DP3A Central Sulawesi	PY (38)	Wednesday, 5 June 2024
3		Head of the Palu City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office (DP3A)	YR (52)	Wednesday, 12 June 2024
4		Head of Women's Quality of Life and Family Resilience DP3A Central Sulawesi	IS (49)	Monday-Tuesday, June 3-4, 2024
5		Young Expert Social Worker in the Field of Child Protection DP3A Palu City	NK (42)	Wednesday, 12 June 2024
6	Community	Director of Libu Perempuan	DR (51)	Friday, 24 May 2024
7		Director of Legal Aid Institute (LBH) APIK Central Sulawesi	NR (35)	Tuesday, July 30, 2024

8		Executive Director of the Sikola Mombine Foundation	SL (28)	Saturday, 27 April 2024
9		Head of PP Wanita Islam Alkhairaat	SA (56)	Tuesday, 28 May 2024
10	Mass Media	Antara Journalist, Central Sulawesi	MH (35)	Friday, May 3, 2024
11		Antara Journalist, Central Sulawesi	AL (45)	Friday, May 3, 2024
12		Editor-in-Chief of media.alkhairaat.id	Nd (38)	Friday, 26 April 2024
13	Business Actors	Head of OKK BPD of the Indonesian Young Entrepreneurs Association (HIPMI) Central Sulawesi	Rl (S6)	Thursday, 13 June 2024
14	Academics	Coordinator of the Center for Gender and Child Research	AF (60)	Tuesday, August 13, 2024
15		Head of SDGs Center Untad,	Hs (49)	Thursday, August 8, 2024

Source: Processed Author

Primary data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews and field observations in Palu City during January–December 2024. Secondary data was obtained from official government documents, mass media reports, laws and regulations, and scientific articles. The focus of the research includes two stages of rehabilitation and reconstruction, namely phase I (2019–2021) in accordance with the Governor Regulation of Central Sulawesi Number 10 of 2019 and phase II (2022–2024) in accordance with the Regulation of the Governor of Central Sulawesi Number 4 of 2022. Primary data analysis starts from data condensation (data simplification), then data presentation (tables and so on), and draws conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). The first stage, data condensation, is to detail or describe the data that has been collected into a more structured and concise format. These themes were then compiled by researchers and sorted, namely themes about the conditions of the social, economic and political environment. The second stage, data presentation involves communicating the findings in an understandable format. The third stage, drawing conclusions based on the findings that have been analyzed explains the relationship between socio-economic and political environmental conditions

and the Implementation of the Policy for the Implementation of the Protection of Women and Children from Violence After the Earthquake, Tsunami and Liquefaction in Palu City. Meanwhile, to deepen *gap* and the novelty of the research, secondary data analysis from scientific articles was carried out. A total of 70 international articles from reputable journals during 2020–2025 were analyzed bibliometrically using VOSviewer. Related topics are the fields of gender, health, public policy, climate change, and disaster management. Next The flow diagram of the research methodology is presented in Figure 1 to visualize the stages of the research process.

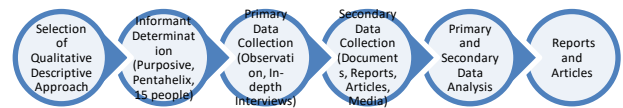


Figure 2 Research Flow Diagram

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The earthquake, tsunami, and liquefaction on September 28, 2018 in Palu City, Central Sulawesi also worsened the vulnerability of women and children to various forms of violence. In this section, the forms of support and obstacles to the protection of women and children in crisis situations are described, especially from the social, economic, and political conditions of the post-disaster of September 28, 2018 in Palu City. This analysis refers to social, economic, and political conditions as one of the factors of the policy implementation process model proposed by Meter and Van Horn (1975). It is known that economic, social, and political conditions on public policy have a profound impact on the performance of policy implementing institutions. Meter and Van Horn (1975) suggested 6 conditions related to the economic, social, and political environment that affect the organization where the implementation takes place, namely: (a) Adequacy of economic resources to support the successful implementation; (b) The extent to which economic and social conditions are influenced by the implementation of the policy; (c) Public opinion; (d) Elite attitudes support or oppose policy implementation; (e) Partisan support or rejection from the organization implementing the policy; (f) The extent to which private interest groups are mobilized to support or oppose the policy (Meter & Horn, 1975, pp. 471–472). Furthermore, these conditions are technically described in the Regional Regulation of Central Sulawesi Province Number 3 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of the Protection of Women and Children from Violence after the September 28, 2018 disaster in Palu City.

Adequacy of Economic Resources

According to Meter and Van Horn (1975), available economic resources are needed to support the successful implementation of policies. The Central Sulawesi Provincial Government stated that Palu City needs Rp18.9 trillion for post-disaster recovery on September 28, 2018. The funds are needed to improve the housing, infrastructure, social, economic, and other cross-sectoral sectors. Financial support is also needed to restore economic conditions as many people have lost access to sources of income, especially the informal sector and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Economic instability due to natural disasters has a significant impact on increasing the vulnerability of women and children to violence. With the loss of economic stability, women

are often trapped in abusive relationships due to limited ability to be financially independent (Herdiana & Lakoro, 2022).

Meanwhile, although the government has allocated a budget for rehabilitation and reintegration programs for victims of violence, the effectiveness of the implementation of policies to protect women and children from violence in Palu City is still hampered by limited economic resources. The Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office (DP3A) of Central Sulawesi and Palu City face limited funds in handling cases of violence. This limited funding not only impacts victim rehabilitation programs, but also hinders the prevention of violence. Child Protection Social Worker at the Palu City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office (DP3A), NK said that a budget is needed for the handling of patients who are victims of violence in hospitals, because it is not guaranteed by the Health Social Security Administration Agency (BPJS). Requests for financial assistance for the cost of treatment for victims of violence in hospitals are also often submitted by the police, but the Palu City DP3A cannot do much because there is no budget for it. So far, Bhayangkara Hospital only guarantees the cost of visum for victims of violence. The support of the Palu City Regional Budget has been given to feed and drink the victims for 2 weeks of shelter in temporary shelters.

Chairman of Commission IV of the Central Sulawesi DPRD for the 2019-2024 period, AP revealed that there are aspiration funds that support programs to prevent violence against women and children, but the Central Sulawesi DP3A stated that the budget allocated in the Central Sulawesi Provincial Budget is also still very minimal. Meanwhile, women's organizations that have been advocating for women victims of violence in Central Sulawesi such as Libu Perempuan, Sikola Mombine and the Legal Aid Institute (LBH) of the Indonesian Women's Association for Justice (APIK) emphasized the importance of long-term financing for victims of violence, including support after the case is over. If the policy of protecting women and children has budgetary consequences, then the provincial government must seriously allocate the budget to the sector. The source of financing for the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) is considered far from sufficient to handle the complexity of the problem, so support is needed from the State Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBN) and the private or non-government sector. In addition to being limited, existing budgets are often not fully channeled to programs that need the most urgent support, such as mental health services, rehabilitation, and legal aid for victims of violence. Research shows that financial or livelihood support within the framework of disaster management policies is needed as an intervention in dealing with post-natural disaster violence against vulnerable groups, such as women, especially women with disabilities. Stopping aid will worsen their vulnerability (Moyna et al., 2024; Ndungu, 2025).

If we look at these conditions associated with the theory of Meter and Van Horn (1975), it can be said that economic resources are not enough to support the successful implementation of policies to protect women and children from violence after the September 28, 2018 disaster in Palu City.

Policy Implementation Affects Socio-Economic Conditions

Referring to the theory of policy implementation of the process model of Meter and Van Horn (1975), economic and social conditions can be influenced by the implementation of a policy. In the context of the post-disaster of September 28, 2018

in Palu City, the following social and economic conditions were also influenced by the implementation of policies to protect women and children from violence.

First, strong cultural and customary norms in Palu City sometimes become an obstacle in the protection of women and children from acts of violence. Libu Perempuan highlighted customary norms in several communities that often hinder the handling of sexual violence through formal legal procedures. LBH APIK also questioned the role of local traditional leaders who are still in control in handling child marriage cases. In fact, this approach prioritizes family settlement over formal law enforcement, which ultimately perpetuates practices that harm women and children. A study shows that social norms are one of the barriers to women and children being reluctant to report violence legally because it is considered embarrassing for their families and communities. Whereas Integrated, contextual, and culturally sensitive child protection is an absolute solution (Bermudez et al., 2018; Datzberger et al., 2024). This is in contrast to the socio-cultural context of women in Central Sulawesi which is actually a key factor in the post-disaster socio-economic recovery process. The strong resilience and social concern of Kaili and other ethnic groups in Central Sulawesi has also encouraged the implementation of various social and economic activities, collaborating with women activists in civil society organizations. Greater participation of women in disaster recovery also raises the optimism of society to rise faster and reject violence (Kurniawan et al., 2021). Research shows, Despite facing structural barriers, financial constraints, and the threat of food insecurity, women continue to demonstrate resilience by engaging in informal economic activities, diversifying post-disaster livelihood sources, leading, building socio-political networks, and initiating community efforts (Hakim et al., 2025; Ismail et al., 2025; Jewkes et al., 2023; Ullah et al., 2024).

Second, community participation. The active participation of local communities plays a strategic role in ensuring the implementation of policies to protect women and children. Women's participation helps create a welcoming environment for women and children, especially through community-based programs supported by NGOs. In Palu City, active community participation in violence prevention has been carried out through various trainings and campaigns involving community leaders, women's organizations, and religious leaders. Community participation is reflected in its role in supervising the location of temporary housing to increase the community's sense of security. Community resilience, family support, and coordination with NGOs are crucial factors in post-disaster human trafficking prevention efforts (Aryanti & Muhlis, 2020; Stoklosa et al., 2021).

Third, focus on recovery in the implementation of policies after the September 28, 2018 disaster in Palu City. The Indonesian Young Entrepreneurs Association (HIPMI) of Central Sulawesi stated that in disaster situations, the business sector and local governments tend to focus on economic and infrastructure recovery, while social issues, including violence against women and children, receive less attention due to limited resources. This is compounded by the fact that existing bureaucracies are often inefficient in managing social programs. The government's focus on post-disaster economic recovery cannot be blamed given the economic and housing stress and unsafe living conditions after a disaster (Cerna-Turoff et al., 2021).

Fourth, social challenges. Academics from the Center for Gender and Child Research at Tadulako University, AF underlined the importance of a multisectoral approach in

overcoming policy barriers to protecting women and children from violence. The involvement of religious leaders and community leaders in educational and advocacy efforts is important to create sustainable social change. In the global community, girls and mothers are more likely to share stories related to protection than men (Bartels et al., 2018). Therefore, Social networks and disaster response communication need to utilize schools or campuses, digital media, and indigenous leaders to appropriately generate, facilitate, and disseminate risk information and violence management policies (Acanga et al., 2025).

If you look at these conditions, associated with the theory of Meter and Van Horn (1975), it can be said that the implementation of policies to protect women and children from violence after the September 28, 2018 disaster in Palu City has partly influenced or moved the socio-economic conditions of the community.

Public Opinion

According to Meter and Van Horn (1975), the measurement of public opinion can be seen in how prominent related policy issues are voiced or advocated by the public. Central Sulawesi Provincial Regulation Number 3 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of the Protection of Women and Children from Post-Disaster Violence on September 28, 2018 in Palu City has attracted various opinions from the public. In addition, how the government presents and implements these policies also plays an important role in shaping public opinion. Public opinion in this regard is represented by journalists and academics extracted in Table 2.

Table 2. Public Opinion On Policy

No	Initials	Representative	Substance of Opinion
1	AL	Antara Journalist, Central Sulawesi (mass media)	The dissemination of information supports Provincial Regulation No.3/2019.
2	MH	Antara Journalist, Central Sulawesi (mass media)	Highlighting the limitations of the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government in implementing Regional Regulations.
3	ND	Editor-in-Chief of media.alkhairaat.id (mass media)	Highlighting the obstacles to the implementation of Provincial Regulation No.3/2019. Judge that the majority of people support this policy.

4	AF	Center for Gender and Child Studies Tadulako University (academics)	Emphasizing the importance of the involvement of religious leaders and criticizing discriminatory views against women and children.
5	Hs	SDGs Center Tadulako University (Academics)	Stating that this Regional Regulation supports the post-earthquake rehabilitation program and needs to be disseminated to all related parties.

Source: Primary Data, Processed by the Author

In general, the community has supported the policy of protecting women and children after the September 28, 2018 disaster in Palu City despite criticism regarding its implementation. Community representatives, such as journalists and academics, support this policy because of its direct relevance to public safety. The support is based on awareness of the high prevalence of violence against women and children in post-disaster areas.

Antara Journalist, Central Sulawesi, AL said that it supports Central Sulawesi Provincial Regulation Number 3 of 2019 and emphasizes the dissemination of information through the mass media. Another Antara Journalist, MH, highlighted the limitations of the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government in implementing the regional regulations. Editor-in-Chief media.alkhairaat.id, ND, noted that the DP3A of Palu Province and City as a regional apparatus organization (OPD) has shown its commitment to protecting women and children from violence. Public support for policies increases when they are exposed to adequate information about the impact of such violence. This support was also strengthened as a result of the education of non-governmental organizations and governments that focused on public awareness campaigns (Salsabila et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, print, electronic and Online, has made a great contribution in reporting events that occurred during and after the natural disaster of September 28, 2018 in Palu City and its surroundings. Journalists have even reported on the conditions of temporary housing and incidents of physical and sexual violence experienced by female and child survivors (Ayomi, 2019; Conterius, 2019; Fall, 2020; Rizal, 2020). Mass media also plays an important role in raising public awareness and publicizing cases of violence. Intensive publication by local media through the work of journalists in the post-disaster period helped to strengthen public attention to the issue of protection of women and children, as well as pressure the government to act more effectively. The media not only serves as a means of information but also as a tool to drive social change by influencing public opinion and political pressure (Kusumanegara, 2010).

Academics also gave positive opinions on the policy of implementing the protection of women and children from

violence after the September 28, 2018 disaster in Palu City. Head of the Center for Gender and Child Studies at Tadulako University, AF emphasizing the importance of the involvement of religious leaders and criticizing discriminatory views against women and children. The Chairman Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) The Tadulako University Center, Hs stated that this Regional Regulation supports the post-earthquake rehabilitation program and needs to be disseminated to all related parties. Academics from Tadulako University in general play a serious role in paying attention to the achievement of the SDGs, especially in terms of gender equality and child protection. They are also involved in research and counseling that supports public policy (Aboud & Yang, 2022).

This research shows the importance of the role of academics in providing in-depth evidence and analysis on gender issues, as well as data-driven policy recommendations that can improve policy implementation. The limitations in operationalizing and understanding the complexity of inequality and structural injustice in the post-disaster recovery process can be overcome by referring to the thinking of academics who recognize the weaknesses of the concept of intersectionality, while developing alternative ideas that highlight the experiences of pain, suffering, trauma, and wounded bonds (Joseph et al., 2021).

If we look at these conditions associated with the theory of Meter and Van Horn (1975), it can be said that public opinion represented by the attitudes of journalists and academics, in general, gives its support to the implementation of policies on the implementation of the protection of women and children from violence after the September 28, 2018 disaster in Palu City.

Elite Attitudes to Policy Implementation

According to Meter and Van Horn (1975), the attitude of the elite towards the implementation of policies can be described from the question of whether the elite supports or opposes the implementation of the policy. The political conditions that support the implementation of policies to protect women and children from violence in Palu City can be seen from various positive responses of bureaucrats and related political actors. The findings of this study show that Palu City DP3A employees, health offices, and police have coordinated effectively through the Center for Integrative Child Welfare (PKSAI) and Community-Based Integrated Child Protection (PATBM). Libu Perempuan praised the quick response that showed awareness among bureaucrats and the support of the political elite to take proactive steps. This condition is also supported by progressive regulations. Palu City Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2021 concerning the Protection and Fulfillment of Children's Rights provides a strong legal basis to protect vulnerable groups, such as girls, while the Mayor of Palu has issued additional regulations that strengthen this legal framework. Several members of the Palu City DPRD with NGO backgrounds are also active in pushing pro-women and children's policies.

At the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government level, it is undeniable that the Governor of Central Sulawesi and the Central Sulawesi Provincial Parliament play a major role in jointly establishing Central Sulawesi Provincial Regulation Number 3 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of the Protection of Women and Children from Violence. Also the Head of DP3A Central Sulawesi and his staff as proposers and implementers of OPD policies. Likewise, members of the Central Sulawesi Provincial DPRD have also provided support to the APBD in recent years in addition to participating in socializing policies (Table 3).

Research shows that the political conditions that support the protection of women and children require synergy between the government, the legislature, and political parties that are committed to ensuring that such policies can be implemented (Puspitasari & Rodiyah, 2022). The underlying mechanism is to engage interest groups that lobby local officials and mobilize supporters to encourage officials to work (Sommer et al., 2024).

The political conditions that hinder the implementation of the policy to protect women and children in Palu City are closely related to the uneven attention of the majority of the elite to this issue. Antara Journalist, MH, stated that in general, local political elites tend to focus on policies that provide short-term political benefits, such as physical development, rather than on issues that require sustainable empowerment, such as the protection of women and children. At the same time, not a few OPD leaders have not prioritized the implementation of this protection policy. Officials in DP3A Central Sulawesi Province and Palu City voiced the importance of staff capacity and integrated handling, cross-sectoral communication and budget support in supporting Central Sulawesi Provincial Regulation Number 3 of 2019 (Table 3) as conditions currently experienced by policy-implementing bureaucrats. Without a paradigm shift among policymakers, gender inequality will continue to be an obstacle to the implementation of these policies. Research supports these findings. Policies that promote gender equality and stop violence against women are sometimes ignored. This is in line with the findings of a global study that reveals that climate change-related policies covering the agriculture, environment, forestry, and natural disaster sectors are still not fully gender-sensitive (Rai et al., 2021).

In addition, an unresponsive bureaucracy is also an obstacle to policy implementation (Ebert & Steinert, 2021). The lack of bureaucratic seriousness in responding to gender issues can hinder the progress of women's protection policies. This is supported by the proportion of women who are only 16 percent of their representation in bureaucratic leadership (Echelon I) and 14 percent in Echelon II (Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2023). Another situation is the reluctance of health workers to interact or deal with victims of violence because they consider violence to be normal or do not want to be involved in legal proceedings (Morse et al., 2025). Even female medical workers are vulnerable to acts of sexual harassment and violence, hindering their leadership career opportunities (Newman et al., 2021). The delay of local governments in responding to violence reported by women victims will be linear with a decline in political support for the government. Therefore, the protection of women from violence is an important factor for the legitimacy of local governments, reducing violence while strengthening public trust (Córdova & Orcés, 2025).

Table 3. Elite Attitudes Regarding Policy

No	Initials	Representative	Substance of Opinion
1	AP	Chairman of Commission IV for People's Welfare of the Central Sulawesi DPRD 2019-2024	Ensuring that the public and victims dare to voice and report the cases experienced. It is important to maximize socialization in

			public spaces and social media.
2	YR	Head of DP3A Palu City	Supporting Provincial Regulation No.3/2019.
3	IS	Head of Women's Quality of Life and Family Quality of Life DP3A Central Sulawesi	Emphasizing the importance of staff capacity and integrated handling in supporting Provincial Regulation No.3/2019.
4	PY	Head of UPTD for the Protection of Women and Children (PPA) Central Sulawesi	Emphasizing staff capacity and cross-sectoral communication in addressing violence against women and children.
5	NK	Young Expert Social Worker in the Field of Child Protection DP3A Palu City	Fighting for additional budgets for the handling of patients who are victims of violence in hospitals, because they are not guaranteed by BPJS Kesehatan.

Source: Primary Data, Processed by the Author

If we look at these conditions associated with the theory of [Meter and Van Horn \(1975\)](#), it can be said that there is an elite attitude that supports and hinders the implementation of policies to protect women and children from post-disaster violence in Palu City. The positive attitude can be seen from the response of bureaucrats and the DPRD who coordinate in preventing and handling violence, supported by progressive regulations. Meanwhile, the political conditions that hinder the implementation of the policy are closely related to the uneven attention of the political elite and the attitude of OPD officials who have not prioritized this protection policy.

Partisan Attitude of Policy Implementers

According to [Meter and Van Horn \(1975\)](#), the partisan attitude of policy is reflected in the partisan character of whether it provides support or as an opposition to the policy implementer. There are several factors identified to support the implementation of policies to protect women and children from violence after the September 28, 2018 earthquake, tsunami, and liquefaction in Palu City, namely public awareness and partnerships between the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Public awareness is the initial basis to support the implementation of policies that tend to increase through NGO programs, due to the increasing vulnerability of women and children ([Rahmi et al., 2021](#)).

In Palu City, through various local initiatives, campaigns to protect women and children from violence have been carried out by several NGOs, such as the Sikola Mombine Foundation and LBH APIK which focus on education related to the rights of

women and children. Likewise, Libu Perempuan, Wahana Visi Indonesia, and the Central Sulawesi Women's Equality Struggle Group (KPKPST), have also played an active role in providing direct support to victims of violence ([Azizah, 2024](#)). This educational program supports the increase of public awareness after disasters which aims to form a culture of long-term violence prevention. Collaboration between the government and NGOs is the next key component of policies for the protection of women and children, especially in disaster-affected areas in Palu ([Astuti et al., 2022](#)). These partnerships are not only effective in distributing aid, but also in building social networks that can provide long-term protection to vulnerable groups. Despite facing budget and resource challenges, collaboration between these groups has contributed significantly to protection and empowerment efforts. According to the research, the role of civil society organizations in lobbying and influencing policy is critical to ensuring that gender issues receive the attention they deserve from the government ([Santoso & Satria, 2023](#)). In addition, faith-based women's organizations such as Wanita Islam Alkhairaat in Central Sulawesi are also intensively strengthening their members through empowerment.

In addition to supporting and advocating for the protection of women and children after disasters, women's organizations in Palu City have diverse voices regarding the policy. Libu Perempuan suggested the revision of Central Sulawesi Provincial Regulation Number 3 of 2019 to be in line with Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning the Crime of Sexual Violence (TPKS) and strengthen the role of DP3A. LBH APIK and the Sikola Mombine Foundation highlighted the implementation of the policy due to limited capacity and resources. The Islamic Women of Alkhairaat appreciated the policy of protecting women and children to prevent violence while providing legal consequences for the perpetrators (Table 4).

In the case of a natural disaster, the involvement of religious organizations or religious leaders in social policy is influenced by religious values and priorities, which can be a supporting or inhibiting factor depending on the specific case ([Alauddin et al., 2022](#)). Religious leaders even have a maximum role in preventing violence, especially sexual violence for female and child survivors ([Lockley et al., 2019](#); [Puspitasari & Rodiyah, 2022](#)). However, there is also a religious interpretation as an obstacle, namely Theological arguments that maintain hegemonic masculinity and view women as "problems" often ignore the reality of gender inequality. This view actually strengthens the subordinate position of women in houses of worship, congregations, and families, thereby increasing the potential for domestic violence. Therefore, a reinterpretation of theology oriented towards gender equality is needed to minimize violence against women ([Clarke et al., 2025](#)).

Table 4. Partisan Attitudes Regarding Policy

No	Initials	Representative	Substance of Opinion
1	DR.	Libu Perempuan (NGO)	Provincial Regulation No. 3/2019 strengthens the role of DP3A in the protection of women and children, and suggests revision of Regional

				Regulations to be in line with Law No. 12/2022 on TPKS.
2	NR	LBH (NGO)	APIK	Emphasizing the importance of Regional Regulations but acknowledging the challenges in their implementation.
3	NL	Sikola Mombine Foundation (NGO)		Highlighting the limitations of capacity and resources in policy implementation, especially in DP3A Palu City.
4	SA	PP Islam (Community)	Wanita Alkhairaat	Respecting Provincial Regulation No.3/2019 in Palu City. The government is obliged to prevent violence while providing legal consequences for the perpetrators.

Source: Primary Data, Processed by the Author

If you look at this condition associated with the theory of [Meter and Van Horn \(1975\)](#), it can be said that in general, women's organizations in Palu City as partners of DP3A Central Sulawesi Province and Palu City give their support to the policy of implementing the protection of women and children from violence after the September 28, 2018 disaster in Palu City.

Private Mobilization of Policies

According to [Meter and Van Horn \(1975\)](#), the final indicator in the socio-economic and political conditions of the policy environment is the extent to which private interest groups are mobilized to support or oppose the policy. Director of Libu Perempuan, DR, emphasized the importance of long-term financing for victims of violence, as well as collaboration with the business world to provide assistance after the case is completed. The source of financing from the APBD is considered insufficient, and support from the State Budget and companies is needed. Sikola Mombine also supports the involvement of the business world in funding for the protection of women and children. Director of LBH APIK Central Sulawesi, NH, said that the provincial government must seriously allocate the budget as a consequence of regional regulations because so far the APBD financing source is far from sufficient to handle the complexity of the problems that arise.

The Regional Management Board (BPD) of the Indonesian Young Entrepreneurs Association (HIPMI) Central Sulawesi, RA, supports the use of corporate social funds in the policy of protecting women and children. According to him, the business world has a moral responsibility to contribute to creating a safer and more prosperous society, including post-disaster. Funding can be used for integrated service centers for victims of violence, including shelters, counseling centers, and legal aid. Research

shows that public-private partnerships contribute significantly to sustainable development. In fact, there is a high level of interdependence between public and private partnerships with the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely society, environment, and economy ([Castelblanco & Guevara, 2022](#)).

However, business actors have not been seen to provide maximum support so far. RA admitted that so far he has not been invited to discuss, let alone mobilized to support the policy of protecting women and children from violence after the September 28, 2018 disaster in Palu City and its surroundings. In fact, the involvement of the private sector in social issues can increase policy effectiveness through the allocation of necessary resources and expertise. Corporate social responsibility is not only limited to the concept of providing financial assistance to the social environment, but also how the programs carried out are long-term and sustainable. HIPMI Central Sulawesi believes that entrepreneurs actually encourage the optimization of policies that also have a good impact on the community, so that they are ready to socialize policies to protect women and children from violence in Palu City at any time. In addition to HIPMI, in Central Sulawesi, business actors are represented by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Kadin) and the Indonesian Employers Association (Apindo).

If you look at the findings of this study associated with the theory of [Meter and Van Horn \(1975\)](#), it can be said that private interest groups have not been mobilized to support policies. They are waiting for the response of the local government.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that the implementation of policies to protect women and children from post-disaster violence in Palu City is influenced by a combination of economic, social and political conditions. Limited economic resources limit the capacity of rehabilitation, prevention, and law enforcement services. Customary norms, community participation, the role of the media, and the support of women's organizations form dynamics that can strengthen or hinder implementation. Progressive regulation and collaboration with NGOs are driving policy achievement, while private sector involvement is not optimal. Successful implementation is highly dependent on funding continuity, consistency of political support, and ongoing cross-actor coordination. This research is limited to a qualitative approach in one study area, namely Palu City, so the findings cannot be generalized to other contexts. Follow-up studies need to integrate mixed methods, expand the scope of the region, and analyze private sector mobilization strategies and strengthen community participation based on local wisdom to increase policy effectiveness.

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