

Gender Mainstreaming in Sustainable Development in Kotamobagu City, North Sulawesi: A Policy Analysis Perspective

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Abstract. This study explains gender equality and the implementation of gender mainstreaming, which are important components of sustainable development. This research uses a qualitative empirical education approach, supported by a review of literature sourced from journals and reports that can be trusted and credible with this research. This research location will discuss gender equality and the implementation of gender mainstreaming in Southeast Asia nationally and in more depth in the case of Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi. The existing findings show that this research underscores the persistent problem of gender inequality, which is influenced by a complex network of interconnected social problems. This emphasizes the urgent need for a comprehensive development approach that prioritizes gender equality and is aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Research conducted in Kotamobagu revealed that the problem of gender-based violence still occurs frequently, so there is a need for intervention on this issue through policy implementation. However, resistance to policy change may arise from those in dominant or privileged positions who seek to maintain the status quo, making this a major challenge. Overcoming these barriers is critical to achieving sustainable development and gender equality in the region.

Keywords: mainstreaming gender, sustainable development, policy analysis, Kotamobagu City, North Sulawesi

1. Introduction

Development is basically a sustainable process with various dimensions, including social, economic, and environmental dimensions, with the aim of community welfare [1]. Debates on development issues never cease, whether by poor countries, developing countries, or developed countries [2], even though the context discussed or the methods used to implement it differ in each country. The concept of sustainable development is becoming increasingly important for public administration. This provision is reflected in the United Nations conceptual document [3].

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a global and national commitment in an effort to improve the welfare of society, including 17 goals, namely: 1) no more poverty; 2) without hunger; 3) healthy and prosperous life; 4) quality education; 5) gender equality; 6) clean water and proper sanitation; 7) clean and affordable energy; 8) decent work and economic growth; 9) industry, innovation and infrastructure; 10) reduced inequality; 11) sustainable cities and

settlements; 12) responsible consumption and production; 13) handling climate change; 14) ocean ecosystem; 15) land ecosystem; 16) peace, justice and strong institutions; 17) partnerships to achieve goals. This means that the SDGs provide a holistic and multidimensional view of development. Gender issues, and especially gender equality, can be considered a cross-cutting issue in the implementation of the SDGs, although it is not clear how to take this into account [4]. The 17 SDGs are formulated in the form of global recommendations, with each government setting its own national goals, guided by global desires but still considering national conditions. Each government decides how to ensure that these global goals are taken into account in the form of recommendations in public administration, planning processes, actions, and strategies [5]. Even though governments around the world have made many efforts to improve the quality of life of women and strengthen the institutional capacity of gender mainstreaming (*Pengarusutamaan Gender - PUG*), the information shows that there are still gaps between women and men in terms of access, participation, control, and benefits, as well as control over resources, such as in the fields of education, health, economics, social culture and other strategic fields [6]. So, the formulation of this research problem arises, namely: First, how is gender equality and gender mainstreaming implemented at the national level in countries in Southeast Asia, especially in the context of Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi? Second, how does the complex network of interrelated social problems influence gender inequality so that it sometimes results in gender-based violence, which still frequently occurs in Kotamobagu, and how can policies be implemented to overcome this problem? Finally, what concrete steps can be taken to overcome resistance to policy change and improve gender equality in the region?

2. Research Method

This research is qualitative empirical education, which is supported by literature reviews from journals and reports that can be trusted and relevant to this research. The location of this research was Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi. Kotamobagu City is one of the cities in the province of North Sulawesi in Indonesia. This city was founded based on Law Number 2007 on January 2, 2007. Kotamobagu City is the expansion of Bolaang Mongondow Regency to advance the region, improve community welfare, streamline services, and drive development to establish a city for the prosperity and well-being of the people of Totabuan. However, problems still have not been resolved, including gender equality. This problem can be resolved through a gender mainstreaming policy.

3. Results And Discussion

3.1 Gender Equality in Southeast Asia: Systematic Literature Review

Based on the analysis of the literature review, it indicates that one group of society being left behind in development, especially women, is caused by various problems in society that are interconnected. The most fundamental problem in efforts to improve the quality of life of women and children is a development approach that does not accommodate the importance of equality between women and men, girls and boys, in gaining access, participation, control, and benefits of development [7]. Gender equality is considered a multi-factor concept based on certain normative principles such as anti-poverty, anti-exploitation, income equality, etc. [8].

Equipping girls and boys with the knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills to overcome gender gaps is a prerequisite for building a sustainable future for all. The European Institute for Gender Equality (UIGE) is an independent center and main source of information on gender equality in the European Union. Uige has compiled a Gender Equality Index, which it hopes can be used to measure progress on gender equality in the 27 EU states. The Gender Equality

Index by UIGE uses six main domains, namely work, money, knowledge, time, power, and health, and two additional dominants, namely violence against women and intersecting inequality [9]. The Gender Equality Index by UIGE uses 31 indicators and has been carried out for 7 years, namely 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022. The focus in 2022 will be on the socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic by analyzing aspects related to child care children, long-term care, housework, and flexible work arrangements. Based on the 2022 Gender Equality Index launched by UIGE, there is progress on gender equality in 2022, but it is going very slowly, namely with an increase of 0.6 points compared to 2021. These results show that certain groups of people tend to be in more vulnerable situations for some time.

Table 1. SGDs Targets and Indicators (5th Goal)

Target	Indicators
5.1 End all forms of discrimination against women and girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1.1 Legal frameworks to promote gender equality and eliminate discrimination
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence and exploitation against women and girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.2.1 Violence against women by intimate partners (once partnered) 5.2.2 Violence against women by non-partners
5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.3.1 Proportion of women married before age 15 and before age 18 5.3.2 Prevalence of female genital mutilation/cutting
5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through shared responsibility within households and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.4.1 Time spent on unpaid domestic and care work
5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in national and local governments 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions
5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.6.1 Women's decision-making on contraceptive use and reproductive health care 5.6.2 Access to sexual and reproductive health services and education
5.A Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, property ownership, and financial services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.A.1 Women's ownership or rights to agricultural land 5.A.2 Equal rights to economic resources, including access to ownership and control over property and financial services

Target	Indicators
5.B Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote women's empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5.B.1 Proportion of women who own mobile phones
5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5.C.1 Systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment

Source: United Nations, 2021 <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5>

Gender equality is a fundamental human rights principle that serves as a crucial element for society-centered sustainable development [10]. The pursuit of gender equality is considered an intrinsic goal and a pivotal aspect in the context of development initiatives. To measure progress and success in achieving gender equality worldwide, it is essential to establish specific targets and indicators. The gender equality goals encompass nine targets and fourteen indicators, emphasizing the overarching aim of promoting gender equality and justice across all sectors and levels, acknowledging the interconnection between gender and development [11].

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right but also a foundational element for fostering a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world [12]. The alignment of policies and practices with the principles of gender equality is integral to the broader concept of gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming is a systematic and rational strategy aimed at achieving gender equality and justice in various facets of human life. This approach centers on fostering equality through institutional policies and practices, emphasizing the integration of gender equality policies and perspectives into the fabric of societal structures [13].

According to the 2023 Gender Inequality Index (GII) published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Singapore stands out in the ASEAN region with the lowest GII score of 0.040 points. This indicates that Singapore has achieved the best GII outcomes among all ASEAN countries. In contrast, Indonesia's GII score decreased to 0.444 points from 0.488 in 2019, marking the highest score for that year. Myanmar experienced an increase in its GII score from 0.478 in the previous year to 0.498 in 2020. This suggests a need for the government to intensify efforts through various policies related to health, education, empowerment, and labor market access to address the existing disparities.

It is crucial to recognize that gender-based discrimination violates human rights and poses significant obstacles to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals outlined by the United Nations. UNESCO underscores the importance of gender mainstreaming as a strategic approach to address gender disparities by integrating gender perspectives into the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs across diverse areas of life and development. The overarching goal is to ensure that women and men have equal opportunities, choices, abilities, power, and knowledge as equal citizens.

In ASEAN countries, in the 2020 Gender in Humanitarian Action Workstream report, Myanmar has more than 273,000 refugees, 69% of whom are women and children, remaining in camps or camp-like situations in the states of Kachin, Shan, Rakhine, Chin., and Kayin. The crises occurring in different geographic locations in the country disproportionately affect women and girls, as well as the most vulnerable and marginalized population groups, and perpetuate and exacerbate pre-existing and persistent gender and social inequalities. This makes

understanding the gender context in different crises across Myanmar important [14]. Humanitarian actors from the UN, NGOs, CSOs, and the Government of Myanmar have demonstrated a strong commitment to gender equality and made significant efforts to promote gender mainstreaming in humanitarian action, as well as across humanitarian, development, and peace relations. To support humanitarian actors, UN Women, on behalf of the Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) workstream, has developed 11 localized gender program checklists for mainstreaming gender in humanitarian action in consultation with national and sub-national Inter-Cluster Coordination Groups. The gender mainstreaming checklist is a step forward in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian action in Myanmar and strengthening the institutional capacity of humanitarian practitioners in Myanmar.

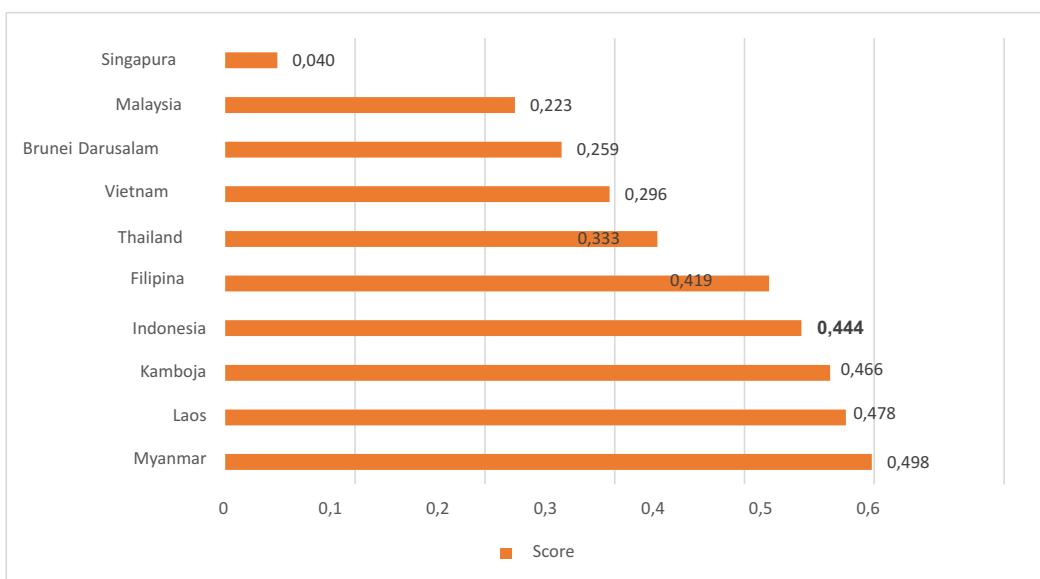


Figure 1: Gender Inequality Index (GII) ASEAN (2020)
Source: GII, 2023

3.2 Gender Equality in Indonesia from a Public Policy Perspective: Challenges and Opportunities

Gender mainstreaming is used to integrate gender as a policy to support development because fair and sustainable development must also guarantee women's access to productive resources and equal participation rights with men. Presidential Instruction Number 9 of 2000 concerning Gender Mainstreaming in National Development (Inpres) defines gender mainstreaming as: "A strategy developed to integrate gender into an integral dimension of planning, preparation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of national development policies and programs with a focus on women's empowerment" (Attachment to Presidential Instruction). To realize gender equality comprehensively and sustainably. In the national development process, the Indonesian Government has integrated gender equality into every stage of the RPJMN, starting from RPJMN I (2005-2009) to RPJMN IV (2020-2024). Presidential Regulation Number 18 of 2020 concerning the 2020 National Medium Term

Development Plan-2024 also stipulates that Gender Mainstreaming is one of the 4 (four) development mainstreams in the 2020-2024 RPJMN.

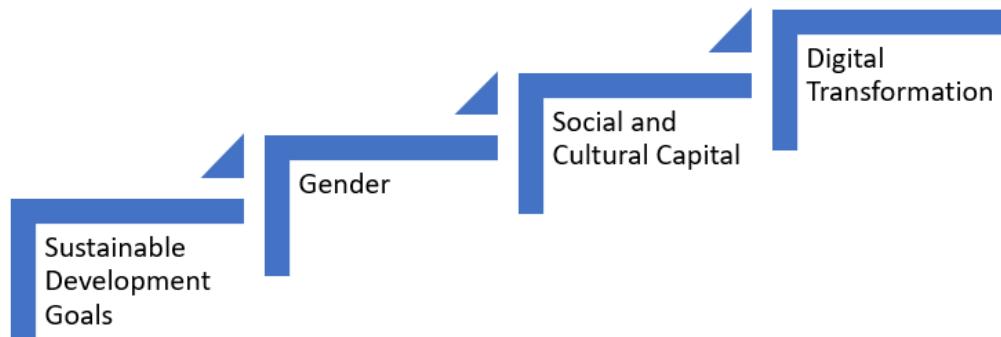


Figure 2. Mainstreaming in the 2020-2024 RPJMN

Source: Attachment to Presidential Regulation Number 18 of 2020 concerning the 2020-2024 National Medium-Term Development Plan

National development goals have also been regulated in Presidential Regulation Number 111 of 2022 concerning the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals; Article 2 paragraph (2) emphasizes the importance of improving the economic and social welfare of society, environmental quality, and inclusive development starting from the role of each local government. The principle of decentralization that applies in the regional government administration in Indonesia also provides opportunities and freedom to carry out government in the regions. The 2020-2024 RPJMN emphasizes that gender mainstreaming is a strategy for integrating gender perspectives into development, starting from policy formulation, planning, budgeting, and implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation. Gender mainstreaming aims to realize gender equality to create more just and equitable development for the entire population of Indonesia.

Gender equality can be achieved by reducing the gap between men and women in accessing and controlling resources, participating in all development and decision-making processes, and gaining benefits from development. Gender equality is an interesting issue if you look at the pros and cons of it, and in the 1990s, the issue of gender equality began to spread in Indonesia [15]. Gradually, the Indonesian feminist movement demanded a shift to a more equal place for women in advocating for women's rights in the social and cultural fields [16]. This can also be seen from the graph below, which shows how gender inequality in Indonesia is according to the World Economic Forum (WEF), which has released the Global Gender Gap Report 2022.

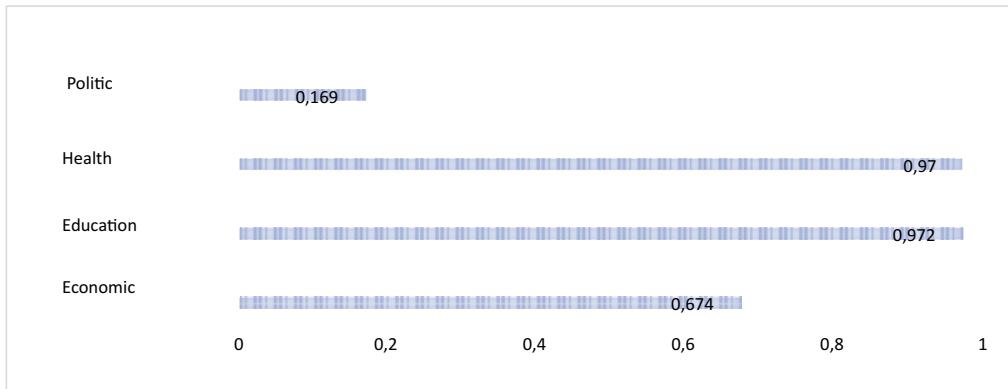


Figure 3. Gender Inequality Index in Indonesia

Source: World Economic Forum, 2022

Figure 3 examines gender inequality in four areas: political empowerment, economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, and health and survival. The WEF Gender Inequality Index has a 0-1-point system. A score of “0” indicates very large gender differences, and a score of “1” indicates achieving full equality. In this year's WEF report, Indonesia received a score of 0.697 on the Gender Inequality Index, ranking 92nd out of 146 countries [17]. This value increased by 0.009 from 0.688 in 2021. Last year, Indonesia was still ranked 101st. If we break down the factors that make up the index, Indonesia's score is burdened by the very low level of influence of women in politics, namely 0.169 or below the world average. Then, in terms of economic participation and opportunities, Indonesia got a score of 0.67, which is in the range of the world average.

Meanwhile, in the fields of education and health, Indonesia achieved the highest score of 0.97 but is still in the range of the world average. This is done by providing equal access to men in the fields of education, health care, decent work, representation in politics, and economic decision-making; it will be able to encourage a sustainable economy, as well as provide benefits to society in particular and humanity in general. The practice of regional autonomy in Indonesia gives greater authority to regional governments, especially district/city governments, to regulate their government. So that regions in Indonesia can successfully implement sustainable regional development through regional autonomy [18]. The transfer of such broad authority from the central government to regional governments (City/Regency Government) opens up opportunities for regions to develop creativity and motivation in developing regions.

The realization of gender equality can be seen from the indicators of gender equality and empowerment in Indonesia, one of which is shown by the Gender Empowerment Index (IDG). From IDG, we can see women's participation in economic life, political participation, and decision-making. IDG's achievements in Indonesia in the 2017-2021 period continue to increase. Women's participation in economic and political life has increased in the last five years, as illustrated.

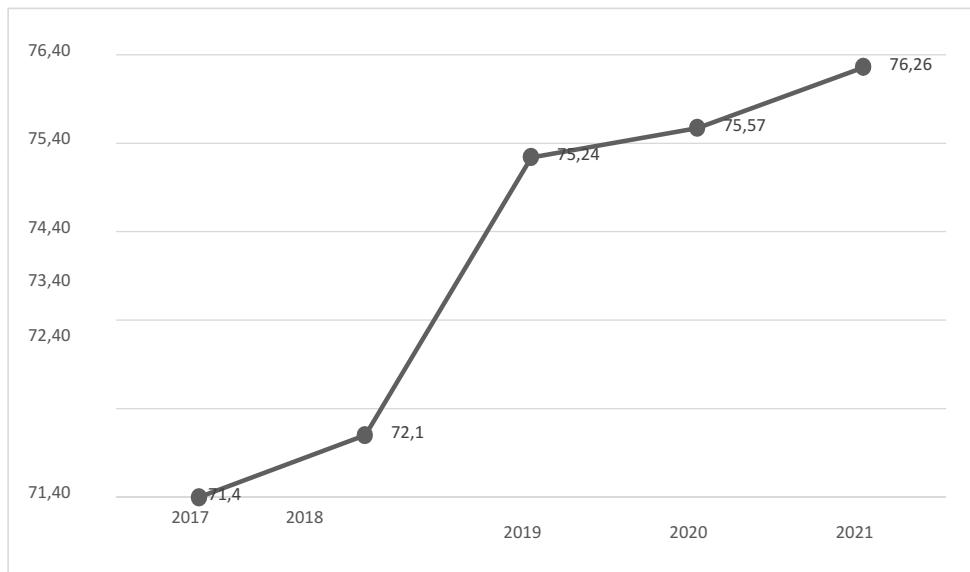


Figure 4. Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) from 2017 – 2021

Source: Central Statistics Agency, 2022

This can be seen from the Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) score, which has continued to increase since 2017. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) recorded that the Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) score was 71.74 in 2017. Meanwhile, in 2021, the IDG score rose to 76.26. BPS defines IDG as an indicator used to measure the implementation of justice and gender equality based on political and economic participation. The three indicators used in the IDG include women's involvement in parliament, participation as professionals, and contribution to employment income. The increase in IDG occurred in all indicators. Women's involvement in parliament was recorded to have increased from 17.32% in 2017 to 21.89% in 2021. Furthermore, women's participation as professionals increased from 46.31% to 49.99%. Then, women's income contribution increased from 36.62% to 37.22% last year. The high growth of IDG is due to the increase seen in all indicators forming IDG, especially in the involvement of women in parliament, which has increased significantly. In 2019, the number of women in parliament increased to 20.52 percent or higher compared to 2018, which only reached 17.32 percent. This is what causes the IDG figures to increase sharply and indicates that gender empowerment is becoming more real and closer to achieving gender equality in Indonesia [19].

Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Number 67 of 2011 concerning the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the regions has ordered the provincial government to prepare gender-responsive RPJPD (Regional Long Term Development Plan), RPJPMD (Regional Medium Term Development Plan), RKPD (Regional Government Work Plan), Strategic Plan, as well as Renja (Work Plan) and RKA (Budget Work Plan). The Minister of Home Affairs Regulation has mandated the following to the provinces: the provincial government is obliged to prepare policies, programs, and development activities with a gender perspective as outlined in the RPJMD, SKPD Strategic Plan, and SKPD Renja (Paragraph (1) article 4). The preparation of development policies, programs, and activities with a gender perspective, as in paragraph (1),

is carried out through gender analysis (Paragraph (2) article 4). Gender analysis can use the Gender Analysis Pathway (GAP) or other gender analysis.

The implementation of the strategy faces various challenges, which are caused by various factors, including implementation of policies and analytical tools, as well as political commitment and support for gender equality, which are still not optimal, understanding of gender concepts and issues, and the benefits of gender mainstreaming in development, especially in the provinces, districts/cities and villages are still low and not uniform. Institutional capacity in implementing the policy, especially human resources, and the provision and use of gender data at each stage of development is still inadequate.

3.3 Analysis of Gender Mainstreaming in Sustainable Development in Kotamobagu

One area in Indonesia with quite high gender inequality is Kotamobagu City, Central Sulawesi. Kotamobagu City is a city in North Sulawesi, Indonesia. This city was founded on January 2/2007, based on Law Number 4 of 2007. Kotamobagu previously had the status of the capital of Bolan Mongondow Regency but was later moved to Lolak. The majority of ethnic groups in Kotamobagu City are Mongondow, one of the areas dedicated to realizing and implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (TPB). Of course, this implementation is accompanied by regional authority to carry out sustainable development locally based on the principle of decentralization, which has been in effect since 2001. The following is the Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) by Regency/City and Dimensions (in percentage):

Table 2. Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) by Regency/City and Dimensions (In Percentage)

Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) by District/City and Dimension (In Percentage)		Gender Empowerment Index (IDG)				
No	District/City	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
1	Bolaang Mongondow	70.64	78.05	77.77	77.36	71.41
2	Minahasa	82.96	87.63	87.05	87.29	87.16
3	Sangihe Islands	66.00	61.38	59.91	61.32	61.58
4	Talaud Islands	58.86	68.59	68.44	68.46	69.09
5	South Minahasa	76.53	76.20	78.34	77.59	75.16
6	North Minahasa	76.74	67.40	64.60	63.95	65.60
7	North Bolaang Mongondow	64.90	61.99	63.79	60.61	57.19
8	Sitaro Islands	73.90	74.53	74.89	74.47	75.75
9	Southeast Minahasa	79.86	78.46	79.92	80.11	80.09
10	South Bolaang Mongondow	67.98	72.22	68.16	71.51	62.98
11	East Bolaang Mongondow	66.08	73.06	72.48	70.59	70.13
12	Manado City	83.18	83.96	84.67	84.29	84.88
13	Bitung City	73.00	65.15	68.84	68.84	66.42
14	Tomohon City	83.23	81.86	82.91	83.70	83.44
15	Kotamobagu City	69.33	66.93	66.42	66.79	67.81
	North Sulawesi	80.91	79.10	78.98	79.07	78.99
		10	12	12	11	9

Source: BPS Kotamobagu City, 2023

Kotamobagu City's gender empowerment index experienced an increase from 2020 to 2022. The increase occurred due to Kotamobagu City being in ninth place out of 15 regencies/cities in North Sulawesi. So, in the IDG measurements, Kotamobagu City is quite high. However, this cannot be used as a reference for the successful implementation of gender mainstreaming in Kotamobagu City. In real conditions, in 2022, the Kotamobagu City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (DP3A) Department recorded 134 cases of violence against women and children being handled (kotamobagu.go.id) in January-December 2022. There were 44 cases of violence reported violence against women and 90 cases of child violence for cases of violence against women, recorded physical violence, domestic violence, sexual violence, and neglect. This shows that the urgency for gender equality is increasingly real in all areas of development, including health, economics, education, society, and politics.

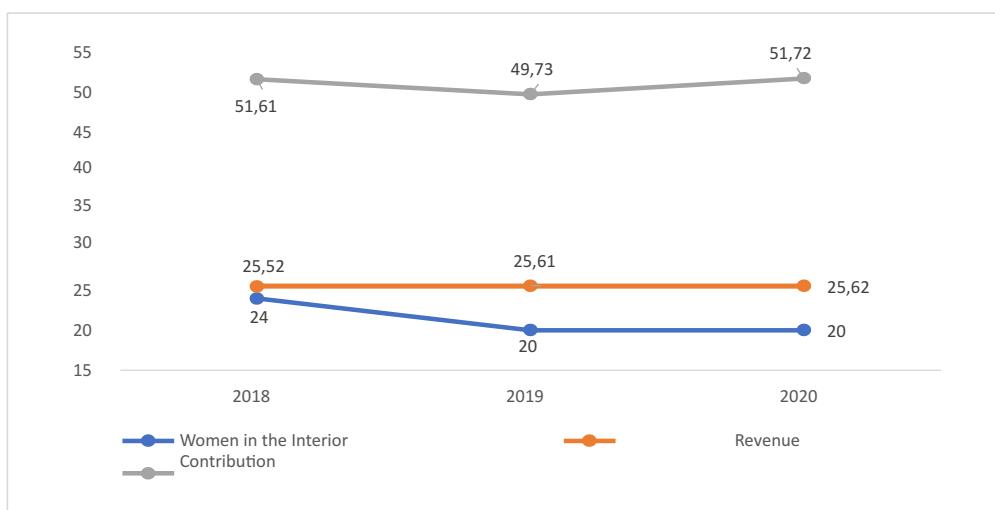


Figure 5. Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) with Three Indicators In 2017 – 2020
Source: BPS Kotamobagu City, 2021 Revenue Contribution

These data have become a trigger for the government to review its commitment to realizing one of the Sustainable Development Goals in Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi. Moreover, the efforts of the Kotamobagu Government, North Sulawesi, to implement a Gender Mainstreaming strategy to maintain, improve, and eliminate inequality in the quality of men and women. The IDG indicator for women in parliament, income contribution, and professional staff continues to increase in the 2018-2020 period. Likewise, the Kotamobagu City Gender Development Index (IPG) has experienced an increase from 2020-2022. According to BPS data (2023), in 2020, the IPG of Kotamobagu City was 95.37% and experienced an increase of 95.47% in 2022. Improvement of several indicators in the IPG components, which include health, education, and income. However, the field of education in Kotamobagu City does not show good results. In the education sector, Kotamobagu City experienced a decline from 2020 to 2022. This is shown by the percentage of School Enrollment Rates according to gender in Kotamobagu City, as follows:

Table 3. School Enrollment Rates by Gender and Age Group in Kotamobagu City 2021-2022

Age Group	Male	Woman	Sum	Male	Woman	Sum
	2020	2020	2020	2021	2021	2021
7-12	99.74	100.02	99.87	99.59	98.94	98.91
13-15	97.79	97.37	97.55	95.5	98.33	97.69
16-18	65.13	80.23	72.96	69.95	77.52	70.49

Source: BPS Kotamobagu City, 2023

Table 3 shows that the school enrollment rate in Kotamobagu City has decreased from 2020-2021. The decline tends to be at each higher level of schooling. The age group of 16-18 years experienced a decrease from 72.96% to 70.49%. Even though the decline is not drastic, the gender gap in education will reduce the average amount of human capital in society. This gap prevents highly qualified talents from girls, which will ultimately reduce the return on investment in the education sector. Furthermore, the 2018 Women's Labor Force Participation Rate (TPAK), according to Kotamobagu City BPS data in 2019 figures, was 37.14%, whereas in 2019, it was based on Kotamobagu BPS data. In 2020 figures, it was 49.19% or an increase of 32.44%. This increase shows that women's efforts to get work increased in 2019. This figure is still low compared to male labor force participation, which reached 79.95% in 2019. For this reason, business training is needed for women so they can contribute to the labor market. Work. The proportion of seats held by women in the DPR The proportion of women's seats in the DPRD is a comparison between the number of women in the current membership of the Kotamobagu City DPRD and the number of seats in the DPRD membership. It is recorded that the number of seats held by women in the DPRD is 5 out of 25 total DPRD membership seats, or only 20%.

It is a challenge for the government to focus more on policy development in relation to women's participation in parliament, employment opportunities, and educational access. Sustainable development in Kotamobagu City, North Sulawesi, suggests that there are still issues related to gender equality that need to be addressed by a number of stakeholders. According to the source of the Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi Mayor's Regulations in 2018, there was a rise in domestic violence against women, sexual abuse, harassment, physical and psychological abuse, child custody, and neglect of women and children between 2015 and 2017. Not to add that there is still a lack of effective services for women and children who are victims of abuse and that women who are victims of sexual violence have very little authority. The Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan of the Government of Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi, for 2018–2022 has been prepared to achieve several targets, including:

- a. Promote the application of gender-conscious laws and regulations in Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi;
- b. Fortify institutional networks for gender mainstreaming, incorporating programs and activities in Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi;
- c. Reinforce the dedication to gender-responsive budgeting in Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi regional governments, government institutions, and non-governmental organizations;
- d. Increasing the capacity to incorporate gender issues in Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi's regional governments, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations;
- e. Statistics on children and gender are available in Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi;

f. Gender mainstreaming is being implemented in Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi, regional governments, government institutions, and non-government institutions in compliance with gender-responsive planning and budgeting.

This action plan or activity basically forms a forum for coordination. It ensures the formation of disaggregated data to show gaps or problems in the implementation of programs or activities, especially those that support gender equality. This statement means that the concept of gender shows vulnerability, especially when using a gender concept that shows an unequal comparison between men and women. There is resistance and stagnant conditions in efforts to socialize gender to the general public [20]. If you look at the Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) data with three indicators (*women in parliament, income contribution, professional staff*) in 2017 - 2020, which fluctuated, with an insignificant increase, the problem encountered was because the regional government still had not implemented the policy. Gender mainstreaming is due to the fact that there are still gender mainstreaming focal points in Regional Organizations of Officials (OPD) who are still lacking in supporting gender mainstreaming policies.

This indicates in policy standards and objectives, resources and incentives, the quality of relationships between organizations, the characteristics of implementing institutions, the economic, social, and political environment, and the disposition or response of implementers. The process of implementing gender equality policies is very complex because it is opposed by actors with dominant or privileged positions who try to maintain the authority (status quo) that benefits them. The existence of actors who hinder the implementation of gender equality policies will hinder the achievement of sustainable development goals in the region by limiting the capacity of gender equality actors to carry out their functions, even delegitimizing their work, and, in practice, undermining the existing legislative mandate for gender equality. At this point, gender mainstreaming requires clear and comprehensive policies that prioritize gender equality. Adequate funding and resources are essential for effective gender mainstreaming. Limited financial support and a lack of incentives for organizations to prioritize gender equality can hinder progress. Collaboration and coordination between various organizations involved in development are very important. Poor communication and collaboration can hinder the integration of gender perspectives into development initiatives. The broader socio-political context can support or hinder gender mainstreaming efforts. Traditional gender roles, discrimination, and unequal power dynamics in society can pose significant challenges. So, overcoming the challenges and obstacles in implementing gender mainstreaming requires comprehensive and coordinated efforts. This may involve:

- a. Advocate for stronger and more explicit gender equality policies and goals.
- b. Ensure adequate resources and incentives for organizations committed to gender mainstreaming.
- c. Foster better relationships and collaboration between development organizations.
- d. Strengthening the capacity and commitment of implementing institutions.
- e. Addressing the root causes of gender inequality in the economic, social, and political fields.
- f. Engage in awareness and advocacy campaigns to change attitudes and challenge the status quo.
- g. Support and protect individuals and organizations working to achieve gender equality.
- h. Hold institutions accountable for their obligations under gender equality laws.

4. Conclusion

The findings presented are gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the context of sustainable development, especially in Kotamobagu City, North Sulawesi. This research shows that gender inequality is still a significant issue in many Southeast Asian countries, and various interrelated social problems influence this inequality. The need for a more comprehensive development approach that considers gender equality is highlighted. This is related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasize the importance of gender equality as a cross-sectoral issue. Gender equality is seen as a fundamental human right and a prerequisite for sustainable development. This recognition is reflected in the Gender Equality Index, which tracks progress towards gender equality. In cases like this, the Indonesian government has currently adopted a gender mainstreaming policy as a strategy to integrate gender perspectives into all stages of national development. This approach is reflected in various national and regional development plans. If you pay attention, even though there is an implementation of gender mainstreaming policies, it cannot be denied that during the implementation of this policy concept, there will be challenges related to less-than-optimal policy implementation, limited understanding of gender concepts and issues, and a lack of institutional capacity to support gender mainstreaming. So, ongoing evaluation and programs between the central and regional governments are needed. In Kotamobagu, the Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) shows an increase from 2020 to 2022.

However, what needs to be noted is that this city is facing challenges in the education sector, with a decline in certain school enrollment rates. Age group, which is worrying for long-term human resource development. This research notes the existence of violence against women and children in Kotamobagu City, which shows that gender-based violence is a problem that continuously requires attention and intervention. Obstacles to this policy, such as resistance to it, may come from actors in dominant or privileged positions who seek to maintain the status quo so that this resistance can hinder the implementation of gender equality policies. This is a challenge and a concern, particularly about education, gender-based violence, and resistance to change. Addressing these challenges will be critical to achieving sustainable development goals and gender equality in the region.

This research recommends that the Kotamobagu City Government develop a Gender Mainstreaming Local Action Plan to overcome gender inequality and accelerate progress towards the SDGs. This plan focuses on strengthening institutional networks, gender-responsive budgeting, and integrating gender perspectives into programs and activities.

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