

Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Social Inclusion for the Fisherfolk Empowerment and Climate Resilience



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About FOCUS

The Fisherfolk Empowerment for Climate Resilience and Sustainability in Central Java (FOCUS) project aims at building a sustainable food system for the fisherfolk community in five districts in Central Java (Batang, Kendal, Semarang, Demak, and Jepara) through integrated ocean management. This project is supported by The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and is the result of co-creation process between Hivos, Yayasan Humanis dan Inovasi Sosial (Humanis), Koalisi Rakyat untuk Keadilan Perikanan (KIARA), Pusat Kajian Sumberdaya Pesisir dan Lautan Institut Pertanian Bogor (PKSPL-IPB), and Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia (WALHI). The project period is four years from 15 December 2022–15 December 2026. FOCUS will cooperate with local governments, community groups and other relevant stakeholders to raise awareness of nutritional issues, coastal management, and climate resilience of coastal communities. Advocacy, awareness raising, and capacity development will be provided in cooperation with local authorities and other stakeholders to implement the activities.

Gender, Fisheries, and Coastal Communities

Globally, 47% of the fisheries workforce consists of women (World Bank, FAO, and WorldFish, 2012).ⁱ In Indonesia, according to KIARA (2017), 48% of the income of fisherfolk families comes from women.ⁱⁱ However, their contribution is rarely recognized mainly due to women's domestication. Fisherfolk is seen as synonymous with men and the sea is seen as a man's space.

Currently, the definition of a "fisherfolk" is only limited to *"any person whose livelihood is fishing"* (article 1.3 of the Indonesian Law Number 7/2016 on the Protection and Empowerment of Fisherfolks, Fish Famers, and Salt Farmers). This definition does not mention women fisherfolk as a subject, even though women's involvement in the fisheries sector can be in pre-production, production, and post-production stages (Ismail, 2017).ⁱⁱⁱ This could further marginalize the position of women in the fisheries sector, both culturally and in terms of policy.

In addition to the complexity surrounding the status and role of women in fisheries, coastal communities are also confronted with the risk of climate change. For the coastal communities of northern Central Java, specifically, some have lost their homes and other support systems in the villages due to sea level rise and land subsidence. They have tried various means to survive. For those who remain, they must raise the floors of their houses to avoid flooding during tidal surges. Not to mention that there are other threats from infrastructure development and extractive industries that cause an increase of forced displacement from their own homes^{iv} and scarcity of basic necessities including water and food.

For women and other marginalized groups, such as children, elderly, or people with disabilities, the impacts are much worse. During times of disaster, gender roles become more apparent, with women often having to stay at home to take care of the family and house. It is also not uncommon for women to seek alternative jobs to make ends meet when the husband/man in the household has no income. Additionally, women are frequently tasked with evacuating belongings, building wave breakers, and cleaning up the flood debris. They are often the last to evacuate, as they tend to prioritize others before themselves. In Aceh province, for example, during the 2004 tsunami, two-thirds of those who died were female (Mazurana et. al., 2011)^v. Women and girls might not have swimming or tree-climbing skills, and often they need men's permission to leave home.^{vi}

FOCUS' Approach to Mainstream Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

FOCUS believes that women, men, youth, elderly, people with disability, and other marginalized communities of all classes, gender, ethnicity, faith, and other background are a part of the society and have equal values. Therefore, we are committed to mainstream Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) into our project cycle, from top to bottom.

It is crucial to mainstream the GESI to ensure that targeted stakeholders and communities have equal opportunities to participate meaningfully in the FOCUS project, by considering their diverse needs, power dynamics, as well as social norms, practices, and policies within the society. We carefully outlined the targeted outcomes and outputs are in favour of all stakeholders, including women, youth, and other marginalized communities. We believe that in the implementation of a project or intervention, if women or other marginalized groups are not involved in the process, the resulting outcomes may lack relevance and fail to address the needs of a specific group. Consequently, certain groups of the community may be excluded and unable to access resources and services, and are unable to benefit from policies.

Opportunities for Mainstreaming GESI

The FOCUS project acknowledges the diversity of coastal communities in Central Java, including differences in resources, policies, and social relations across the five different districts we support. The project's ambition is to transition from being GESI-sensitive to being GESI-transformative. This means that we recognize existing inequalities, consider solutions, and actively work towards implementing those solutions, both at the cultural and structural levels.

We are also trying to amplify the voices of marginalized groups, including women and youth, to better understand their access, control, and management of resources in their villages. To ensure their meaningful participation, the activities that we carry out takes into account the productive and reproductive burdens faced by women; therefore, the activities scheduled based on their availability, and it is designed in a way that does not add to women's already heavy workload. We also acknowledge that women and youth have their own knowledge and experiences in facing climate change, and these experiences inform us how to tailor the project to better address their needs.

Implementing A Gender-Transformative Approach

Adapted from Swiss Development Cooperation (2021), there are five stages of programs towards gender equality and social inclusion, namely exploitative, neutral, inclusive, empowering, and transformative. These stages are aligned with Humanis' Gender Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (GEDI) Strategy. FOCUS aims to address the issues in this project using GESI-transformative approach. According to CARE (2019)^{vii}, there are three important elements when using a gender-transformative approach: **building agency, changing relations, and transforming structure**.

Our commitment for a GESI-transformative project is reflected through these four steps:

- Support a meaningful participation of women, youth, and other marginalized communities on capacity building and other relevant activities to foster critical awareness.
- Understand diversity and consider the context of communities, including their intersectional identities.
- Address and challenge power dynamics, social norms, and actively foster a culture of equality and inclusivity.
- Transform discriminatory social norms, traditions, and practices, as well as advocating for changes in laws and policies to promote equality and inclusion.

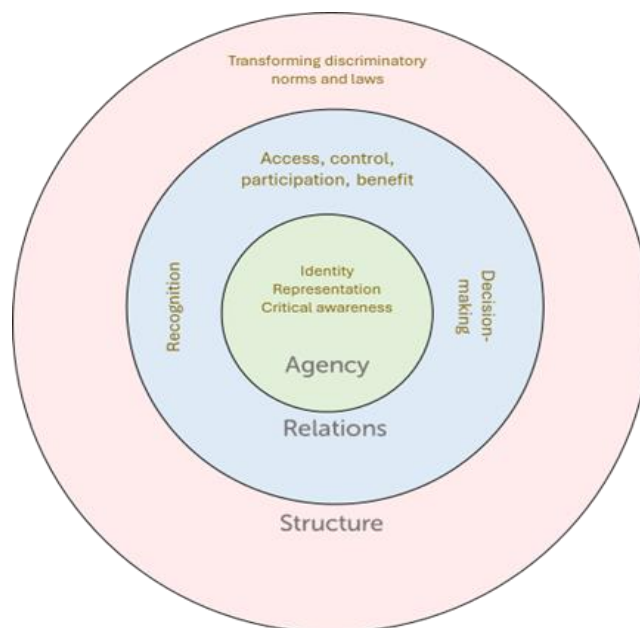


Figure 1: Gender-Transformative Approach and Intersectionality adapted for FOCUS project

Intersectionality Perspective to Achieve a Gender-Transformative Project

People's lived experiences are not separate, but complex and interrelated. For FOCUS, this project recognizes how the different identities and social positions of the fisherfolk in Central Java affect their vulnerability and resilience to climate change and their access to resources and opportunities for empowerment. For example, women fisherfolks with disability may face discrimination not only because of their gender or disability, but because of the combination of both. Their multiple forms of

barriers may not be adequately addressed by the existing legal and social frameworks; therefore, promoting the availability of an inclusive environment that supports the fisherfolks' intersectional realities is one of the main outcomes of this project.

There are three types of intersectionality, according to Crenshaw, an African American civil rights advocate who first introduced intersectionality: structural, political, and representational intersectionality. To achieve gender-transformative approach using **structural intersectionality**, this project addresses how different structures create unique experiences of vulnerability to climate change and disaster risks among women, youth, and other marginalized communities in Central Java's coastal areas. Using **political intersectionality**, the project addresses how women and other marginalized communities in coastal areas of Central Java have been marginalized from decision-making and the utilization of resources, and advocate for their inclusion. Using **representational intersectionality**, the project aims to increase media representations of coastal communities against stereotypes and discrimination of marginalized groups.

Endnotes

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- ⁱ World Bank. 2012. Hidden Harvest: The Global Contribution of Capture Fisheries. © Washington, DC. <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/11873> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.
- ⁱⁱ Naufaludin Ismail. 2017. *Perjuangan Rekognisi Identitas Hukum Perempuan Ujung Pangkah, Gresik: Analisis Feminis terhadap Kebijakan Kartu dan Asuransi Nelayan*. Jakarta: Jurnal Perempuan.
- ⁱⁱⁱ *Ibid.*
- ^{iv} Data collected from a series Focus Group Discussions conducted by FOCUS team for the development of Village Profile documents, December 2023—February 2024.
- ^v Dyan Mazurana, Prisca Benelli, Huma Gupta and Peter Walker, "Sex and Age Matter: Improving Humanitarian Response in Emergencies." Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, August 2011. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/sex-and-age-matter-improving-humanitarian-response-emergencies>
- ^{vi} IFRC. 2010. *A Practical Guide to Gender-sensitive Approaches for Disaster Management*. Geneva: IFRC. <https://pgi.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/media/document/2021-11/a-guide-for-gender-sensitive-approach-to-dm.pdf>
- ^{vii} CARE. 2019. *Gender Transformative Adaptation: From Good Practice to Better Policy*. Netherlands: CARE. <https://careclimatechange.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Gender-Transformative-Adaptation-Publication-FINAL.pdf>

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