An-Nisa' Journal of Gender Studies

OPEN ACCESS

ISSN 2086-0749 (p) 2654-4784 (e)

https://annisa.uinkhas.ac.id DOI: 10.35719/annisa.v18i2.351 Vol 18, No 2, (2025), pp. 169-184

Rethinking women's empowerment in Indonesia: A Marxist feminist analysis of UN Women's institutional engagement

Shofi Thowil Umur[1*], M. Nur Rofiq Addiyansyah[1], Ammar Salem Khan[2]

[1] Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kudus, Central Java, Indonesia

[2] Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Pakistan

Article Information

Submitted: 2025-03-24
Revised: 2025-06-18
Published: 2025-12-31

Keywords:

UN Women; Women's Empowerment; Marxist Feminism; Gender Equality.

Abstract:

Women's empowerment in Indonesia faces structural inequalities, unpaid reproductive labor, and unequal access to resources. In this context, the relationship between UN Women's institutional involvement and changes in women's material conditions requires critical examination. This study analyzes UN Women's efforts to promote gender equality in Indonesia through policy advocacy, violence prevention, and economic empowerment. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, it examines institutional publications, government documents, and media reports through document analysis and thematic coding. Source triangulation was used to enhance trustworthiness, and findings were interpreted through a Marxist feminist lens. Three areas of involvement emerged. First, advocacy and partnerships supported gender-responsive planning, policy accountability, and evidence-based studies to protect women. Second, public campaigns and violence prevention involved community mobilization, digital literacy, documentation, and access to information on protection. Third, economic empowerment involved entrepreneurship and digital skills training, strengthened corporate commitments to gender equality, and the development of productive skills through business partners. Across these areas, UN Women contributed through facilitation, capacity building, and partnerships, with varying roles across initiatives. However, documentary evidence was insufficient to establish the programs' direct effects on women's material conditions. The study offers a critical cross-sectoral synthesis that distinguishes UN Women's contributions from its partners' activities and clarifies the evidentiary limits of empowerment outcomes. From a Marxist feminist perspective, control over resources and the division of reproductive labor are key dimensions in evaluating women's empowerment.

Copyright: © The author(s) 2025
This is an open access article under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial 4.0 International License.

To cite this article (APA Style):
Umur, S. T., Addiyansyah, M. N. R., & Khan, A. S. (2025). Rethinking women's empowerment in Indonesia: A Marxist feminist analysis of UN Women's institutional engagement. *An-Nisa' Journal of Gender Studies, 18(2)*, 169-184. https://doi.org/10.35719/annisa.v18i2.351

***Corresponding author:** Shofi Thowil Umur, Islamic Political Thought Study Program, Faculty of Da'wah and Islamic Communication, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kudus, Central Java, Indonesia e-mail: 2240510011@ms.iain kudus.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia continues to face challenges in achieving gender equality in economic participation, political representation, and the protection of women from violence. Organizational structures, institutional practices, and decision-making processes can reproduce gender discrimination (Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015). Education, health, and economic conditions are also associated with women's labor force participation (Aini & Arif, 2025). Statistics Indonesia (BPS, 2025) reported that the female labor force participation rate reached 56.42% in 2024, compared with 84.66% for men. In the political sphere, women hold approximately 22% of the seats in the Indonesian House of Representatives following the 2024 election, while affirmative action policy stipulates a minimum quota of 30% women among legislative candidates (Armond, 2024). Research on political representation also highlights gender bias and candidate selection mechanisms within political parties (Birnir et al., 2025). Meanwhile, domestic violence remains a concern for women's protection and is associated with unequal gender relations (Siregar, 2024). These conditions underscore the importance of gender-responsive policies, protection from violence, and expanded economic opportunities through collaboration among various actors.

Previous research can be grouped into three areas. First, studies on structural inequality indicate that the division of domestic roles and mobility constraints limit women's social and economic participation (Parry, 2010; Whitaker, 2017; Roy et al., 2024). Second, studies on women's empowerment and protection highlight education, political participation, economic opportunities, and the barriers survivors of violence face in accessing justice (Guinee, 2014; Ríos et al., 2023; Balasubramanian et al., 2024; Martitah et al., 2024). Third, studies on international organizations examine the dynamics of gender equality norms and UN Women's partnerships with non-state actors in supporting women's empowerment (Krook & True, 2012; Bodur Ün, 2019; Jullanar et al., 2024). Within the literature reviewed, syntheses linking policy advocacy, violence prevention, and economic empowerment in UN Women's engagement in Indonesia remain limited. To address this gap, this study offers a cross-domain document analysis that distinguishes UN Women's contributions from its partners' activities. A Marxist feminist perspective is used to examine structural inequalities and the adequacy of evidence concerning changes in women's material conditions.

This study aims to analyze the forms of UN Women's engagement in supporting gender equality in Indonesia through policy advocacy, the prevention of violence against women, and economic empowerment, drawing on documentary evidence. The study addresses three main research questions. First, how does UN Women support the integration of a gender perspective into development planning, the strengthening of partnerships, and policy accountability? Second, how is UN Women involved in public campaigns, education, and digital literacy, and in providing access to information on the protection of women? Third, how does UN Women support women's economic empowerment through skills development, the strengthening of business commitments, and corporate partnerships? This study is expected to enrich the understanding of UN Women's institutional engagement through a Marxist feminist perspective. Its findings are also expected to inform the development of policy evaluations that consider the division of responsibilities among actors and the adequacy of evidence concerning empowerment outcomes.

This study proceeds from the argument that UN Women's engagement in Indonesia's gender equality agenda occurs through normative and institutional support, capacity development, and collaboration with the government, civil society organizations, and the business sector. The existence of policies, campaigns, and empowerment activities does not, in itself, demonstrate a reduction in the structural inequalities experienced by women. From

a Marxist feminist perspective, the recognition of rights and the expansion of opportunities need to be examined in relation to control over economic resources, the division of reproductive labor, and gendered power relations. Accordingly, the analysis seeks to identify documented forms of support, distinguish the roles and responsibilities of implementing actors, and examine the extent to which available sources support an assessment of program outcomes. This argument places the relationship between institutional commitments and women's material conditions at the center of understanding empowerment, while limiting conclusions to the available empirical evidence.

METHOD

Research Approach

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a document analysis design to examine UN Women's engagement in supporting gender equality in Indonesia (Bowen, 2009). The analysis focused on three areas: policy advocacy and partnerships, public campaigns and the prevention of violence against women, and economic empowerment through skills development and partnerships. Official documents, institutional publications, and media reports were used to identify forms of support, program implementation, and UN Women's contributions in relation to the roles of the government, civil society organizations, and companies. A Marxist feminist perspective was used to interpret the relationships among the gender equality agenda, structural inequalities, resource distribution, and power relations. The study sought to understand patterns of institutional engagement while limiting its conclusions to the available documentary evidence.

Data Sources and Collection

Data were drawn from publications by UN Women, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Global Compact, the United Nations in Indonesia, the Ministry of National Development Planning/National Development Planning Agency (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas), the Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Cultural Affairs (Kemenko PMK), the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KemenPPPA), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, the National Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan), and relevant media reports. Based on the reference columns in the three findings tables, 22 citation occurrences were identified, representing 18 unique references according to combinations of author or institutional name and publication year. Dated sources spanned 2010–2025, alongside undated publications (*n.d.*). This range refers to the publication years of the sources and does not indicate a continuous observation period. Document selection considered source credibility, relevance to the research focus, clarity of information about activities, and the identities of implementing actors. The information collected covered gender-responsive policies, violence prevention campaigns, information services concerning women's protection, entrepreneurship training, and corporate partnerships. The academic literature provided the methodological foundation, theoretical framework, and points of comparison for the discussion.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using qualitative document analysis (Bowen, 2009), with thematic coding informed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The analytical stages involved repeated reading, identification of relevant information, initial coding, grouping of codes, review of categories, and development of themes. Coding considered the forms of UN Women's engagement, types of activities, implementing actors, and supporting documentary evidence.

The findings were organized into three main themes: 1) policy advocacy and partnerships, encompassing gender-responsive planning, accountability, and evidence-based protection; 2) public campaigns and violence prevention, covering community mobilization, digital literacy, and protection information; and 3) economic empowerment through skills, corporate commitments, and productive partnerships. The analysis distinguished UN Women's direct support from activities implemented by its partners. The three themes were subsequently interpreted through a Marxist feminist perspective, with attention to social reproduction, class inequalities, control over economic resources, and gendered power relations (Vogel, 2013; Fraser, 2016; Mojab & Carpenter, 2019). Interpretation was limited to the available documentary evidence.

Data Validity

Data validity was addressed through source triangulation by comparing information across UN Women's publications, government documents, international organization publications, and media reports (Carter et al., 2014). Verification focused on the consistency of information concerning activities, implementation dates, partnerships, and the identities of implementing actors. UN Women's contributions were distinguished from activities undertaken by its partners, including Komnas Perempuan and Bluebird Group. Information in media reports was compared with available official documents to reduce reliance on a single source. Attention was paid to coding consistency and the traceability of evidence within each category to support the trustworthiness of the findings. Academic literature served as a conceptual point of comparison, while accounts of program implementation remained grounded in documentary evidence.

Methodological Considerations

Document analysis enabled an examination of UN Women's engagement through institutional publications, policy documents, and media reports. However, differences in publication purposes, geographical coverage, publication dates, and information completeness limited the depth of interpretation. The analyzed documents primarily recorded commitments and program outputs rather than beneficiaries' experiences, resource distribution, or changes in economic relations. Accordingly, this study was not designed to assess program effectiveness or causal impacts. A Marxist feminist perspective was used as a framework for interpreting structural issues, while changes in class relations could not be empirically established from the available evidence. These limitations provide a basis for further research involving beneficiaries and program implementers directly.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on qualitative document analysis informed by Bowen (2009) and thematic coding following Braun and Clarke (2006), the review of official documents, institutional reports, and media coverage concerning UN Women's activities in Indonesia identified three main findings. First, UN Women's advocacy and partnerships to support gender equality in Indonesia encompass integrating gender equality into development planning, strengthening partnerships and policy accountability, and developing evidence-based policies to protect women. Second, public campaigns and the prevention of violence against women in Indonesia, including public mobilization, education, and digital literacy, as well as the strengthening of documentation and access to protection-related information. Third, women's economic empowerment through skills development and partnerships, encompassing entrepreneurial and digital skills development, strengthening private-sector commitments, and developing productive skills through corporate partnerships. These three

findings are presented based on patterns identified in the documents, the forms of UN Women's engagement, and documented evidence of program implementation.

UN Women's advocacy and partnerships in supporting gender equality in Indonesia

The document analysis identified three thematic categories of UN Women's advocacy and partnerships to support gender equality in Indonesia: the integration of gender equality into development planning, the strengthening of partnerships and policy accountability, and support for the formulation of evidence-based policies to protect women. These categories encompass UN Women's engagement in supporting the formulation of gender-responsive development policies, strengthening institutional mechanisms for policy implementation and monitoring, and providing prevention frameworks and research findings to support the protection of women. Documented forms of engagement include technical assistance, gender analysis, capacity building for government officials, the development of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and collaboration with government institutions and civil society organizations. Table 1 presents the three thematic categories, their supporting documentary evidence, and the corresponding forms of UN Women's engagement.

Table 1

UN Women's Advocacy and Partnerships in Supporting Gender Equality in Indonesia

No.	Thematic Category	Documentary Evidence	Forms of UN Women's Engagement	References
1	Integration of gender equality into development planning	Support for the preparation of a technocratic document on gender equality and women's empowerment as an input to the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2025–2029, alongside efforts to strengthen gender-responsive planning and budgeting mechanisms in national development.	Technical assistance, gender analysis, policy consultations, stakeholder discussions, and capacity building for government officials to integrate gender perspectives into development planning, budgeting, and monitoring.	UN Women (n.d.); Ministry of National Development Planning (2024)
2	Strengthening partnerships and policy accountability	Support for the implementation of the National Action Plan for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Children in Social Conflict (RAN P3AKS), including the development of monitoring, evaluation, and reporting frameworks to strengthen accountability in policy implementation.	Policy advocacy, institutional capacity building, technical assistance, and strengthened collaboration with the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KemenPPPA), relevant government institutions, and civil society organizations to support the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of RAN P3AKS.	UN Women (2023a); Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Cultural Affairs and Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (2024)
3	Support for the formulation of evidence-based policies for the protection of women	Introduction of the RESPECT Women: Preventing Violence against Women framework in Indonesia in 2023 and the implementation of the Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces study on women's safety in public spaces in selected areas	Collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and international partners in developing an evidence-based violence prevention framework, participation in activities introducing the framework	World Health Organization (2019, 2023, 2024); UN Women (2017)

	of East Jakarta, South Jakarta, and West Jakarta.	and strengthening capacity in Indonesia, and provision of findings from the public space safety study to inform the formulation of policies for the protection of women.

Source: Compiled by the authors based on documents from UN Women, the Ministry of National Development Planning, the Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Cultural Affairs, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, and the World Health Organization, as cited in the table.

Table 1 illustrates UN Women's support for integrating gender perspectives into development planning by preparing a technocratic document as input to the RPJMN 2025–2029 and strengthening gender-responsive planning and budgeting. In implementing RAN P3AKS, this support includes advocacy, institutional capacity building, technical assistance, and the development of monitoring, evaluation, and reporting frameworks. Support for the formulation of evidence-based policies for the protection of women encompasses collaboration in developing the RESPECT framework at the global level, participation in its introduction in Indonesia in 2023, and the provision of findings from studies on public space safety in selected areas of East Jakarta, South Jakarta, and West Jakarta.

Cross-category analysis reveals three functions of UN Women's support in the policy process: providing inputs for development planning, supporting accountability mechanisms for policy implementation, and supplying prevention frameworks and evidence to inform the formulation of policies to protect women. This pattern demonstrates engagement through collaboration with government institutions and partner organizations, involving technical assistance, capacity building, and knowledge provision that vary across categories. The availability of technocratic documents, monitoring frameworks, prevention frameworks, and research findings indicates the existence of instruments intended to support policy processes. However, the evidence summarized in Table 1 is insufficient to assess how these instruments have been utilized in decision-making or policy implementation. Changes in budget allocations, the adoption of recommendations, the effectiveness of monitoring mechanisms, and improvements in women's circumstances attributable to UN Women's support cannot be established on the basis of the available evidence. Accordingly, these findings identify the forms and mechanisms of UN Women's support, while assessing their effectiveness requires further evidence regarding follow-up actions and implementation outcomes.

Public campaigns and the prevention of violence against women in Indonesia

The document analysis identified three thematic categories of public campaigns and violence prevention efforts targeting women in Indonesia: public mobilization and advocacy for violence prevention, digital education and literacy on violence prevention, and the strengthening of documentation and access to protection-related information. These categories encompass international campaigns, youth engagement, the development of educational materials, and support for initiatives to protect women. UN Women's engagement includes campaign activities, information on violence prevention, and partnerships with government institutions and civil society organizations. Table 2 presents the thematic categories and corresponding forms of UN Women's engagement.

Table 2
Public Campaigns and the Prevention of Violence against Women in Indonesia

No.	Thematic Category	Documentary Evidence	Forms of UN Women's Engagement	References
1	Public mobilization and advocacy for violence prevention	The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign was held from November 25 to December 10, 2024. The National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) documented 169 campaign activities across 20 provinces and three activities abroad. The 16For16 initiative engaged 16 young activists and digital advocates aged 18–30 through training on the use of social media for violence prevention advocacy.	Participation in international campaigns to prevent gender-based violence and the provision of training for young digital activists through the 16For16 initiative. The activities documented by Komnas Perempuan involved various organizations and were not all organized by UN Women.	Ferida (2024); Komnas Perempuan (2024); UN Women (2024a)
2	Digital education and literacy on violence prevention	Development of the Youth Guide to End Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV), which provides information on forms of digital violence, preventive measures, reporting mechanisms, and access to support services for survivors.	Support for the 30 for 2030 youth network in developing and disseminating educational materials to increase young people's knowledge and participation in preventing gender-based violence in digital spaces.	UN Women (2023b, 2024a, n.d.)
3	Strengthening documentation and access to protection-related information	Development of DELILA (Dengar, Lindungi, Laporkan; Listen, Protect, Report) as a system for documenting and reporting violence against women living with HIV, and the launch of the SARI (Sahabat Artifisial Migran Indonesia; Indonesian Migrant Artificial Companion) AI chatbot on April 21, 2025.	Support for the development of a violence documentation system in collaboration with the Indonesian Positive Women's Network (IPPI), as well as collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia to provide information and initial protection-related assistance for migrant workers through the Safe Travel application.	UN Women (2022); Ferida (2024); Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2025)

Source: Compiled by the authors based on Ferida (2024), Komnas Perempuan (2024), UN Women (2022, 2023, 2024), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2025).

Table 2 illustrates UN Women's engagement in public campaigns, the development of digital educational materials, and support for documentation and access to protection-related information. During the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign in 2024, Komnas Perempuan documented 169 activities involving various organizations, not all of which were organized by UN Women. The 16For16 initiative engaged 16 young activists and digital advocates aged 18–30 through training in social media advocacy. Educational support included developing the Youth Guide to End Online Gender-Based Violence by the 30 for 2030 youth network. Meanwhile, support for documentation and protection-related information

encompassed the development of DELILA in collaboration with the Indonesian Positive Women's Network (IPPI) for women living with HIV, as well as collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia to provide protection-related information for migrant workers through SARI, which was launched on April 21, 2025.

Cross-category analysis reveals differences in the functions and target groups of UN Women's support. Public campaigns and training for young activists focus on promoting community participation in violence prevention advocacy, while the OGBV guide provides educational materials on gender-based violence in digital spaces. DELILA supports the documentation and reporting of violence against women living with HIV, whereas SARI provides protection-related information for migrant workers. These differences demonstrate the various forms of support provided through public communication, education, and the development of information tools in collaboration with partner organizations. However, the scope of the evidence requires careful distinction: the OGBV guide was developed at the Asia-Pacific regional level, and its specific use in Indonesia has not been demonstrated, while the benefits of SARI for women migrant workers cannot be assessed independently based on the information presented in the table. The available evidence primarily documents activities, program outputs, and forms of partnership. It remains insufficient to establish behavioral changes, increased utilization of support services, or reductions in violence attributable to UN Women's support. Assessing program effectiveness, therefore, requires further information on program reach, utilization, and outcomes for the target groups.

Women's economic empowerment through skills development and partnerships

The document analysis identified three thematic categories of women's economic empowerment associated with UN Women's agenda in Indonesia: entrepreneurial and digital skills development, strengthening private-sector commitments to women's empowerment, and productive skills development through corporate partnerships. These categories encompass entrepreneurship training and mentoring, the implementation of the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), and productive skills development by private-sector partners. UN Women's engagement is reflected in program support, the development of gender equality principles, and institutional collaboration, with varying roles across initiatives. Table 3 presents the thematic categories and supporting documentary evidence.

Table 3

Women's Economic Empowerment through Skills Development and Partnerships

No.	Thematic Category	Documentary Evidence	Forms of UN Women's Engagement	References
1	Entrepreneurial and digital skills development	The Together Digital program provided training to 240 participants from six villages in Lombok. In 2023, a collaboration between UN Women and the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Indonesia (FEB UI), provided digital entrepreneurship mentoring for women former migrant workers in West Lombok.	Support for entrepreneurship training, digital skills development, online marketing, and business capacity building through institutional partnerships.	UN Women (2023c); Nino (2023)
2	Strengthening private-sector commitments to	The number of companies signing the Women's Empowerment Principles	Development of the WEPs in collaboration with the United Nations Global	United Nations Global

	women's empowerment	(WEPs) in Indonesia increased from 14 in 2019 to 177 in February 2023.	Compact to promote equal employment opportunities, women's capacity building, and commitments to economic empowerment in the private sector.	Compact & UN Women (2010); United Nations Indonesia (2023)
3	Productive skills development through corporate partnerships	The Kartini Blue Bird program provided 24 weeks of sewing training for women from drivers' families. Some participants reportedly received sewing orders and earned additional income after completing the training.	An indirect connection through the application of the WEPs developed jointly by UN Women and the United Nations Global Compact. The training program was implemented by Bluebird Group.	United Nations Indonesia (2023)

Source: Compiled by the authors based on UN Women (2023), Nino (2023), United Nations Global Compact and UN Women (2010), and United Nations Indonesia (2023).

Table 3 shows that the Together Digital program provided training to 240 participants from six villages in Lombok, while the collaboration between UN Women and the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Indonesia, in 2023 provided digital entrepreneurship mentoring for women former migrant workers in West Lombok. In the private sector, the number of companies signing the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) in Indonesia increased from 14 in 2019 to 177 in February 2023. Meanwhile, the Kartini Blue Bird program, implemented by Bluebird Group, provided 24 weeks of sewing training for women from drivers' families. Some participants reportedly received sewing orders and earned additional income after completing the training. The connection between this corporate program and UN Women lies in its adoption of the WEPs, which were jointly developed with the United Nations Global Compact.

Cross-category analysis reveals differences in the target areas of support, namely developing participants' entrepreneurial capacities, expanding formal corporate commitments, and enhancing productive skills through corporate initiatives. These differences are accompanied by variations in UN Women's role, ranging from support for training and mentoring, through institutional partnerships, to the provision of WEPs as a framework for private-sector engagement. In the case of Kartini Blue Bird, the training was implemented by Bluebird Group; therefore, its connection to the WEPs does not constitute evidence of UN Women's direct involvement in the program. The evidence summarized in Table 3 also differs in scope: the number of participants indicates training reach, the number of WEP signatories reflects formal corporate commitments, and sewing orders and additional income represent economic benefits reported by some participants. These three types of evidence are insufficient to establish changes in corporate practices, the sustainability of participants' income, or improvements in women's economic independence as program impacts. Accordingly, these findings document forms of support and reported benefits, but assessing their impacts requires further evidence on the implementation of corporate commitments and changes in participants' economic conditions over time.

Discussion

The findings of this study identify three main results. First, UN Women's advocacy and partnerships to support gender equality in Indonesia encompass integrating gender perspectives into development planning, strengthening partnerships and policy accountability, and providing evidence-based frameworks and studies to support the protection of women. Second, public campaigns and the prevention of violence against

women in Indonesia are carried out through public mobilization, digital education and literacy, and the strengthening of documentation and access to protection-related information, as reflected in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign, 16For16, the OGBV guide, DELILA, and SARI. Third, women's economic empowerment through skills development and partnerships includes entrepreneurship and digital skills training, the strengthening of corporate commitments through the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), and productive skills development through corporate initiatives. Overall, the findings indicate that UN Women's engagement involves technical assistance, capacity building, and institutional collaboration. However, the documentation analyzed is insufficient to establish the direct impacts of these programs on reducing gender inequality in Indonesia.

The findings on policy advocacy, violence prevention, and economic empowerment relate to several social challenges, particularly the limited participation, safety, and livelihood opportunities of women. In rural development, economic and infrastructure priorities risk marginalizing changes in gender relations (Syukri, 2023), while stereotypes, institutional barriers, and resource constraints limit women's leadership (Aulia et al., 2024). These conditions highlight the relevance of support for gender-responsive planning and strengthened accountability. Barriers to accessing justice when reporting violence during the pandemic demonstrate the need to connect public campaigns with accessible protection services (Martitah et al., 2024). In the economic sphere, domestic responsibilities are associated with limited female labor force participation (Susilo et al., 2024), while corporate reporting does not fully disclose discriminatory practices (Faisal et al., 2024). Therefore, the relevance of training programs and corporate commitments needs to be assessed in relation to women's needs. These three areas demonstrate the importance of interconnections among policy, protection, and economic empowerment, although their benefits for different groups of women require further empirical evidence.

From a Marxist feminist perspective, the three findings can be interpreted as institutional efforts confronting challenges related to social reproduction and resource distribution. Vogel (2013) explains the reproduction of labor power under capitalism, while Fraser (2016) highlights the dependence of economic systems on often unpaid care work. This theoretical framework directs the analysis toward whether advocacy, protection, and training initiatives transform women's material conditions. Policy support and public campaigns may expand recognition of women's rights, but documenting activity does not establish changes in the domestic division of labor or in economic dependence. Similarly, entrepreneurship training does not necessarily demonstrate increased control by women over income, assets, and decision-making. This interpretation aligns with Rioux's (2015) emphasis on the material dimensions of social reproduction and Mojab and Carpenter's (2019) examination of the historical formation of class and gender relations. MacArthur et al. (2022) underscore changes in norms, responsibilities, and resource distribution. Accordingly, institutional contributions can be understood as opportunities for change, while structural transformation remains an analytical question that cannot be resolved through the documentary evidence available in this study.

A key lesson from this study is the importance of distinguishing between what institutions document and what women actually experience. Policies, campaigns, and training programs provide information about interventions but do not automatically explain changes in beneficiaries' lives. For researchers, this requires reflexivity in selecting evidence, interpreting achievements, and limiting conclusions to the scope of the available documents (Bowen, 2009). Careful analysis is necessary to distinguish UN Women's contributions from the actions of government institutions, civil society organizations, and corporate partners.

From a scholarly perspective, empowerment needs to be examined in terms of access to resources, the ability to make choices, and the negotiation of power relations (MacArthur et al., 2022). Attention to transformative leadership (Munive et al., 2023), as well as educational and economic constraints and cross-sector collaboration (Widiastuti et al., 2024), broadens sensitivity to the contexts in which change occurs. The methodological lesson is that researchers should remain open to experiences that are not represented in institutional reports and use the limitations of documentary evidence to formulate future research that involves women as sources of knowledge about their own empowerment.

At the conceptual level, this study's findings on advocacy and partnerships are consistent with Krook and True (2012), who conceptualize gender equality norms as dynamic processes within international institutions. Bodur Ün (2019) extends this perspective by demonstrating how local actors negotiate and contest global norms; therefore, documented commitments do not necessarily explain the local acceptance of these norms. In the economic sphere, Bryan et al.'s (2024) attention to structural barriers, resource access, and women's agency within food systems intersects with questions concerning empowerment through training. The similarity lies in their shared attention to institutional processes and the conditions that constrain gender equality. The distinction lies in the present study's focus, which synthesizes documentary evidence on advocacy, violence prevention, and economic empowerment in Indonesia. From a Marxist feminist perspective, this synthesis connects institutional commitments to questions of class relations and control over resources (Mojab & Carpenter, 2019). The study's scholarly contribution lies in its critical cross-sectoral analysis, which clarifies institutional contributions and the limitations of the available evidence without claiming to measure program effectiveness.

The recommendations focus on strengthening implementation and outcome evaluation in line with each actor's responsibilities. First, the government, in collaboration with UN Women, should link gender-responsive planning to budgetary and implementation indicators, including monitoring the National Action Plan for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Children in Social Conflict (RAN P3AKS) and following up on the RESPECT framework and Safe Cities initiatives. Second, organizers of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign and 16For16 should assess changes in knowledge, access to services, and service utilization. Third, the organizations managing DELILA and SARI should ensure data confidentiality, accessibility, and safe referral mechanisms. Fourth, implementers of Together Digital and entrepreneurship mentoring initiatives should monitor business sustainability, market access, and women's control over income. Fifth, companies that have signed the WEPs should report on the implementation of gender equality principles, while the implementers of Kartini Blue Bird should evaluate the program's benefits. Sixth, future research should involve program beneficiaries and local governments to assess the distribution of benefits across geographical areas, economic circumstances, and domestic responsibilities. Evaluation findings should be reported periodically using clearly defined indicators, while distinguishing UN Women's responsibilities from those of its partners.

CONCLUSION

This study identifies three areas of UN Women's engagement to support gender equality in Indonesia: policy advocacy, the prevention of violence against women, and women's economic empowerment. In the policy domain, technical assistance and partnerships focus on integrating gender perspectives into development planning and strengthening accountability. In the protection domain, activities include public campaigns, digital literacy initiatives, and information provision on protection services. In the economic domain, skills

training and collaboration with the private sector reflect efforts to expand women's productive opportunities. These forms of engagement are implemented through facilitation, capacity building, and cross-sector collaboration, with varying roles across initiatives. The documents analyzed provide insights into institutional commitments and the implementation of activities, but do not provide sufficient evidence to establish their impact on women's safety, access to resources, and economic autonomy.

Theoretically, this study contributes a critical analysis across these three domains through the lens of Marxist feminism, particularly by distinguishing institutional commitments to gender equality from changes in women's material conditions. This perspective highlights the division of reproductive labor, economic dependence, resource distribution, and power relations as key dimensions that should be considered when evaluating women's empowerment. Practically, the study proposes directions for developing evaluation frameworks that encompass policy implementation, access to and utilization of protection services, business sustainability, and women's control over income. Distinguishing UN Women's contributions from those of government institutions, civil society organizations, and corporate partners provides a basis for clarifying responsibilities for implementation, evaluation, and outcome reporting according to each actor's involvement.

This study is limited to document analysis; therefore, its conclusions depend on the completeness, temporal coverage, and perspectives represented in the available sources. The experiences of beneficiaries, the division of domestic labor, and changes in women's control over resources cannot be adequately explained through the documents analyzed. The involvement of multiple actors also requires caution when attributing outcomes to UN Women, while the research design does not allow for the assessment of causal program impacts. Future research should integrate document analysis with interviews involving beneficiaries, program implementers, and local government representatives, alongside periodic monitoring of outcome indicators. Comparative studies across regions and social groups are also needed to examine variations in access, benefit distribution, and structural barriers, while considering women's economic circumstances and domestic workloads.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors express their gratitude to the lecturers of the Islamic Political Thought Study Program, Faculty of Da'wah and Islamic Communication, UIN Sunan Kudus, as well as to supervisors and colleagues, for their guidance, support, and time provided in the preparation and research of this journal article.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that they have no personal, professional, or financial conflicts of interest that could influence the research process or its findings.

DECLARATION OF AI USE

The authors declare that the research and manuscript preparation were conducted independently, without the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, and in accordance with the principles of academic integrity.

FUNDING STATEMENT

This research was conducted independently without receiving financial support from any institution, organization, or external party.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Shofi Thowil Umur: Conceptualization; Data Curation; Formal Analysis; Methodology; Writing Original Draft. **M. Nur Rofiq Addiyansyah**: Conceptualization; Formal Analysis; Methodology; Supervision; Writing Review & Editing. **Ammar Salem Khan**: Formal Analysis; Supervision; Visualization; Writing Review & Editing.

REFERENCES

Aini, A., & Arif, M. (2025). Determinants of female labor force participation rate in 2019-2023 in 34 Provinces of Indonesia. *Indonesian Interdisciplinary Journal of Sharia Economics (IIJSE), 8(1)*, 2520-2531. https://doi.org/10.31538/iijse.v8i1.6309

Armond, A. M. (2024, September 23). *Urgensi meningkatkan keterwakilan perempuan di DPR RI*. Kementerian Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia. https://www.setneg.go.id/baca/index/urgensi_meningkatkan_keterwakilan_perempuan_di_dpr_ri

Aulia, S. S., Marzuki, Suyato, & Arpannudin, I. (2024). Women in gender equality movement: A systematic literature review. *Frontiers in sociology, 9*, 1432383. https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2024.1432383

Badan Pusat Statistik. (2025). *Indeks ketimpangan gender 2024*. https://www.bps.go.id/id/publication/2025/07/31/83ae68c36720895d3895ec58/indeks-ketimpangan-gender-2024.html

Balasubramanian, P., Ibanez, M., Khan, S., & Sahoo, S. (2024). Does women's economic empowerment promote human development in low- and middle-income countries? A meta-analysis. *World Development, 178*, 106588. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2024.106588

Birnir, J. K., Okthariza, N., Agustyati, K. N., & Pratama, H. M. (2025). The patriarchy in the parties: Voters, parties and women's electoral fortunes in the 2024 legislative election in Indonesia. *Electoral Studies, 95*, 102938. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2025.102938

Bodur Ün, M. (2019). Contesting global gender equality norms: The case of Turkey. *Review of International Studies, 45(5)*, 828–847. https://doi.org/10.1017/S026021051900024X

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal, 9(2)*, 27–40. https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2)*, 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Bryan, E., Alvi, M., Huyer, S., & Ringler, C. (2024). Addressing gender inequalities and strengthening women's agency to create more climate-resilient and sustainable food systems. *Global Food Security, 40*, 100731. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gfs.2023.100731

Carter, N., Bryant-Lukosius, D., DiCenso, A., Blythe, J., & Neville, A. J. (2014). The use of triangulation in qualitative research. *Oncology nursing forum, 41(5)*, 545–547. https://doi.org/10.1188/14.ONF.545-547

Faisal, F., Hapsari, M. A., Joseph, C., & Pramono Sari, M. (2024). Sustainable development goals on gender equality disclosure practices of Indonesian companies. *Cogent Business & Management, 11(1)*. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2362423

Ferida, K. (2024, November 25). *Kampanye 16 hari anti kekerasan terhadap perempuan kembali digelar, tahun ini fokus pada 3 hal*. Liputan6.com. https://www.liputan6.com/amp/5804173/kampanye-16-hari-anti-kekerasan-terhadap-perempuan-kembali-digelar-tahun-ini-fokus-pada-3-hal

Fraser, N. (2016). Contradictions of capital and care. *New Left Review, 100*, 99–117. https://doi.org/10.64590/nt2

Guinee, N. (2014). Empowering women through education: Experiences from Dalit women in Nepal. *International Journal of Educational Development, 39*, 173–180. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2014.07.007

Jullanar, I., Setiawan, M. C. A., & Astuti, W. R. D. (2024). Kerja sama UN Women dengan Gojek dalam mendukung agenda Sustainable Development Goals-5: Gender equality di Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of International Relations, 8(1)*, 53–76. https://doi.org/10.32787/ijir.v8i1.471

Kementerian Koordinator Bidang Pembangunan Manusia dan Kebudayaan, Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak, & UN Women. (2024). *Rencana aksi nasional perlindungan dan pemberdayaan perempuan dan anak dalam konflik sosial (RAN P3AKS): Implementasi agenda perempuan, perdamaian dan keamanan di Indonesia* [Brosur]. https://wps.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/01_WPS-RAN-P3AKS-BROCHURE_V3-copy_compressed.pdf

Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia. (2025, April 21*). Kementerian Luar Negeri dan UN Women memperkuat pelindungan perempuan pekerja migran Indonesia melalui inovasi chatbot AI SARI*. https://kemlu.go.id/berita/kementerian-luar-negeri-dan-un-women-memperkuat-pelindungan-perempuan-pekerja-migran-indonesia-melalui-inovasi-chatbot-ai-sari?type=publication

Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional. (2024). *Rancangan teknokratik Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional (RPJMN) tahun 2025–2029.* https://www.bappenas.go.id/show-result-satudata?name=publikasi&key=rpjmn&tahun=

Komnas Perempuan (Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan terhadap Perempuan). (2024, Desember 12). *Siaran pers Komnas Perempuan peringatan Hari Hak Asasi Manusia Sedunia*. https://komnasperempuan.go.id/siaran-pers-detail/siaran-pers-komnas-perempuan-peringatan-hari-hak-asasi-manusia-sedunia

Krook, M. L., & True, J. (2012). Rethinking the life cycles of international norms: The United Nations and the global promotion of gender equality. *European Journal of International Relations, 18(1)*, 103–127. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066110380963

MacArthur, J., Carrard, N., Davila, F., Grant, M., Megaw, T., Willetts, J., & Winterford, K. (2022). Gender-transformative approaches in international development: A brief history and five uniting principles. *Women's Studies International Forum, 95*, 102635. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2022.102635

Martitah, M., Sulistianingsih, D., Yusoff, R. M., & Ismail, N. (2024). Insufficient criminal justice system response to the severity of domestic violence during the pandemic in Indonesia. *Heliyon, 10(14)*, Article e33719. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e33719

Mojab, S., & Carpenter, S. (2019). Marxism, feminism, and "intersectionality." *Journal of Labor and Society, 22(2),* 275–282. https://doi.org/10.1111/lands.12409

Munive, A., Donville, J., & Darmstadt, G. L. (2023). Public leadership for gender equality: A framework and capacity development approach for gender transformative policy change. eClinicalMedicine, 56, 101798. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eclinm.2022.101798

Nino. (2023, August 29). *FEB UI dan UN Women berkolaborasi dalam program pendampingan kewirausahaan digital bagi PMI purna Pulau Lombok*. Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis Universitas Indonesia. https://feb.ui.ac.id/2023/08/29/feb-ui-dan-un-women-berkolaborasi-dalam-program-pendampingan-kewirausahaan-digital-bagi-pmi-purna-pulau-lombok/

Parry, M. (2010). Betty Friedan: feminist icon and founder of the national organization for women. 2006. *American journal of public health, 100(9)*, 1584–1585. https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2009.187534

Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa Indonesia. (2023, September 19). *Jumlah perusahaan yang mempromosikan prinsip-prinsip UN Women soal pemberdayaan perempuan melonjak*. https://indonesia.un.org/id/246481-jumlah-perusahaan-yang-mempromosikan-prinsip-prinsip-un-women-soal-pemberdayaan-perempuan

Ríos, V., Beltrán-Esteve, M., Gianmoena, L., Peiró-Palomino, J., & Picazo-Tadeo, A. J. (2023). Quality of government and women's political empowerment: Evidence from European regions. *Papers in Regional Science, 102(6)*, 1067–1097. https://doi.org/10.1111/pirs.12761

Rioux, S. (2015). Embodied contradictions: Capitalism, social reproduction and body formation. *Women's Studies International Forum, 48*, 194–202. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2014.03.008

Roy, S., Bailey, A., & van Noorloos, F. (2024). Understanding the barriers affecting women's mobility in the first- and last-mile stretches in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review. *Journal of Transport Geography, 121*, 104036. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtrangeo.2024.104036

Siregar, W. Z. B. (2024). Causes and impacts of domestic violence against women: Cases in Indonesia. *Jurnal Sosiologi Dialektika, 19(1)*, 77–88. https://doi.org/10.20473/jsd.v19i1.2024.77-88

Stamarski, C. S., & Son Hing, L. S. (2015). Gender inequalities in the workplace: The effects of organizational structures, processes, practices, and decision makers' sexism. *Frontiers in Psychology, 6*, Article 1400. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01400

Susilo, Y., E. Yuniashri, & Handrito, R. P. (2024). Women's tendency in work involvement: A study of female labour force in Indonesia. *Economics and Sociology, 17(1)*, 151–165. https://doi.org/10.14254/2071-789X.2024/17-1/10

Syukri, M. (2023). Gender policies of the new developmental state: The case of Indonesian new participatory village governance. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs, 42(1)*, 110–133. https://doi.org/10.1177/18681034221149750

UN Women. (2017). *Scoping study: Audit keamanan di tiga wilayah Jakarta*. https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ESEAsia/Docs/Publications/2018/04/Scoping-study-s.pdf

UN Women. (2022). *UN Women Indonesia newsletter: Oktober 2021–Januari 2022* [Newsletter]. https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/id-ID_UN-Women-Indonesia-Newsletter-Vol-3-2022s.pdf

UN Women. (2023a). *Women, peace and security in Indonesia* [Country brief]. https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/wps_country_brief_indonesia_20230329.pdf

UN Women. (2023b). *Youth guide to end online gender-based violence* [Toolkit]. https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-12/ap-c463-youth-guide-to-end-ogbv_toolkit_r02-s.pdf

UN Women. (2023c). *UN Women Indonesia newsletter: October 2022–January 2023* [Newsletter]. https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/id-UN-Women-Indonesia-Newsletter-vol-4-en-s-b.pdf

UN Women. (2024a). *Orange the World 2024 – Indonesia* [Photograph]. Flickr. https://www.flickr.com/photos/unwomen/54200944454/

UN Women. (2024b). *Youth guide to end online gender-based violence* (2nd ed.) [Toolkit]. https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-05/ap-c876-toolkit_second-edition_v3-2024-s01.pdf

UN Women. (n.d.). *Outcome IDN_D_1.1: Stakeholders adopt innovative and integrated development solutions to accelerate advancement towards the SDGs*. UN Women Transparency Portal. Retrieved October 19, 2026, from https://open.unwomen.org/en/outcome-detail/XM-DAC-41146-IDN_D_1.1

United Nations Global Compact, & UN Women. (2010). *Women's empowerment principles: Equality means business*. https://unglobalcompact.org/library/65

Vogel, L. (2013). *Marxism and the oppression of women: Toward a unitary theory*. Brill.

Whitaker, E. (2017). *An analysis of Betty Friedan's the feminine mystique (1st ed.)*. Macat Library. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781912282456

Widiastuti, T., Al-shami, S. A., Mawardi, I., Zulaikha, S., Haron, R., Kasri, R. A., Al Mustofa, M. U., & Dewi, E. P. (2024). Capturing the barriers and strategic solutions for women empowerment: Delphy analytical network process. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity, 10(3)*, 100345. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joitmc.2024.100345

World Health Organization. (2019). *RESPECT women: Preventing violence against women—A framework for policymakers*. https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHORHR1819

World Health Organization. (2023, November 9). *Kerangka kerja RESPECT, pendekatan baru untuk mengakhiri kekerasan terhadap perempuan di Indonesia*. https://www.who.int/indonesia/id/news/detail/09-11-2023-a-novel-approach-to-ending-violence-against-women-in-indonesia--the-respect-framework

World Health Organization. (2024, August 27). *Kerangka RESPECT untuk menghentikan kekerasan terhadap perempuan tersedia dalam bahasa Indonesia*. https://www.who.int/indonesia/id/news/detail/26-08-2024-respect-framework-to-end-violence-against-women--now-available-in-indonesian