Feminist Participatory Action Research Report

CENTRAL SULAWESI, WEST NUSA TENGGARA, EAST NUSA TENGGARA

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FOREWORD

Nurturing the fundamental power of community-based resilience, Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) has ignited transformative changes for women and young people to raise their voices, influence decisions and catalyse change toward gender equality and women's empowerment in Indonesian villages.

For UN Women, with generous support from KOICA (Korea International Cooperation Agency) under the WE NEXUS program, "Empowered Women for Sustainable Peace: Addressing the Peace Humanitarian Nexus to Enhance Community Resilience in Indonesia", and through collaboration with the Institute of International Studies (IIS) of Universitas Gadjah Mada, the FPAR initiative has been more than a research project. Hence, the compilation of women- and youth-led initiatives presented in the Final Report of the FPAR stands as a testament to the knowledge, courage, and collective strength of women and young people at the grassroots. It addresses the pressing challenges of disaster, social conflict, precarious livelihoods, and gender-based violence (GBV) that women experience.

For the research participants, FPAR has been a transformative journey of empowerment, self-discovery, and action grounded in their lived experiences as marginalized communities in Central Sulawesi, East Nusa Tenggara, and West Nusa Tenggara.

Beyond its methodology, FPAR mobilized 25 co-researchers, women and men who are experiencing advocacy and formal research for the first time. With guidance from the University and eight local partner facilitators, these emerging leaders revived women's groups, secured women's roles in peace and village decision-making, and inspired wider community participation to strengthen local resilience.

As a result, this initiative mobilized youth and ensured village plans and budgets reflected the needs of women and children, in line with the Women-friendly and Child-Care villages (DRPPA) framework. By introducing a simple yet effective Conflict Early-Warning and Early Response System (CEWERS), communities became better equipped to prevent and resolve conflicts.

Grounded in everyday village life, FPAR supported communities to study and take action on four urgent issues: disaster, social conflict, livelihoods, and GBV. With women at the center and leadership from the community, the teams examined everyday rules and practices that perpetuate inequality and tested simple, workable solutions. The results are practical and evidence-based, showing through local examples how unequal roles and power between women and men increase risks and hinder crisis preparedness, response, and recovery –and what can be done to change that.

This report underscores the power of participatory research in building inclusive, reflective, and transformative knowledge. It affirms that women and communities are trusted, sustainable change becomes possible. The lessons from this initiative will continue to shape and strengthen UN Women's programming and partnerships going forward.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the co-researchers, partner organizations, and communities who made this work possible. We look forward to continuing this shared journey toward a more resilient and inclusive future.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BPD	village consultative body (badan permusyawaratan desa)
FPAR	feminist participatory action research
FGD	focus group discussion
GBV	gender-based violence
HDP	human-development-peace nexus
NTB	Nusa Tenggara Barat
NTT	Nusa Tenggara Timur province
RP	responsible party
WPS	women, peace and security

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The WE NEXUS project aims to develop scalable interventions supporting key policies in Indonesia and is funded by the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and implemented by UN Women. These efforts focus on preventing violent extremism, reducing disaster risk, strengthening resilience, and protecting and empowering women and children. The project was planned and carried out by the Institute of International Studies at Universitas Gadjah Mada (IIS-UGM) in Kupang and Timor Tengah Selatan (Nusa Tenggara Timur), Kota Bima and Kabupaten Bima (Nusa Tenggara Barat), and Sigi (Sulawesi Tenggara) from November 2024 to February 2025. The project aimed to identify the root causes of gender inequality and their intersection with vulnerability in the context of disasters, social conflict, and violent extremism. Additionally, the project sought to empower women by strengthening local leaders and enhancing their capacity to ensure gender perspectives are integrated into policy decision-making, thereby fostering resilience among vulnerable groups.

Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) is an inclusive, community-driven research approach rooted in feminism and action research traditions. FPAR actively involves marginalized groups, particularly women, as co-researchers who shape the research process from inception to completion. Unlike traditional research methods, FPAR emphasizes lived experience, collective inquiry and social transformation. In the WE NEXUS project, FPAR was employed as a tool to explore, cultivate, and enhance grassroots activism by equipping women with skills and confidence to engage in advocacy and influence decision-making. Through methods such as storytelling, participatory mapping, and community dialogues, **co-researchers** – local community members enlisted to actively participate and lead the action research – were asked to engage with local issues, including disaster impacts, social inequalities, and gender-based violence (GBV). By presenting women's voices and centring their experiences, this approach empowered co-researchers to articulate their concerns, develop actionable solutions, and advocate for meaningful policy change. The project fostered women's representation in public discourse and strengthened local leadership, ensuring advocacy efforts were grounded in community needs and sustained through collective action.

The FPAR training successfully engaged 29 co-researchers (26 women, 3 men) who participated in three FPAR training sessions: 10 from Kab. Kupang and Timor Tengah Selatan (9 women, 1 man); 10 women from Kota Bima and Kab. Bima; and 9 from Sigi (7 women, 2 men). Participants were selected based on their community engagement, communication skills, and commitment to gender-focused advocacy. The majority were women, aligning with the project's goal of amplifying women's narratives in disaster, conflict, and violence contexts. While most participants were between 30 and 40 years old, younger co-researchers contributed valuable energy and adaptability through training using digital tools. Participants demonstrated varying levels of facilitation experience, thus highlighting the need for targeted capacity-building strategies to optimize advocacy outcomes.

The training consisted of three phases: fundamental FPAR training; data and evidence-based advocacy training; and reflection and evaluation sessions. These stages built participants' understanding of feminist research methodologies, enhanced the ability of participants to translate data into advocacy strategies and entailed evaluation of their progress in this regard. Co-researchers employed various research methods, including focus group discussions (FGDs), interviews, seasonal calendars, and transect walks. Interviews and FGDs were preferred methods due to their practicality, while challenges such as limited comprehension, geographical constraints, and time limitations hindered the implementation of other approaches.

The advocacy phase resulted in 25 targeted initiatives addressing key social issues and produced tangible outcomes such as strengthened community networks, media advocacy plans, and increased government support. Despite engagement and coordination challenges, these efforts underscored the need for sustained advocacy to achieve long-term community transformation. The final phase facilitated reflection, sharing best practices, and advancing media-focused advocacy strategies, thereby laying a foundation for continued community empowerment and gender-focused activism.

By addressing structural inequalities and equipping co-researchers with research and advocacy tools, the WE NEXUS project strengthened women's voices and their leadership in local communities. This participatory model ensured that solutions emerged from within the communities themselves, fostering ownership and sustainable change. While some co-researchers successfully transitioned from research to advocacy, others faced barriers such as resistance from local authorities and logistical constraints. Despite these challenges, the initiative facilitated social transformation by uncovering systemic inequalities and encouraging collective action.

Key lessons highlight the importance of accessible training materials, confidence-building initiatives, and integrating advocacy strategies with existing community programmes. Sustaining this progress requires institutional support, ongoing capacity-building, and grassroots alliances to ensure FPAR continues to amplify women's voices and foster long-term change.

INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT DESIGN

Background

Despite significant economic growth, Indonesia continues to face interconnected crises, including humanitarian needs arising from conflict, climate-induced disasters, and displacement. In response, the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) collaborates with UN Women and its partners to strive for and present opportunities to develop innovative approaches using the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus. Focused on empowering women, the WE NEXUS project integrates the women, peace and security agenda (WPS) with strategies for reducing disaster risk. This collaboration aims to establish effective practices that link humanitarian response, sustainable development, and peacebuilding efforts from the ground up.

Women's participation is fundamental to addressing social crises and making changes. Ensuring women can effectively participate in decision-making is critical to building resilience, strengthening social cohesion, sustainable peace, and improved crisis preparedness. Genuine and meaningful participation also means that women can voice their opinions and needs, thus challenging existing inequalities and demanding socially just and inclusive policies and practices.

These ideals remain challenging in various regions, however, including in Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT), Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB), and Sulawesi Tengah. These provinces face overlapping disaster challenges, social conflict, and violent extremism. NTT experiences severe climate impacts, with prolonged droughts, extreme weather, and frequent floods and landslides. Limited access to clean water, sanitation, and healthcare has led to high child mortality, disproportionately affecting underprivileged women and vulnerable groups (Saraswati, 2022). Meanwhile, NTB had Indonesia's lowest Gender Inequality Index (Indeks Ketimpangan Gender or IKG) in 2021 but recorded the second-highest child marriage rate. Violence against women

remains a pressing issue, with domestic abuse sometimes escalating into communal conflict. Deeply rooted patriarchal structures reinforce toxic masculinity and rigid social expectations, further marginalizing and limiting women's opportunities. (Saraswati, 2022).

Similarly, Sulawesi Tengah struggles with disaster risk management and social vulnerability, contributing to poverty and inequality. The province has one of the highest child marriage rates and the highest disability prevalence in Indonesia (Saraswati, 2022). Yet, those most affected – women, youth, and people with disabilities – are often excluded from decision-making processes that could address these issues.

In this study, Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) refers to a methodology in which researchers collaborate with communities to identify and address gender-related issues in disaster management and response, conflict, and social violence. This approach diverges from traditional research, which prioritizes academic values and interpretations. Instead, the feminist influence in FPAR emphasizes a collaborative framework between researchers and community members to recognize challenges and determine relevant, feasible actions that promote sustainable gender equality and strengthen social resilience. FPAR explores the deep-rooted patriarchal culture that limits women's opportunities in the three focus issues. Rather than treating problems that are gender-based as universally relevant, FPAR values the diversity of women's experiences, ensuring that the approach remains contextual and grounded.

Considering the needs mentioned earlier, FPAR activities were adopted to promote grassroots women's participation in identifying problems of gender inequality and solving them through collective actions for sustainable social change. By employing the FPAR approach, this project upholds the principles of openness, justice, equality, and diverse perspectives. FPAR is an effective tool to respond to dominant societal structures rooted in male power. By appreciating the personal experiences of vulnerable groups, addressing the layers of factors that cause gender inequality, and incorporating reflexivity, FPAR provides the foundation for transformational change (Lykes & Crosby, 2014; Reid & Frisby, 2008). Further, the FPAR method creates a learning space that actively encourages co-researchers to network and understand social issues through a gender lens. The goal of the project is to emancipate women, empower them to become champions within their villages, and ultimately drive societal change.

Problem statement

As part of the WE NEXUS project, the FPAR initiative addresses a fundamental question: How can a gender-based perspective be meaningfully integrated into society, particularly in the context of disasters, conflict, social instability, and extremist violence? This question explores the intersectionality of gender with these challenges, ensuring that women's roles and needs are central to building resilience, promoting peace and mitigating the impacts of crises.

Objectives

The WE NEXUS project aims to enhance the meaningful participation of women and promote the development of gender-sensitive policies and responses, especially in situations involving disasters, conflicts, and violence. Within the framework of FPAR, these objectives are further refined to focus on specific objectives:

1. Position women as champions of change within villages to challenge societal norms, advocate for gender equality and drive transformative change.

2. Encourage women's understanding of their roles in development, particularly in navigating the complex intersections of disaster management, social conflict, and violent extremism, through a collaborative approach.

3. Promote a safe and supportive space where women can build resilience by influencing policies and benefiting from equitable opportunities.

The project believes that women are pivotal in shaping their communities alongside men and in addressing root structural challenges and advocating for alternative, inclusive policies.

Project design

The WE NEXUS project was designed as a training activity, with *feminist participatory action research (FPAR)* as the central focus. FPAR is a research approach that emerges from the evolution of action research, research, and participatory research, which is then grounded in feminist principles and ideology (Lykes & Crosby, 2014; Reid & Frisby, 2008). As a result, FPAR follows the principles of participatory research and emphasizes the values of democracy, fairness, equality, awareness of the socioecological environment (micro, meso, and macro), respect for diversity, and pluralism. These principles are merged and intersect with feminist traditions of challenging patriarchal oppression and inequality while embracing personal subjectivities, intersectionality and fostering reflexivity (Lykes & Crosby, 2014; Reid & Frisby, 2008).

A feminist approach in participatory action research (PAR) demands that gendered power relations are interrogated at every level (APWLD, 2019). FPAR recognizes and validates women's experiences while researchers share and contribute to understanding these gendered experiences. Further, a feminist approach involves acknowledging the practical barriers to women's participation in a project and implementing measures to enable all to contribute effectively. By transcending the traditional power structure between 'researcher' and 'subject', FPAR is a democratic inquiry and action process designed and implemented by women participating as '*co-researchers*'. In this way, FPAR nurtures collective ownership of knowledge and action through a deliberative approach (Godden, 2017; Wickramasinghe, 2020, in Godden et al., 2020). The intention is to cultivate an independent women's movement that advocates for an alternative development model.

The project is grounded in two core principles: reflexivity and intersectionality. *Reflexivity* involves critical self-reflection on how the social backgrounds, assumptions, positionality, and behaviour of co-researchers impact the research process. Being 'reflexive' entails 'thoughtful, self-aware analyses' between co-researchers and those being researched (Lumsden, 2024). Meanwhile, *intersectionality* serves as an analytical tool for understanding how various social structures and identities contribute to issues of inequality. Intersectionality guarantees that the project does not adopt a uniform approach but rather recognizes and addresses the various realities present in the community. These principles discourage a 'tick-box' approach to reflective research that merely dictates which identity should be the focus and prescribes a 'correct' way to conduct reflective research.

To centre on reflexivity, this project employs storytelling as a vital method to critically examine issues that disproportionately affect women. This approach invites co-researchers to reflect on their positionality while engaging with the narratives. Simultaneously, to foster a sense of intersectionality, co-researchers are encouraged to engage with the concept of 'why' when addressing an issue. This method aids co-researchers in uncovering the multifaceted variables contributing to the village's structural problems, enabling a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the challenges.

This FPAR initiative is positioned as an important contributor to the broader WE NEXUS project. Below are key FPAR contributions.

1. Established gender-responsive and inclusive village working groups to monitor early warning signs of threats to social cohesion, promote community-based conflict prevention, and enhance disaster resilience and preparedness.

2. Supported community-based groups (women, youth, marginalized communities, and people with disabilities) to build leadership, networking, and coordination capacity.

3. Strengthened women's capacity to participate meaningfully in local forums to develop village plans, policies, budgets and preparedness mechanisms.

These initiatives align with the FPAR initiative's core spirit of capacity-building for women, emphasizing their roles in addressing issues related to disaster management, social conflict, and violent extremism. Active, multi-stakeholder coordination is crucial for effective implementation and maximal synchronization. By integrating a gender perspective, the FPAR initiative can significantly contribute to cross-sectoral efforts in disaster management, social conflict resolution, and the prevention of violent extremism.

To achieve its objectives, the FPAR initiative adopts the pedagogy of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, as proposed by Kemmis et al. (2014). This approach is guided by openness, reciprocity, mutual disclosure, and shared risk (Reinharz, 1992). Diagram 1 provides a visual representation of the approach's cyclical characteristics.

Diagram 1. Action research cycle (Kemmis, 2014)
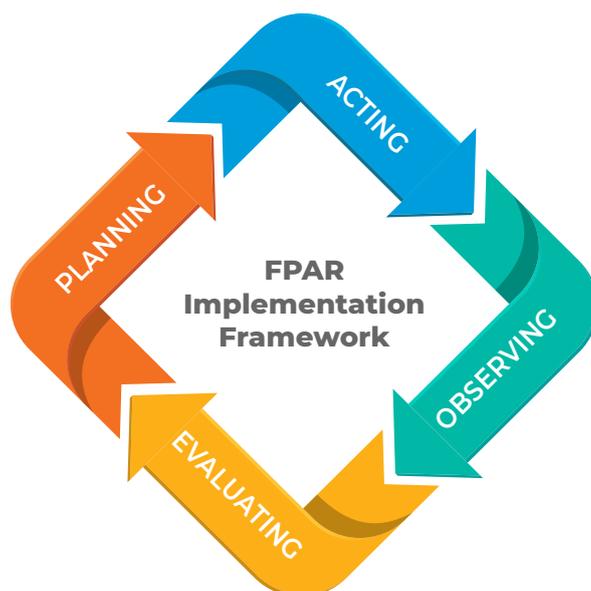
Table 1 below illustrates the operationalization of this approach. Each phase corresponds to a distinct stage of the project, with specific objectives, methods, and outputs designed to foster continuous reflection and improvement.

- In the planning phase, co-researchers are introduced to fundamental concepts of feminism and FPAR through interactive methods such as group storytelling. This foundational step equips participants with the knowledge to develop their individual research workplans.
- The acting phase involves co-researchers implementing their plans within their communities and engaging directly with villagers to analyse predetermined issues with remote guidance. This hands-on approach enables participants to translate theory into practice.
- During the observing phase, co-researchers analyse the collected data using participatory techniques, like mapping and futures, to connect their findings with broader feminist and activist knowledge.
- Finally, the reflecting phase provides space for evaluation and collective learning. Using participatory scoring and ranking, participants assess the outcomes of their research and campaigns, culminating in a co-created evaluation report that maps the way forward.

This structured yet flexible cycle ensures that each stage builds upon the previous one, thus reinforcing learning and fostering meaningful community engagement.

Table 1. Implementation plan

Planning	Acting	Observing	Reflecting
Phase			
Training 1: FPAR Fundamental Concepts		Training 2: Evidence-based advocacy and community campaign	Training 3: Conducted in reflection/ evaluation workshop
Key Objective			
Introducing key concepts and the significance of feminism and FPAR.	Implement individual research workplan through an FPAR method.	Analyse data and connect to knowledge of feminism and activism.	Evaluate the FPAR research already conducted and map the way forward
Method			
Group storytelling, followed by a short presentation.	Engage with their village to analyse predetermined issues with remote assistance.	Participatory mapping and futuring techniques on advocacy and community.	Participatory scoring and ranking.

Planning	Acting	Observing	Reflecting
Output			
Individual workplan of FPAR.	Individual reflection on the datasheet of fieldwork.	Actionable plan on advocacy and campaign.	Report on the campaign and advocacy plan, along with a co-created evaluation of the project.

Geographical focus

The FPAR initiatives were implemented in four districts and one city of three provinces in Indonesia, as shown in Table 2. The areas represented regions that have experienced various challenges related to conflicts, disasters and violence and their impacts on women. These challenges have highlighted the need to cultivate stronger women's voices and participation in crisis preparedness and mitigation.

Table 2. List of provinces, districts, and wards/villages

Province		
Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT)	**Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB)**	**Sulawesi Tengah**
District: Kabupaten Kupang Village: 1. Camplong II Village 2. Manusak Village 3. Raknamo Village 4. Tolnaku Village 5. Oefafi Village 6. Mata Air Village **District: Kabupaten Timor Tengah Selatan** Village: 1. Spaha Village 2. Oetuke Village 3. Tuapakas Village	**District: Kota Bima** Ward: 1. Penatoi Ward 2. Paruga Ward 3. Dara Ward **District: Kabupaten Bima** Village: 1. Rato Village 2. Ncera Village 3. Roi Village 4. Samili Village	**District: Kabupaten Sigi** Village: 1. Rogo Village 2. Kaleke Village 3. Bangga Village 4. Pombewe Village 5. Ngatabaru Village 6. Pesaku Village 7. Ramba Village 8. Wisolo Village 9. Rarampadende Village

NTT is an archipelagic province with dispersed islands and diverse geographical features, including mountains, hills, vast grasslands, steppes, and savannas (Saraswati, 2022). Kab. Kupang and Kab. Timor Tengah Selatan (TTS), are highly prone to natural disasters due to climate change (drought, forest and land fires, and floods), with women disproportionately affected. Additionally, scarcity and unequal access to, and control over, natural resources can lead to social conflict. The intergenerational societal plurality based on religion or ethnicity, however, keeps the risk of radicalism in both regions low. This trend is reflected in the high inter-religion index in 2023 (Saraswati, 2022; TribunFlores.com, 2024). However, both areas still struggle in terms of gender-based discrimination and domestic violence, especially in TTS, with the highest rate of violence against women and migrant workers in the province (Saraswati, 2022).

The second province is NTB. The population of NTB is concentrated primarily on Lombok Island, which is home to 70% of the province's inhabitants. The region consists of two main islands, Lombok and Sumbawa. Both islands have limited road connectivity (Saraswati, 2022). Bima, located on Sumbawa Island, is among the region's most vulnerable to violent conflict. Communal tensions often arise from minor personal disputes that escalate into large-scale village clashes.

In addition, the Penatoi Ward in Kota Bima has been stigmatized as a 'red zone' for violent extremism after several past incidents (Saraswati, 2022). Women often endure discrimination and stigma related to terrorism. Apart from extreme violence, the area also experiences serious issues related to natural disasters and their impacts on women. This phenomenon coincides with persistent and widespread gender discrimination in public decision-making spaces that restrict women from assuming leadership roles, thereby weakening their communities' ability to address disaster emergencies.

The third province is Sulawesi Tengah. The province is known for its mountainous terrain that creates challenging and often critical conditions for transportation. While intercity transportation options are varied, they rely primarily on traditional modes of travel. The population predominantly inhabits the same island, adding to the regional concentration (Saraswati, 2022). In 2018, disaster struck the province in Sigi Regency, Palu City, and Donggala Regency. A series of earthquakes, tsunamis, and liquefaction claimed the lives of over 4,000 people and caused significant property loss. Apart from the natural disasters, Sigi is also considered a high-risk area, frequently experiencing communal conflicts, especially violent clashes among villages (Saraswati, 2022). Alcohol-fuelled aggression and provocative false information on social media often exacerbate tensions, especially among young people. Further, child marriage and stunting remain critical social issues that require urgent attention.

Methods

The report adopts a thematic and process-oriented approach to effectively present the research journey and outcomes. Anchored in the cyclical framework of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, the report is structured to mirror the initiative's iterative nature. Each section corresponds to a specific phase of the FPAR implementation framework, detailing the objectives, methods, and outputs that emerged during each stage. This approach emphasizes the interconnectedness of the phases by illustrating how the insights gained at one stage inform subsequent actions and reflections. By aligning the report's structure with the research process, the narrative highlights the evolving nature of the initiative, ensuring that both the methodology's rigour and the transformative learning experiences of participants are captured. This method also reinforces the collaborative and participatory ethos of FPAR, showcasing the voices, contributions, and reflections of co-researchers throughout the documentation.

Several methods were used to collect data for this analysis.

- **Surveys** based on Google forms gathered the basic biodata of co-researchers and several simple assessments related to their capacities. This method is also used to gather quick feedback from each training session and assistance forum, as well as to coordinate activities.
- **Verbal statements and testimonies** were delivered during various formal and informal activities – including input from field facilitators, partners, and UN Women as the main implementer – regarding the activity process, implementation, and evaluation.
- **Facilitator observations** were made during training sessions and informal communication with co-researchers and other involved parties. Facilitators also noted the sociocultural context that influenced the FPAR journey, both in the training environment and within the community.
- **Co-researcher outputs** are reflected in their completed worksheets, FPAR plans, and reports (both textual and non-textual, including photos, verbal narratives, videos, and educational materials). These outputs assisted the facilitator team in mapping processes related to issue focus, methods used, and observable direct results.

It is crucial to note that the observation process occurred over a relatively short period, which limited the ability to conduct more systematic observations at the outcome or impact level.

Implementation and technical coordination

The implementation of this FPAR initiative is based on the WE NEXUS mechanism. In Indonesia, the WE NEXUS project is funded by KOICA and implemented by UN Women in collaboration with Save the Children, UNFPA, Yayasan Care Peduli, and Wahid Foundation as the main responsible parties (RPs). As the FPAR implementer, IIS-UGM primarily coordinated with UN Women and RPs on technical matters to achieve the project's objectives effectively. Each RP coordinated implementation at the subnational level. IIS-UGM also worked closely with facilitators who supported participants on the ground with field implementation. RPs appointed these facilitators in the respective areas to help with the day-to-day assistance to communities.

A monthly coordination meeting ensured the communication of ideas, progress, and challenges faced during FPAR implementation, while separate meetings focused more on particular issues.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

This section outlines the selection process of co-researchers, followed by an overview of their demographics and the facilitation experience. It then details the structured three-phase training designed to equip co-researchers with the knowledge and skills needed for FPAR. Key insights from the training highlight their learning processes, challenges, and contributions to advocacy efforts within their communities.

Co-researcher profiles

29 co-researchers (26 women, 3 men) participated in the three FPAR training sessions: 10 from Kab. Kupang and Timor Tengah Selatan; 10 women from Kota Bima and Kab. Bima and 9 from Sigi (7 women, 2 men). The selection of co-researcher candidates was based on the following agreed criteria:

- Ages range from 18 to 60 years.
- Living in the village they represented.
- Minimum education level: middle school graduate, with preference given to high school graduates.
- Fluent in the local language.
- Demonstrated active engagement with the community and proven experience facilitating or leading community organizing and empowerment initiatives (such as Kader Posyandu, PKK, Karang Taruna).

- Demonstrated commitment and willingness to work voluntarily in their respective communities.
- Strong communication skills, including the ability to express opinions in public, and demonstrated leadership qualities.

These criteria were shared with the RPs who, with their respective local organizations in each area, nominated the co-researchers because they better understood contextual dynamics at the local level. Below are some overviews of co-researcher profiles, including gender, age, and facilitation experience (Bar Chart 1 and Bar Chart 2).

Bar Chart 1. Proportion of women and men co-researchers
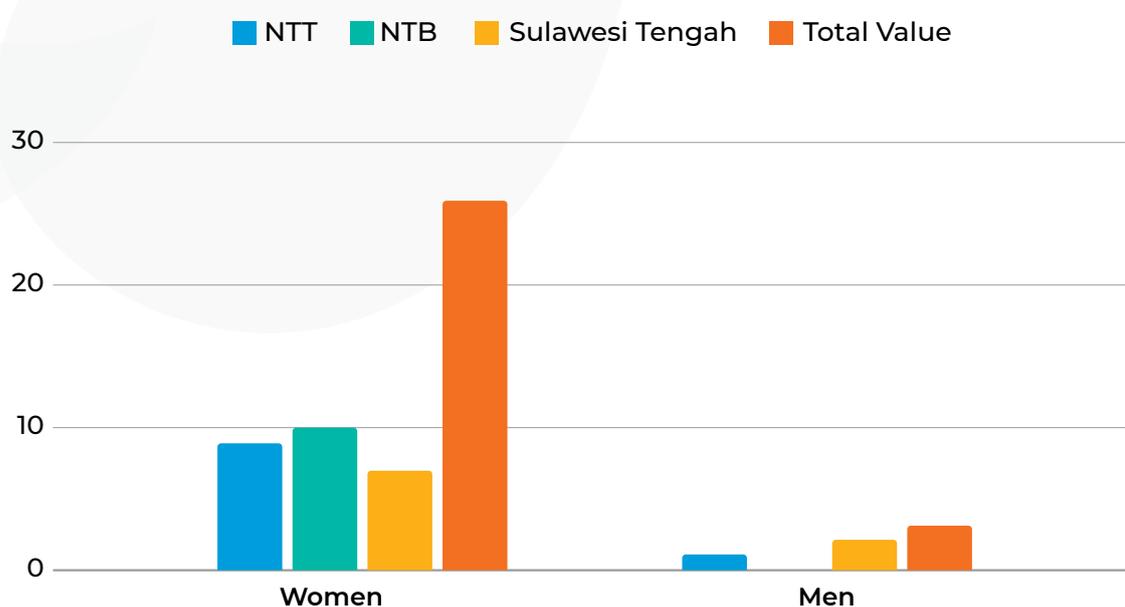
Bar Chart 1 illustrates the proportion of women and men among the 29 co-researchers who participated in the training. Overall, women constituted the majority, with a total of 26 co-researchers, while only 3 men took part in the project. In NTT, 9 co-researchers were women, while only 1 was a man. In Bima, all 10 co-researchers were women. Meanwhile, in Sigi, 2 co-researchers were men, while the remaining 7 were women.

The greater number of women is certainly in line with FPAR, which aims to explore women's narratives. However, regardless of gender, the priority was that all participants firmly understood the core principles of feminism and confidently expressed women's voices in the context of disasters, conflicts and violence.

Bar Chart 2. Age distribution of co-researchers
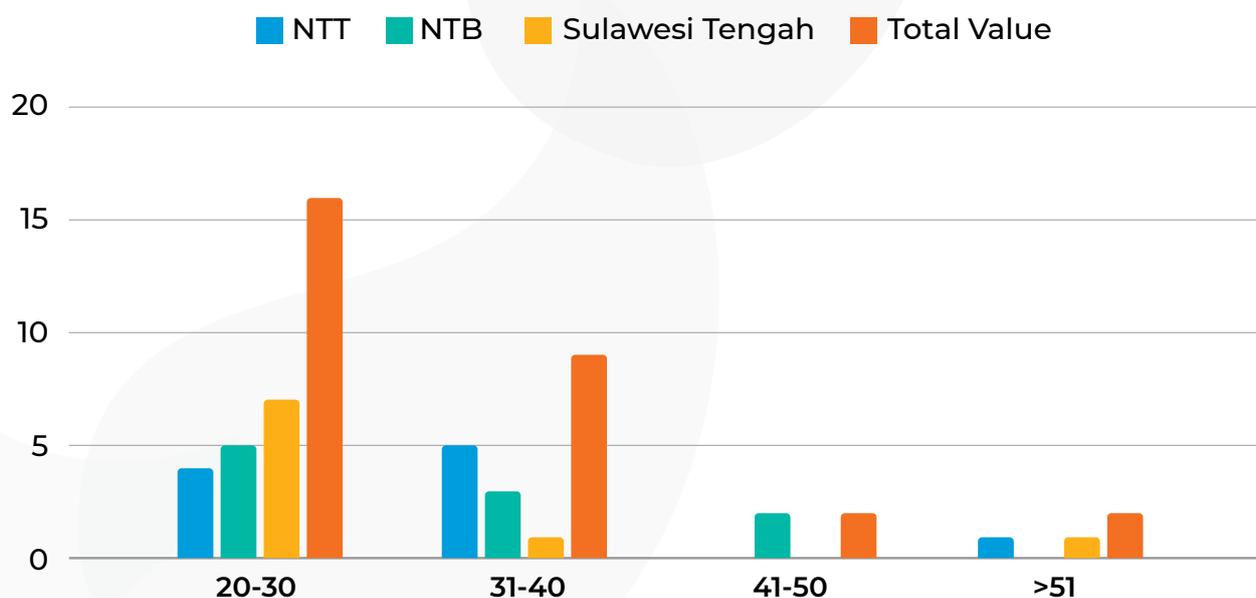
Bar Chart 2 presents data on the age distribution of co-researchers who participated in the training across three regions.

- Most co-researchers belong to the 30-40 aged group, followed by four co-researchers in the 20-30 age group. Further, one co-researcher is over 50 years old (specifically, 59 years old).
- In NTB, the largest proportion of co-researchers falls within the 20-30 age group, followed by three co-researchers in the 30-40 age group and two in the 40-50 age category. There were no co-researchers older than 50.
- In Sulawesi Tengah, the 20-30 age group is the most represented, with seven co-researchers. Meanwhile, only one co-researcher belongs to the 30-40 age group, and one co-researcher over the age of 50 (51 years old) participated.

The age distribution of co-researchers in NTT, NTB and Central Sulawesi showed strong participation from younger individuals, particularly those in the 20-30 age group in NTB and Central Sulawesi. This younger group brought dynamic energy and easily adapted to technology such as WhatsApp, video calls, and digital document access. Meanwhile, in NTT, most co-researchers were in the 30-40 age group, reflecting a level of maturity that supported quality engagement and understanding of complex social issues. Although older co-researchers (over 50 years old) were few, their involvement provided valuable insights, cultural knowledge, and guidance for long-term recovery from disasters, conflicts, and violence.

The average age profile of the co-researchers highlighted that most participants were in early adulthood or adulthood and this influenced the training dynamics, providing a probable explanation for why the training could be completed in a relatively short time, despite the density of the materials. However, the domination of the younger age group also revealed a bias, as the narratives of the elderly participants might be less represented.

Bar Chart 3. Facilitation experience of each co-researcher
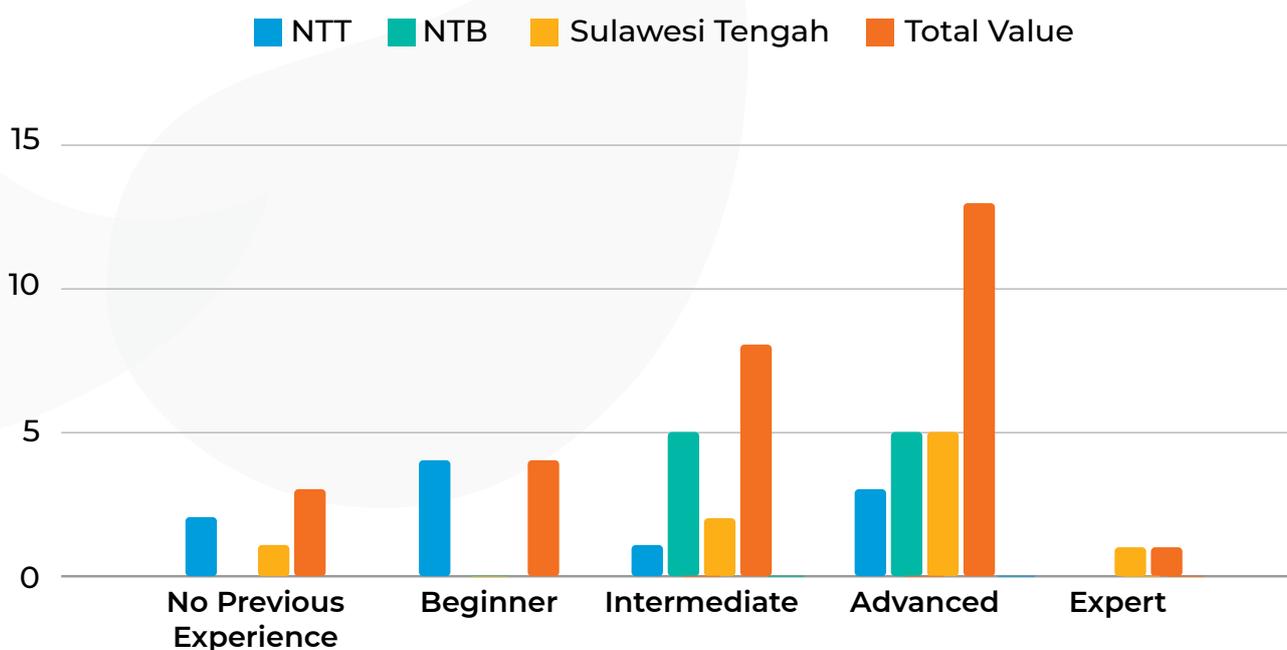
In addition to gender and age, the facilitation experience of each co-researcher was mapped based on the co-researcher's self-assessment. This chart highlights that overall most co-researchers identify themselves as adequate or moderately skilled in facilitation and organizational experience, indicating a foundation for confidence. However, a closer examination of the data reveals varying trends across the three regions.

- In NTB, the proportion of co-researchers who identified themselves as advanced and experts was equal, with five participants in each category.
- In Sigi, adequately skilled co-researchers were the majority, totalling five co-researchers. This group was followed by two intermediate-skilled co-researchers, one expert participant, and one who came without previous experience.
- In NTT, conditions were diverse. The largest group consisted of four co-researchers who assessed themselves as having skills at the beginner level. Three co-researchers identified themselves as advanced, while one reported an intermediate skill level. Two co-researchers had never had exposure to facilitation experience.

The varying capacities reflected by co-researchers highlight the value of a stronger capacity-building strategy for more effective training delivery and comprehension. The finding suggests that classification from entry to advanced would help the WE NEXUS project create the desired community impacts. While the entry level co-researchers can focus on basic concepts and simple advocacy plans, advanced co-researchers could be engaged in leadership capacities with more systematic and high-level advocacy. The diverse capacities also present opportunities for peer mentorship, which can enhance women's community activism through FPAR.

Training implementation

As previously stated, the FPAR initiative was executed in three stages. Each phase built upon the last, gradually enhancing participants' understanding of feminist research methodologies and their application in advocacy. Below is a general overview of the training sessions, detailing the locations, number of co-researchers, and facilitators involved in each session.

Fundamental FPAR

The initial training, Fundamental FPAR, focused on introducing the concept of FPAR to the co-researchers. The training explained the principles of FPAR and provided practical guidance on conducting research through a feminist lens. Throughout the training, co-researchers were introduced to key research skills such as framing research questions, designing data collection methods, and engaging with communities ethically and sensitively. By the end of the training, the co-researchers collaboratively developed FPAR plans based on their chosen research topics. During the training, co-researchers provided feedback on their experience:

- Some noted that the tight schedule limited opportunities for discussion and data collection.
- Others found the reading materials challenging to comprehend.
- Several co-researchers suggested increasing the number of co-researchers, believing this would enhance their confidence, particularly in advocacy efforts.

In response, the facilitators implemented the following measures:

- Provided follow-up support after the FPAR training through WhatsApp and Zoom meetings to ensure co-researchers' comprehension.
- Offered one-on-one consultations to equip co-researchers with the necessary knowledge for field data collection.
- Introduced flexibility in the data collection process and timeline, allowing data to be gathered via WhatsApp calls.

The first training resulted in developing an FPAR planning agenda, leading to 26 research projects on data collection. Four methods were introduced during the training: 1) focus group discussions (FGDs), 2) interviews, 3) seasonal calendars, and 4) transect walks. However, FGDs and interviews were the methods most chosen by co-researchers for reasons of familiarity and practicality. Of the 26 initiatives, 17 planned to use interviews, 8 combined interviews and FGDs, and 1 relied solely on FGDs.

Several challenges hindered the implementation of the seasonal calendar and transect walk methods, which require active community engagement. These included difficulties in comprehension and application within the local context, the complexity of community dynamics, and the extensive geographical scope of the villages. Further, time constraints hindered the effective implementation of these approaches.

Data-driven and evidence-based advocacy

The second training was centred around data-driven, evidence-based advocacy and equipped co-researchers with practical and substantive knowledge to tackle women's structural and societal challenges through an advocacy-based approach. Building on the previous training, this phase emphasizes refining the data, collected during the period leading up to the second training, into actionable advocacy messages. The co-researchers then implemented these messages during the interval before the third training. Below are several pieces of feedback gathered from the co-researchers.

- The short timeframe (two to three weeks) for advocacy implementation limited its effectiveness.
- External factors, such as social conflict and natural disasters, hindered community engagement.
- Transforming collected data into persuasive evidence is difficult.

In response to this feedback, facilitators provided the following assistance.

- Practical examples to enhance contextual understanding. A case study on water scarcity illustrated how daily usage records and testimony from affected individuals were systematically organized to strengthen advocacy efforts, with the narrative framework serving as the focal point for advocating the issue.
- Flexible engagement methods, such as remote interviews and digital storytelling, as a contingency strategy.
- Support for co-researchers to focus on achievable short-term goals, such as raising awareness within their communities or engaging with local stakeholders.

The output of this training was the development of an advocacy action plan that guided co-researchers in mapping advocacy objectives, focusing on achievable goals such as redefining perspectives and influencing behavioural change. The co-researchers also analysed key target actors and identified methods for effectively implementing their plans. Further, co-researchers were encouraged to apply the SMART approach in developing their action plans, ensuring they were specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound. A total of 25 advocacy projects were mapped, addressing issues related to disasters, social conflicts, and violent extremism. One co-researcher from Sigi, Sulawesi Tengah, could not continue the initiated project due to personal reasons. Further details can be found in Table 3 and Table 4.

Reflection and evaluation

The third training revolved around reflection and evaluation, specifically regarding the first and second pieces of training. This final phase encouraged co-researchers to consider the outcomes of their advocacy actions and whether they achieved transformation. What challenges did they encounter? What best practices emerged? Further, how can the advocacy be sustained? Such questions were central to the discussions.

- As a part of this process, through the *Inclusivity Gallery* co-researchers showcased their research and advocacy efforts, fostering discussions on empowerment and inclusivity. Visual storytelling, including images and videos, deepened their understanding and strengthened their solidarity. Inspired by the examples provided by facilitators, co-researchers explored media advocacy, proposing documentary films and digital platforms to amplify their work.
- The co-researchers encountered common challenges, especially when attempting to engage women in village discussions, as they were unfamiliar with speaking in front of a group. Coordination was also complex due to the village government's busy schedule and women's farming responsibilities. However, the facilitators highlighted that advocacy is an ongoing process that requires persistence and commitment to make a lasting impact. Hence, co-researchers were encouraged not to view the project's conclusion as the end of their advocacy effort but as a foundation for continued action to achieve the intended transformation.
- Advocacy efforts yielded promising results, including the support of local government. For example, a co-researcher collaborated with a researcher to provide a disaster preparedness programme and a women's economic empowerment initiative to be discussed in the following section.

The documented FPAR result reports from each co-researcher were the primary output of this final training and are included in Annex 4.

General Information			
Area	**Date and Place**	**Co-researchers**	**In-field Facilitators/Co-facilitators**
Training 1: Fundamental FPAR			
Kab. Kupang and Timor Tengah Selatan, Nusa Tenggara Timur	Kota Kupang, November 21 to 22, 2024	10 co-researchers (9 villages)	• 2 female co-facilitators from CIS Timor • A female guest facilitator from the National Gender Youth Activist (NGYA)
Bima, Nusa Tenggara Barat	Kota Bima, December 6 to 7, 2024	10 co-researchers (7 villages)	• 2 female co-facilitators from La Rimpu and LP2DER are present
Sigi, Sulawesi Tengah	Kota Palu, December 13 to 14, 2024	9 co-researchers (9 villages)	• 3 co-facilitators (2 females, 1 male) from YKP, Karsa Institute and CARE
Training 2: Data and Evidence-Based Advocacy			
Kab. Kupang and Timor Tengah Selatan, Nusa Tenggara Timur	Kota Kupang, January 16 to 17, 2025	10 co-researchers (9 villages)	• 3 co-facilitators: 2 from CIS Timor (1 female, 1 male) and 1 female from Une Daya Nusantara (UDN) • 1 female UN Women Volunteer
Bima, Nusa Tenggara Barat	Kota Bima, January 10 to 11, 2025	10 co-researchers (7 villages)	• 2 female co-facilitators from La Rimpu and LP2DER • 2 female UN Women Volunteers
Sigi, Sulawesi Tengah	Kota Palu, January 11 to 12, 2025	8 co-researchers (8 villages)*	• 3 co-facilitators from YKP, Karsa Institute, and CARE (2 females, 1 male). • 2 UN Women Volunteers (1 female, 1 male)
Training 3: Reflection and Evaluation – Hybrid (Online and In-person), February 7, 2025			

General Information			
Area	**Date and Place**	**Co-researchers**	**In-field Facilitators/Co-facilitators**
Kab. Kupang and Timor Tengah Selatan, Nusa Tenggara Timur	• Kota Kupang • Kolbano, Timor Tengah Selatan	9 co-researchers (9 villages)**	• 2 in-field facilitators were assigned: Maria Evi Daros (female) for Kab. Kupang and Ryan Rihi (male) for Timor Tengah Selatan (TTS). • 3 co-facilitators: 2 from CIS Timor (1 female, 1 male) and 1 female from UDN
Bima, Nusa Tenggara Barat	Kota Bima	10 co-researchers (7 villages)	• 2 in-field facilitators were assigned: Fitrahtul Putri (female) & Eny Cahyanilhusna (female). • Two female co-facilitators from La Rimpu and LP2DER
Sigi, Sulawesi Tengah	Kota Palu	8 co-researchers (8 villages)*	• 1 female in-field facilitator was assigned: Mutia Zakia Salma (female). • 3 co-facilitators from YKP, Karsa Institute, and CARE (2 females, 1 male).

One co-researcher could not join the training due to an unforeseen personal event.

** One co-researcher was unable to attend due to flooding.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The results and analysis of the FPAR initiative provided valuable insights into the experiences, strategies, and outcomes achieved by the co-researchers throughout the project. This section examines the diverse focus areas chosen by co-researchers, reflecting their priorities in addressing local challenges such as disaster response, gender inequality, and social conflict. This part of the report also explores the advocacy methods employed, ranging from participatory mapping and storytelling to media campaigns and community dialogues. The analysis highlights the tangible impacts of these efforts, showcasing how co-researchers influenced community awareness, engagement and policy discussions. Further, this section identifies key enabling factors that supported successful advocacy, alongside barriers that posed challenges to implementation. Reflecting on these factors and the lessons learned, this analysis offers practical insights for enhancing future FPAR initiatives and ensuring their long-lasting impacts.

Co-researchers' focus areas

In disaster emergencies, conflicts and violent extremism, FPAR's participatory model helped communities express both their vulnerability and resilience. FPAR places disasters and conflicts in sociopolitical and environmental contexts rather than demanding top-down interventions or objective outlooks measured by external standards. Despite the severity of the above crises, FPAR emphasizes local voices to increase advocacy ownership. Co-researchers chose target topics based on their own priorities rather than those of external actors. This distinction is essential for relevant and sustainable advocacy.

FPAR changes how we view disasters, conflicts, and violent extremism and positions co-researchers as knowledge producers. It allows for localized solutions based on the everyday realities of those most affected, making campaigning inclusive and transformative. In this FPAR initiative, co-researchers learned to explore how conflict, violence, and disasters affect and exacerbate gender inequality in their communities. They also critically identified and determined the topics that became the primary focus of their FPAR implementation. The topics chosen by the co-researchers illustrate the intersection of environmental issues, GBV, and structural inequalities, highlighting specific vulnerabilities and marginalization across various contexts. Moreover, the overall implementation of FPAR indicates that the varied topics selected by co-researchers are closely aligned with different, highly localized settings, thereby offering a comparative perspective on disasters, conflicts and violent extremism.

In general, the FPAR initiatives indicated that disaster emergencies were considered the most significant issue affecting women's vulnerabilities and marginalization during crises. The choice was understandable, considering Indonesia's geological and geographical conditions make it particularly susceptible to natural disasters. This is especially true in the three regions: Sigi, which has experienced tsunamis and liquefaction; Kupang and Timor Tengah Selatan, which are prone to droughts and have experienced crises from cyclones; and Bima, where floods and landslides occurred in 2024. Nevertheless, while all three locations share disaster-related concerns, Kupang and Timor Tengah Selatan and Sigi exhibited a more pronounced link between disaster and social vulnerability, whereas Bima presented an additional dimension of violent extremism due to youth conflicts and their impacts on women.

Understanding these conditions and assessing the underlying dynamics is vital to predicting long-term impacts or for reading them as symptoms of problems more global and transboundary, such as climate change. In general, co-researchers have not placed climate change as a focus topic. However, climate change could be the common theme that, viewed through a gender lens, led to increased women's vulnerability. For example, drought, disruption of agricultural cycles due to extreme weather or disease, and cyclone patterns might have increased women's risks of violence, exploitation, and socioeconomic disadvantages (e.g., infection and disease, work opportunities, and social participation). A specific study would be necessary, however, to clearly state the facts and assess the connections between climate change and women's situations.

As previously discussed, FPAR challenges the notion of a universalized female experience, recognizing instead the diverse and context-specific realities that shape women's lives. The trends from the co-researchers' topics show that, despite some generalized conditions, each village presented distinct challenges to women regarding disaster vulnerabilities, GBV, socioeconomic hardships, and exclusions. The co-researchers' choice of topics also helps provide a 'zoom-in' overview of the fundamental problems and the magnitude of the issues that women face in their respective communities. The following section elaborates on regional trends, while a village-level overview is provided in Table 3. A comprehensive breakdown of each co-researcher's focus area can be found in Annex 3.

Kupang and Timor Tengah Selatan in NTT

The issues facing Kupang and Timor Tengah Selatan in NTT primarily centre around disasters and conflicts. Notably, none of the co-researchers identified violent extremism as a concern in the participating villages of the FPAR initiative. Instead, they highlighted challenges related to disasters, particularly droughts and flooding.

Four villages – Spaha, Raknamo, Camplong II, and Mata Air – are actively addressing these issues. Spaha, Raknamo, and Camplong II focus on combating drought, while Mata Air concentrates on managing flooding. Other villages, such as Outuke, Oefafi, and Tolnako, have identified domestic violence as a significant concern, whereas Manusak is addressing issues associated with early and unintended pregnancies. Interestingly, Tuapakas Village points to the interconnectedness of disasters and conflicts, particularly highlighting how drought can exacerbate domestic violence.

Kota Bima and Kabupaten Bima in NTB

In Bima, NTB, women face significant challenges stemming from disasters, conflicts, and violent extremism. In Penatoi Ward, co-researchers worked to address issues related to violent extremism by focusing on empowering the former wives of terrorism convicts and helping them achieve economic independence and self-reliance.

Meanwhile, several locations, including Rato Village, Dara Ward, Roi Village, Ncera Village, and Samili Village, confronted various conflict-related issues. These issues included the dual burdens faced by women, discrimination against women in public life, and domestic violence. Additionally, some co-researchers examined the connections between disasters and social conflicts, particularly in Paruga Ward and Dara Ward, where waste management along riverbanks had become a significant concern.

Sigi in Sulawesi Tengah

Like Kupang in Timor Tengah Selatan, NTT, none of the co-researchers in Sigi, Sulawesi Tengah, investigated the issue of violent extremism. The report highlights the need for appropriate interventions for various priority issues, particularly concerning disaster and conflict. Specifically, Rogo Village tackles disaster-related issues, primarily focusing on floods, whereas Rarampadede Village and Pesaku Village concentrate on conflicts arising from disasters, emphasizing women's roles. Further, the villages of Pombewe, Ngatabaru, Ramba, Kalake, Wisolo, and Bangga examine the interconnected issues of disaster and conflict, which include access to medication, child marriages, domestic violence, water accessibility, and areas affected by stunting.

Many gender-based conflicts in Sigi emerged from the 2018 Palu earthquake and the subsequent recovery challenges. A major concern is the high prevalence of child marriages, often driven by families facing financial difficulties. These families may perceive marrying off their daughters as relieving their burdens. Unfortunately, such early marriages can result in girls leaving school and an increased risk of stunted growth in children. Many parents in Sigi also opt to marry off their children young to avoid the stigma associated with premarital sex and to conform to religious practices.

Table 3. Overview of key issues women face in their communities

Village	Key Issues	Impact on Women	Observation of Government/ Community Response
Nusa Tenggara Timur: Kabupaten Kupang & Timor Tengah Selatan			
Spaha Village, Timor Tengah Selatan	Experienced extreme drought, with only one water source, a functioning well located 2–3 km away.	Women spent long hours fetching water, which affected children's school attendance and increased reliance on informal loans.	No government intervention was observed.
Outuke Village, Timor Tengah Selatan	Faced domestic violence, with customary fines (money, livestock, rice) as penalties.	Women sought stronger sanctions, believing fines did not deter abuse.	There was no formal legal intervention beyond customary practices.
Tuapakas Village, Timor Tengah Selatan	Suffered from prolonged drought, causing crop failures and clean water shortages.	Women managed limited water supplies, children attended school without bathing, and they faced punishment for refusing to fetch water.	There had been no reported government intervention.
Raknamo Village, Kupang	Endured water scarcity and families purchased expensive water tanks (Rp 125,000 lasted 1–2 weeks).	Women managed limited water supplies; children attend school without bathing; punishment for refusing to fetch water.	The community urged the government to provide sustainable water sources, but no action was taken.
Camplong II Village, Kupang	Experienced erratic rainfall and prolonged drought, with water sources located at lower elevations.	Women and children bore the burden of collecting water.	The planned water infrastructure was stalled due to a lack of government follow-through.
Mata Air Village, Kupang	Suffered flooding due to Cyclone Seroja which caused fatalities and displacement.	Women led disaster preparedness but lacked evacuation centres, health facilities, and clean water.	Women demanded long-term flood prevention and climate adaptation measures.
Oefafi Village, Kupang	Domestic violence (KDRT) was widespread; women avoided reporting to police.	Fear of divorce, social ostracization, and gossip prevented women from seeking legal action.	Cases were solved through customary practices rather than legal channels.

Village	Key Issues	Impact on Women	Observation of Government/ Community Response
Tolnako Village, Kupang	Had a female-majority population (1,153 women, 753 men), and there was rampant domestic violence and gender discrimination.	Common verbal and physical abuse; stigma faced by female leaders.	Cases were solved through family negotiations rather than legal action.
Manusak Village, Kupang	Experienced high early and unintended pregnancy rates (20% of women); saw a rise in risky behaviour among teenagers.	School dropouts limited women's participation in decision-making and economic opportunities.	Women held leadership positions, indicating a shift toward gender inclusivity. However, the increase in risky behaviour among teenagers should also be addressed.
Nusa Tenggara Barat: Kota Bima and Kabupaten Bima			
Penatoi Ward, Kota Bima	Empowerment of former wives of terrorism convicts took place through skills training and independent businesses; they faced social exclusion and intimidation from extremist networks.	Lacked essential skills, faced social exclusion and intimidation, and endured economic hardship.	A holistic approach was needed: 1) combining social, economic, and psychological support to build social trust; 2) fostering two-way communication; and 3) shifting societal perspectives.
Rato Village, Kab. Bima	A high number of women were heads of households or single parents. They had heavy dual roles: earning a livelihood and caring for families.	Experienced increased exhaustion and stress sometimes leading to physical or verbal violence toward children at home.	Individuals lacked adequate support systems from their family, workplace, or social environment. There is a need for increased support mechanisms for single-parent women.
Dara Ward, Kota Bima	Women lost their livelihoods due to a drop in seaweed prices and flood-related damage to seaweed farming. They previously earned incomes through seaweed farming-related tasks (e.g., preparing ropes).	Women lost their primary source of income and faced limited employment opportunities, struggling with household expenses and meeting basic needs.	Economic alternatives and support were needed for women who relied on seaweed farming for income. Government action was necessary for seaweed industry recovery and flood management.

Village	Key Issues	Impact on Women	Observation of Government/ Community Response
Roi Village, Kab. Bima	Women's participation community deliberations was lacking. There was a wage gap between male and female agricultural laborers.	Women were excluded from decision-making, which led to wage disparities, despite equal labour contributions.	Strengthening women's inclusion in decision-making processes in Mbolo Weki.
Ncera Village, Kab. Bima	Women's involvement in physical labour and decision-making was minimal.	Gender stereotypes limited women's roles, preventing their participation in family or village decisions.	There has been no reported government intervention.
Samili Village, Kab. Bima	Domestic violence was prevalent, and intervention was lacking.	Victims suffered severe impacts on their mental, psychological, and physical health, leading to possible death. Economic and cultural barriers prevented them from escaping abusive situations.	Women need economic empowerment to escape abusive situations. There has been no reported government intervention in this matter.
Paruga Ward, Kota Bima	Waste management issues and flooding along riverbanks occurred due to poor waste management.	Poor waste management from Paruga and the nearby villages led to clogged drainage, creating more frequent flooding.	Women demanded greater community involvement in waste management and the creation of economic opportunities through waste utilization. They called for empowerment through training on waste transformation and flood prevention.

Village	Key Issues	Impact on Women	Observation of Government/ Community Response
Dara Ward, Kota Bima	The area experienced similar issues as Paruga Ward: flooding and poor waste management.	Poor waste management leads to clogged drainage that creates more frequent flooding.	The community urged the implementation of community-based plastic waste management programmes, with an emphasis on encouraging women's participation in transforming waste into valuable products to both prevent flooding and enhance economic outcomes.
Sulawesi Tengah: Sigi			
Rogo Village	Women faced a double household burden during floods, an increased risk of domestic violence, mental exhaustion, and health risks due to unsanitary conditions.	Women experienced physical and mental exhaustion, increased vulnerability to domestic violence, risk of urinary tract infections, and potential infertility.	The co-researcher emphasized the need for better flood management and enhanced healthcare services for women.
	Violent conflicts occurred between villages, and drug and alcohol abuse were prevalent among youth. Women were excluded from conflict resolution.	Women were excluded from conflict resolution discussions and had limited roles in peacebuilding despite their potential contributions.	The government deployed police and military forces to neutralize the conflict, and NGOs (CARE Indonesia and Karsa Institute) were involved in resolution efforts.
Pesaku Village	Brawls and drug and alcohol abuse were primary cause of frequent conflicts.	Women were excluded from conflict management discussions and needed a more active role in conflict resolution.	The emphasis was placed on elevating women's role in conflict management and enforcing sanctions.

Village	Key Issues	Impact on Women	Observation of Government/ Community Response
Pombewe Village	High child marriage rates, low prioritization of women's education, and limited participation in local decision-making.	Limited education opportunities, child marriage due to economic pressures, and restricted participation in local governance.	No direct government action mentioned, but education is key to empowering women and improving social outcomes.
Ngatabaru Village	Challenges in accessing healthcare and high rates of child marriage led to stunted births.	Early and unintended pregnant women missed medical checkups, and child marriages led to a high number of stunted births and poor maternal health.	No government intervention was noted, but healthcare access and awareness of child marriage need improvement.
Ramba Village	Child marriage was driven by parental pressure and unintended pregnancies.	Child marriage led to limited opportunities, early pregnancies and health risks.	There was no mention of government intervention, despite the need to raise awareness about the effects of child marriage.
Kaleke Village	Child marriage, domestic violence, and stunting in children.	Domestic violence, stunting in children, and child marriages contributed to health risks.	A well-organized task force and an antiviolence group worked with the local government to address violence toward women and children.
Wisolo Village	Lack of access to clean water, problems with water storage, and inadequate disaster risk reduction.	Health risks arose due to unsafe water, difficulty accessing clean water, and inadequate disaster preparedness.	The women demanded clean water, management systems and better disaster risk reduction programmes.
Bangga Village	High rates of child stunting, improper waste disposal, and child marriage.	Stunting occurred due to a lack of proper nutrition and care, and young mothers were unable to provide adequate care.	No government intervention was noted; raising awareness about proper nutrition and health practices is crucial.

Advocacy implementation – progress, challenges and impact

On average, the co-researchers only had two weeks to implement their advocacy action plans and assess the extent to which their advocacy was responded to by their audience and whether the advocacy activities brought about change. The issue of time constraints underscores the value of sustaining the FPAR initiative within the WE NEXUS Project.

Diagram 2. Research and advocacy ideas proposed by the co-researchers

Strategy to articulate key messages

In the 25 advocacy projects led by co-researchers, narrative construction played an essential role in raising public awareness and engaging diverse key stakeholders, including government officials, religious leaders and traditional leaders.

Gender-sensitive narratives were employed to highlight the disproportionate impact of disasters, social conflict, and extremist violence on women and other vulnerable groups. A gendered lens was used frequently to underscore how women bear the brunt of crises. For instance, in Raknamo Village, Kupang, NTT, the issue of water scarcity was framed as a gendered problem, affecting women and children disproportionately, linking water shortages to domestic violence and thereby underscoring the urgency of intervention. Similarly, in Mata Air Village, Kupang, NTT, disaster management advocacy was framed through a human rights lens, stressing the compounded vulnerabilities of women, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities.

Beyond gender, several initiatives adopted intersectional narratives that linked socioeconomic and environmental dimensions. For instance, in Penatoi Ward, Kota Bima, NTB, the economic empowerment of wives of former terrorists was framed within the broader context of deradicalization and social reintegration, highlighting the link between financial vulnerability and social exclusion. Further, Tolnako Village, Kupang, NTT, presented domestic violence as a multifaceted consequence of gender, social, cultural and economic factors. Due to local customs and cultural traditions, women are regarded as subordinate to men, which positions men as the heads of household with unquestioned authority. Economic marginalization further exacerbates women's vulnerability as limited employment opportunities compel them to remain financially dependent on their husbands. This dependence reinforces their precarious position within the household, heightening their exposure to violence.

Several initiatives demonstrated how excluding women from decision-making undermines community resilience. The advocacy project in Rarampadende Village, Sigi, Sulawesi Tengah, highlighted the exclusion of women from conflict resolution. This practice leads to gendered power imbalances, limiting women's ability to respond to pressing social issues, such as substance abuse and community disputes.

Taken together, the advocacy process provides lessons on the importance of narratives tailored to a community's social realities. Through building messages, the co-researchers sought to give voice to marginalized women and introduce more inclusive policies and practices. The co-researchers' use of narratives, or storytelling, emphasizes the value of presenting evidence and demonstrates their ability to position those messages in a sociocultural context that cultivates awareness, empathy, and collaboration and encourages the sustainability of long-term interventions.

Methods of engagement

Various techniques were implemented throughout the action plan to deliver advocacy messages effectively. Four key methods were identified across the 25 advocacy projects: social meetings, FGDs, policy advocacy, and capacity-building training through sharing information, education and communication (IEC) materials. These methods enable direct engagement without complex infrastructure, making them practical within resource-constrained settings. Co-researchers selected these methods based on familiarity with their approaches, practical feasibility within tight time constraints, and the ability they offered for meaningful engagement with stakeholders.

Awareness campaign, including the use of IEC materials

Many co-researchers created a small forum to sensitize their key advocacy messages and influence their target audience. Across the aggregated advocacy projects, 13 incorporated this approach, with 4 from NTT, 5 from NTB, and 4 from Sulawesi Tengah. These forums provided a practical and accessible platform to engage community members directly, allowing for interactive discussions that encouraged participation. They were also cost-effective and easy to

organize, making them suitable for resource-limited settings. Moreover, small forums created a safe space where sensitive issues, such as GBV or social exclusion, could be addressed in a more personal and supportive environment. Lastly, this approach enabled co-researchers to tailor their messages to the local context, ensuring culturally relevant content easily understood by diverse groups. In most cases, the campaign was held informally. In total, it is estimated that at least 20 people attended the social meetings; however, this figure is likely underestimated as some co-researchers did not formally count or document the number of participants.

In one case, in Samili Village of Kab. Bima, the co-researchers employed a social meeting strategy to engage directly with targeted stakeholders about the issue of domestic violence. The participants included affected women in the village who joined the Seruni support group. Infographic materials were often developed to support these activities and inform women about their rights and available support mechanisms.

Picture 1. Poster materials developed by co-researchers on violence against women and children (left) and on child marriage (right)

Co-researchers in Samili Village, Kab. Bima, NTB, were not the only ones who used posters as awareness-raising campaign materials. A co-researcher from Ramba Village, Sigi, Sulawesi Tengah, also employed a similar strategy to address child marriage. As part of her advocacy, the co-researcher printed images illustrating the dangers of child marriage, sourced the information from social media, and shared the material with attendees. She used the poster to initiate discussion by asking if they were aware of these risks and whether they knew any youth who had married young. Similarly, co-researchers from Manusak Village, Kupang, NTT, also used pamphlets as tools for dissemination. The co-researchers focused on the issue of high rates of early and unintended pregnancies and conducted awareness-raising activities by distributing pamphlets on preventive measures. These pamphlets stressed the negative consequences of early and unintended pregnancies and how to prevent them.

Picture 2. Local communities with the photocopied poster during the *Posyandu Remaja*

Picture 3. Pamphlets created by co-researchers from Manusak Village provide key information on issues they highlighted

Focus group discussions

While social meetings provided a more relaxed and informal setting, FGDs offered a structured platform for dialogue between marginalized groups and decision-makers. This approach enabled direct advocacy efforts and facilitated the co-creation of solutions by exchanging comments. Several co-researchers reported organizing FGDs as part of their advocacy strategy. Of the 25 advocacy projects, 10 incorporated the FGD approach, with 5 projects from NTT, 3 from NTB, and 2 from Sulawesi Tengah.

One example took place in Roi Village, Kab. Bima, NTB, where women had historically been excluded from governance discussions and decision-making processes despite playing a significant role in community welfare and development. Traditional leadership structures prioritize male authority by limiting women's influence over local policies, resource allocations, and conflict resolution. To address this imbalance, a co-researcher organized an FGD involving the village government, traditional leaders, the village consultative body (*badan permusyawaratan desa*, or *BPD*), and women's representatives. As a result, a commitment was established to enhance women's participation in decision-making processes. This agreement ensured that women were formally included in village deliberation meetings (*musyawarah desa*), allowing them to contribute to policy discussions and advocate for community development priorities.

Policy advocacy

Policy advocacy focused on encouraging decision-makers to incorporate community concerns into governance frameworks and ensuring that they were formally recognized and institutionalized. This form of advocacy often involved sustained direct engagement with policymakers such as through a public hearing, lobbying, or consultative dialogue organized formally or informally. This method necessitates a close relationship between co-researchers and policymakers, as well as comprehension of their preferred methods of communication, which social activists with advanced advocacy skills often possess. Given these specifications, only three co-researchers could engage in policy advocacy with decision-makers as reflected below.

- In Penatoi Ward, Kota Bima, co-researchers combined policy advocacy with community engagement to support ex-terrorist wives, such as by facilitating their economic reintegration. These women faced marginalization due to their associations with former extremists. This limited their access to financial resources, employment and social support. In response, co-researchers engaged local stakeholders and collaborated with LP2DER and the National Unity and Political Agency (KESBANGPOL) to advocate for economic opportunities. Their efforts focused on financial independence to reduce social exclusion and prevent cycles of extremism, thus highlighting economic empowerment as a long-term strategy for resilience.

- Similarly, in Tuapakah Village, Timor Tengah Selatan, a co-researcher combined policy advocacy with community engagement. She facilitated discussions with local women on water conservation while also advocating for the construction of wells in *Dusun* (hamlet) 01, 02, and 03, along with the installation of water pipelines. The local government responded positively, committing to these initiatives in 2025. However, continuous monitoring is necessary to ensure effective implementation.

- In Pombewe Village, Sigi, a co-researcher urged the government to refine education policies to reduce gender disparities in schooling. The recommendations included strategies to decrease female dropout rates and the provision of training workshops (e.g., fried shallot business training) to enhance women's economic opportunities.

Capacity-building initiatives

Two co-researchers from NTB and Sulawesi Tengah employed capacity-building training as an approach to engaging with the community. They aimed to equip residents, particularly women, with the skills and resources necessary for sustainable empowerment. This method translated advocacy messages into long-term, actionable change by fostering economic self-sufficiency and strengthening community resilience.

For instance, in Dara Ward, Kota Bima, a co-researcher focused on empowering women seaweed farmers by providing training in seaweed processing to enhance its marketability. These sessions enabled women to develop value-added products, thereby nurturing economic independence and reducing reliance on male-dominated markets. The initiative was strengthened through collaboration with Fisheries Extension Officers and LP2DER, ensuring the training was practical, market-orientated, and sustainable in equipping women with the necessary expertise to navigate the local economy and secure long-term livelihoods.

Progress in perceptions and participation

The advocacy initiatives undertaken across the 25 projects yielded notable progress in advancing women's participation, economic empowerment, and social awareness. However, achieving policy change remained challenging due to time constraints, highlighting the gap between short-term advocacy efforts and long-term structural reform. Many co-researchers nurture idealistic visions for systemic change, but these aspirations require sustained support and institutional commitments to be fully realized. Key progress and challenges follow.

1. **Shifting Perceptions of Gender-Based Violence:** Advocacy efforts addressing domestic violence resulted in increased public awareness and community-led initiatives to support survivors. In Samili Village, Kab. Bima, the involvement of the Seruni Support Group and village government led to the following:

   - A shift in public attitudes towards domestic violence, reframing it as a human rights issue rather than a private matter.
   - Awareness raised on the need for strengthened support systems for survivors, including establishing community-based reporting and counselling mechanisms.

2. **Behaviour Changes in Public Participation:** One of the most significant impacts of the advocacy initiatives was increased awareness of women's roles in decision-making processes, which led to observable behavioural changes in public participation. In Pesaku Village, Sigi, Sulawesi Tengah, women gained greater confidence in public speaking and decision-making, enabling them to voice concerns about injustices, participate more actively in community events, and challenge traditional gender roles.

   This shift has coincided with a decline in the perception that women's responsibilities should be confined to domestic roles, fostering their active engagement in religious meetings, community initiatives, and social events. The growing awareness of women's capabilities has further strengthened this empowerment, reinforced by the visibility of successful female figures, including highly active co-researchers.

   Additionally, participation in FPAR activities has demonstrated women's ability to engage in discussions on social change and contribute to the formulation of local workplans for village authorities. As a result, women in Pesaku Village have become more assertive in community discourse, playing an increasingly influential role in local decision-making processes.

3. **Policy Commitments and Implementation Challenges:** While some policy commitments were secured, transitioning from commitment to execution proved difficult. In Tuapakas Village, advocacy efforts addressing water scarcity resulted in a government pledge to construct pipelines by 2025. However:

   - The actual allocation of resources and infrastructure development remains uncertain.
   - Long-term community engagement is required to ensure accountability and monitor progress.

Challenges and lessons learned

While many stakeholders actively participated in the advocacy initiatives, others were reluctant to engage, presenting significant challenges for project implementation. Social stigma, logistical constraints, and cultural resistance were among the key barriers co-researchers encountered, highlighting the complexities of conducting advocacy work in diverse community settings.

Sensitivity and social stigma

In several cases, the sensitive nature of advocacy topics made community members hesitant to participate. Febrianti's advocacy project on child marriage in Ramba Village revealed how deeply embedded societal and familial norms discouraged young women from sharing their experiences. Many were unwilling to be interviewed or have their stories documented, fearing potential backlash from their families and communities. The stigma surrounding early marriage and reproductive health created an atmosphere of silence, preventing open discussions on a critical issue affecting their futures.

A similar challenge emerged in Kalake Village, Sigi, Sulawesi Tengah, where Ahadiyanza's advocacy initiative also focused on reducing child marriage. Efforts to engage the community met considerable resistance, as discussions on reproductive health and marriage were considered culturally taboo. Community members, particularly parents and elders, viewed the topic as a private family matter, making it difficult for young women to voice their concerns or seek external support.

These cases highlight the profound impact of social stigma in deterring participation, underscoring the need to create safe and supportive environments where individuals feel empowered to engage without fear of judgement or repercussions. Advocacy efforts addressing deeply entrenched cultural norms must be approached with sensitivity, incorporating trusted community figures, such as religious and traditional leaders, to facilitate open dialogue and gradual acceptance.

Logistical and technical constraints

Beyond social barriers, logistical and technical challenges also hindered advocacy implementation. Many co-researchers struggled to coordinate meetings and effectively engage stakeholders due to scheduling conflicts and external disruptions. Stakeholders, particularly local government officials, had competing responsibilities, making it challenging to secure consistent participation.

Additionally, adverse weather conditions significantly impacted engagement efforts in several locations. Unpredictable weather disrupted Tesalonika Tanu's advocacy project in Camplong II, Kupang, and Reashly Moloka's initiative in Mata Air Village, Kupang, limiting the ability to conduct outreach activities as planned. Similar challenges affected Eka Rahmatiah and Dyah Alifa Azminingtyas (Rato Village, Kab. Bima, NTB) and Ainun Mardiani (Samili Village, Kab. Bima, NTB), where severe weather conditions led to delays and reduced participation.

The unpredictability of external factors highlights the importance of integrating contingency plans into advocacy initiatives, ensuring that activities remain adaptive and resilient in the face of logistical obstacles. Further, co-researchers should focus on deepening and expanding stakeholders and community involvement to ensure sustainability and long-term impact. Strengthening collaboration with relevant stakeholders will be essential in sustaining advocacy efforts and securing ongoing support for women's empowerment and gender equality initiatives at the village level.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of advocacy progress, the following section outlines key advocacy implementations tailored by co-researchers across the three provinces.

Table 4. Key advocacy implementation

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
Kupang/Timor Tengah Selatan, Nusa Tenggara Timur
1	Tesalonika Tanu, Camplong II Village	Enhancing public awareness on utilizing household wastewater during droughts.	The initiative framed women's struggles with water scarcity as a women's rights issue, linking it to health and food security to highlight structural inequalities.	Social meetings served as the primary engagement method, with advocacy efforts targeting local government actors (village leaders and the BPD), women as the most affected group, and CIS Timor for implementation support.	The initiative raised awareness but did not lead to significant behavioural changes.	Strengthening community engagement and ensuring early local government involvement.
2	Reashly Mokola, Mata Air Village	Enhancing community capacity in disaster management for the protection of women and vulnerable groups in Kampung Kelapa Tinggi.	The initiative focused on women and vulnerable groups, considering gender, age, and disability. It employed human and women's rights-based language, highlighting the disproportionate impact of flooding on pregnant women and their restricted access to healthcare, education, and public facilities during the disaster.	An FGD was conducted with key stakeholders, including the village head (crucial for decision-making), BPBD (responsible for disaster mitigation awareness), religious leaders (ensuring community safety and cohesion), UDN (assisting in implementation), and affected women (providing first-hand insights into vulnerabilities).	The initiative increased awareness of disaster response and led to initial behavioural changes in disaster preparedness.	Enhancing data collection, strengthening government coordination, and amplifying advocacy to bolster long-term disaster preparedness.

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
3	Penina Sabuna, Spaha Village	Empowering women by enhancing food security and economic capacity to address drought challenges.	The initiative focused on the impact of drought on women and children, emphasizing gender roles in crisis, particularly in water management and household responsibilities. It highlighted women's struggles in ensuring family survival during droughts.	The initiative focused on FGDs with local government representatives responsible for village finance, the social service, and the Food Security Agency, all of whom play a role in distributing social assistance. Additionally, impacted women were actively involved.	Women's involvement in advocacy increased, with village leaders supporting economic initiatives and social aid. The long-term goal is to establish a Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA).	Ensuring the sustainability of VSLA initiatives through ongoing government support, regular monitoring, and active community engagement.
4	Novalita Bengngu, Raknamo Village	Empowering women to use water reservoirs effectively and sustainably.	Water scarcity was framed as a gendered issue, impacting women and children through a rights-based approach. The advocacy highlighted hardship narratives, including links to domestic violence resulting from water shortages.	An FGD was held with women's representatives, highlighting structural issues related to drought. A joint discussion with the village government, the key decision-making body, followed.	Perception shifted. **Long-term goal:** Advocacy for additional water storage in key areas.	Raising awareness of the specific impacts of drought on women and children, along with better alignment of the timing of advocacy efforts with the schedule of stakeholders.

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
5	Milka Yosina Feo, Oetuke Village	Women's empowerment in advocating for justice against domestic violence.	The narrative highlighted the urgent need to protect women affected by domestic violence by adopting an intersectional approach that considers vulnerabilities related to poverty, mental health, and societal gender expectations.	The advocacy focused on social meetings, engaging the village women, village head, BPD, religious leaders, and TP-PKK.	The advocacy efforts increased awareness of gender equality and empowered women.	Tackling stigma and fear of retaliation, ensuring consistent community engagement, and implementing follow-up programmes for lasting impact. Including government-led socialization and enforcement of domestic violence regulations, with the church facilitating information dissemination.
6	Helang Ruth Mang, Tolnaku Village	Shifting women's mindsets on domestic violence issues.	Domestic violence was framed as a broader issue beyond physical abuse, emphasizing human and women's rights. The approach prioritized cultural sensitivity to address fear and societal barriers.	Focused on FGDs with local government as key to policy development and reform, and women representatives from the affected group.	Attitudes shifted, willing to speak out.	Focusing on increasing legal awareness.

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
7	Luther Ferdinan Noman, Oefafi Village	Reducing violence against women in Oefafi village.	The initiative focused on protecting women from domestic violence by raising awareness of reporting mechanisms and highlighting gender inequality and economic vulnerability as contributing factors.	The advocacy effort was centred on FGDs, with the village head as the decision-maker; BPD to raise community awareness; and traditional and religious leaders as facilitators. Socialization activities targeted women in the village, with UDN supporting implementation.	Shifted public attitudes towards creating a safer environment for women.	Strengthening collaboration, enhancing advocacy, increasing participation, and improving women's legal protection.
8	Asti Apolla Bessie, Tuapakas Village	Addressing the drought issue in Tuapakas Village as part of efforts to tackle domestic violence problems.	The initiative highlighted water scarcity's impact on women and children through a human and women's rights framework. It addressed the increased burden on women's domestic work, including long-distance water collection, and the disruption of children's education due to economic challenges and household responsibilities.	A dialogue with the village head, as the decision-maker and financial authority, was held to address the issue and present key demands. Additionally, social meetings with women in the village aimed to raise awareness of water conservation, promote VSLA, and advocate for the installation of water pipelines.	The local government has planned water wells and pipelines for 2025. Long-term goal: Empower women through economic support initiatives, including livestock programmes and VSLA development.	Enhancing coordination, prioritizing women's roles, and strengthening monitoring of government commitments to water infrastructure.

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
9	Alina Soares & Mega Selvia Yuliana Lalay, Manusak Village	Raising awareness among young women about the risks of pregnancy outside of early and unintended pregnancies.	Emphasized the importance of awareness and education, addressing the intersection of gender and youth challenges with a focus on societal pressures.	Conducted social meetings with BKKBN for youth in the church, distributing pamphlets on the impact of early and unintended pregnancies and prevention strategies.	Increased awareness and behavioural change, with youth becoming more cautious.	Sustaining collaboration with local authorities and continuing youth engagement are essential for achieving long-term change.
Bima, Nusa Tenggara Barat

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
10	Sulastri & Nurlaela, Penatoi	Creating an ecosystem that supports the economic independence of wives of ex-terrorists	The approach employed an intersectional framework, addressing the interconnected issues of gender, terrorism, social exclusion, and economic empowerment.	Social meetings engaged ex-terrorist wives to enhance economic and entrepreneurial skills. The Penatoi Ward government aimed to facilitate empowerment programmes, with LP2DER providing guidance and evaluation. DP3A and Kesbangpol supported policy development for economic-based deradicalization.	The initiative contributed to deradicalization, reduced stigma, and significantly improved economic independence for wives of ex-terrorists.	Providing ongoing support, particularly for consistent access to business capital, market opportunities, and specialized training.

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
11	Sukmawati, Paruga Ward	Raise public awareness to encourage more significant concern for the environment, mainly along riverbanks.	Focused on environmental health, highlighting women's roles and the socioeconomic factors influencing their ability to manage waste disposal effectively.	Social meetings with the riverbank community and the Environmental Agency to support community-led waste management initiatives.	Awareness of environmental issues increased, with women willing to change waste disposal habits with local authority support, and collaborative efforts in plastic waste recycling.	Improving waste infrastructure, conducting clean-ups, enhancing waste separation, and strengthening local follow-ups.
12	Sry Rahmawati, Dara Ward	Utilizing plastic waste along riverbanks.	Focused on environmental protection and sustainability, highlighting community well-being and the urgency of addressing water pollution.	Focused on social meetings, targeting housewives in Dara Ward, ward officials and the Environmental Agency. Key stakeholders included village officials responsible for policymaking and housewives who manage household waste and influence plastic consumption.	Achieved behavioural changes in waste management, local leader support, and a plastic waste bank.	Improving coordination, adapting to officials' schedules, and raising awareness for sustainable waste management.

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
13	Eka Rahmatiah & Dyah Alifa Azminingtyas, Rato Village	The impact of the dual role of female heads of household on preventing child abuse in Rato Village.	Focused on women's dual roles concerning economic necessity and childcare responsibilities.	FGDs were conducted with 30 PKK members in Rato Village to share information and strengthen advocacy networks. Additionally, 7 Posyandu Mawar cadres in Dusun Rato engaged in discussions on women's roles and child abuse, while further discussions were held with 2 young women from the Permata community.	These developments fostered positive shifts in attitudes towards women's roles, increasing local and government engagement in advocacy.	Expanding outreach, strengthening community ties, and prioritizing locally led programmes for sustainability.
14	Khairunnisah, Dara Ward	Empowerment of women seaweed farmers.	Focused on economic hardship caused by declining seaweed prices and natural disasters impacting livelihoods, with particular engagement on income loss, especially for women.	Focused on social meetings and training methods, engaging local seaweed farmers in raw material processing. LP2DER provided support and guidance, while fisheries extension officers from the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries contributed valuable materials for socialization and training.	Women were trained to process seaweed into marketable products. Long-term goal: Improve women's livelihoods and promote sustainable seaweed farming.	Enhancing training schedules, sustaining support for skill implementation, and strengthening partnerships for ongoing assistance.

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
15	Hidmatul Irfani, Roi Village	Increasing women's roles in community meetings and decision-making.	Framed women's exclusion in decision-making, highlighting their potential in addressing social issues, and emphasized the need for women's voices in community welfare.	Advocacy focused on an FGD involving women from the village, the village government, traditional leaders, and BPD. The village government plays a crucial role in decision-making, while traditional leaders' decisions influence policy. BPD represents the community, particularly women, and impacts the village government's decisions.	Raised awareness of women's importance in decision-making, leading to increased confidence in their contributions to social decisions.	Strengthening alliances and overcoming logistical barriers, such as timing, were essential for effective advocacy.
16	Novi Rahmanita, Ncera Village	The role of young women in public spaces in Ncera Village.	Framed around gender equality, emphasizing women's rights, especially in public spaces.	The advocacy centred on FGDs with young women in the village, the "SAKOLA NDAI" women's group, which plays a key role in driving change, and the village government, which holds the power to influence the community.	Women's participation in public forums increased significantly, enhancing their confidence and broadening the understanding of their roles in decision-making.	Focusing on sustaining support for women's networks and maintaining institutional pressure to foster inclusivity.

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
17	Ainun Mardiani, Samili Village	Reducing and preventing domestic violence.	Framed domestic violence as a human rights violation while addressing the intersectionality of gender and socioeconomic factors.	The advocacy efforts engaged women affected by domestic violence, the Seruni group, and the village government through awareness campaigns featuring short film screenings and poster distributions.	Awareness was raised, behaviours changed, and support networks strengthened, fostering community action against domestic violence.	Strengthening the support network while overcoming coordination challenges through early stakeholder notification.
Sigi, Sulawesi Tengah						
18	Yulianus, Rogo Village	Anticipating floods in Rogo Village.	The focus was on women's vulnerability in flood-prone areas, highlighting the intersectionality of gender inequality in education and decision-making within disaster management.	The FGD involved the village government, locals, and the disaster preparedness group (KSB). These groups were chosen as the target audience due to the village government's influence on society and KSB's role in disaster management.	Community awareness, government support, and women's participation increased.	Enhancing community engagement for inclusive participation.

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
19	Naswa, Rarampadende Village	Enhance women's involvement in development and conflict resolution in the village.	The focus was on empowering women and integrating them into community development, particularly in conflict resolution and substance abuse reduction.	The social meetings targeted women and youth in the village, raising awareness of the importance of women's involvement in decision-making and reducing alcohol consumption. The village government played a key role by granting permission for the event.	Increased female participation in village activities and decision-making improved perceptions of women's roles and boosted public confidence.	Continuing efforts to actively engage youth and raise awareness of gender equality and substance abuse prevention.
20	Karmila, Pesaku Village	Enhance women's involvement in conflict resolution.	Empowering women by challenging traditional perceptions of women as weak.	The advocacy activities focused on raising awareness of the important role of women in resolving community conflicts and on educating regarding the dangers of drug use and alcohol consumption.	Women demonstrated increased confidence and began actively participating in decision-making and community activities.	Maintaining community support to advocate for women's rights and gender equality.

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
21	Cayati Nur Nafia, Pombewe Village	Economic empowerment for women.	Focused on education as a crucial means of empowerment and economic independence for women.	The village government, as the key actor with the authority to influence others through policy, participated in discussions and training sessions with women and teenage girls in the village.	Women became more aware of education's importance, engaged in village decisions, and participated more in health and community programmes.	Ensuring sustainability by providing consistent support, overcoming patriarchal resistance, creating economic opportunities, and maintaining continuous engagement.
22	Anggi Tri Rahayu, Ngatabaru Village	Child Marriage	This co-researcher only joined the first FPAR training and could not continue for personal reasons.			
23	Febrianti, Ramba Village	Raise awareness among teenagers about the impact of child marriage.	Focused on raising awareness of the dangers of child marriage, emphasizing education and health perspectives.	Social meetings were conducted with teenagers as the target audience during Posyandu activities in the village, supported by health workers and accompanied by poster distribution.	Raised awareness, prompted behavioural changes, and increased local authorities' involvement.	Strengthening local health partnerships, expanding education access, and empowering women economically narratives.

No	Name	Case	Message Focus	Methods & Targets	Impact	Points of Improvement
24	Ahadiyanza, Kalake Village	Reduce the rate of child marriage among minors and provide space for the youth, especially girls, to express their opinions.	The focus was on addressing gender, age, and economic vulnerability, with particular emphasis on the risks of child marriage and reproductive health.	Women, mothers, and teenage girls participated in social meetings, addressing child marriage alongside the village government, Posyandu cadres, and BPD. The village government, holding decision-making power, plays a crucial role in influencing societal change.	Awareness of the risks associated with child marriage and reproductive health increased.	Reinforcing education through follow-ups and prioritizing women's economic empowerment to reduce vulnerability to child marriage.
25	Novitasari, Wisolo Village	Improve access to clean water facilities.	The focus was on women's vital role in water access, highlighting their struggles in securing clean water for their families' needs.	The advocacy targeted women and the village government, using musyawarah desa (village deliberation) to highlight the importance of involving women in village development, particularly in securing water sources.	Women became more aware of development planning and more vocal on community issues, especially water access.	Emphasizing a personal approach is essential as some women face challenges engaging with collective initiatives.
26	Ilmiatun, Bangga Village	Reduce stunting in Bangga Village.	The focus was on the risks of stunting and environmental factors affecting women and children.	Social meetings and providing supplementary food at the Posyandu were emphasized. The primary targets were teenagers, pregnant women, and mothers with toddlers as they play a crucial role in preventing stunting.	Awareness of stunting increased among youth and pregnant women, but behavioural and practical changes in the environment and nutrition remained limited.	Increasing direct engagement with youth to reduce shyness and further educating mothers on the risks of stunting and the environmental impact.

Through participatory research, co-researchers identified pressing challenges requiring immediate attention and long-term action. The findings highlighted the complex interplay between social, economic and environmental factors and reinforced the necessity of inclusive and context-specific approaches.

A detailed analysis of these initiatives led to categorizing 26 projects into five key thematic clusters: disaster, conflict, violent extremism, intersectionality of disaster and conflict, and other critical issues. Table 5 provides an overview of the core themes addressed by co-researchers across the three locations.

Table 5. Advocacy themes of the co-researchers

Cluster/Theme	Co-researchers
Disaster	
Flooding & waste management	• Reashly Mokola, Mata Air Village, NTT • Yulianus, Rogo Village, Sulawesi Tengah • Sry Rahmawati, Dara Ward, NTB • Sukmawati, Paruga Ward, NTB
Drought & access to clean water	• Tesalonika Tanu, Camplong II Village, NTT • Penina Sabuna, Spaha Village, NTT • Novalita Bengngu, Raknamo Village, NTT • Novitasari, Wisolo Village, Sulawesi Tengah
Conflict	
Domestic violence	• Milka Yosina Feo, Outuke Village, NTT • Helang Ruth Mang, Tolnaku Village, NTT • Luther Ferdinan Noman, Oefafi Village, NTT • Ainun Mardiani, Samili Village, NTB
Dual roles: economic empowerment and public space accessibility	• Eka Rahmatiah & Dyah Alifa Azminingtyas, Rato Village, NTB • Khairunnisah, Dara Ward, NTB • Hidmatul Irfani, Roi Village, NTB • Novi Rahmanita, Ncera Village, NTB
Horizontal conflict between villages	• Naswa, Rarampadende Village, Sulawesi Tengah • Karmila, Pesaku Village, Sulawesi Tengah
Violent extremism	
Economic independence for women/wives of former terrorism convicts	• Sulastri & Nurlaela, Penatoi Ward, NTB

Intersectionality of disaster and conflict	
Tensions between groups and domestic violence because of disasters	• Asti Apolla Bessie, Tuapakas Village, NTT • Ahadiyanza, Kalake Village, Sulawesi Tengah
Impact of natural disasters on the position of women and vulnerable groups (child marriage, access to education, stunting)	• Cayati Nur Nafia, Pombewe Village, Sulawesi Tengah • Anggi Tri Rahayu, Ngatabaru Village, Sulawesi Tengah • Febrianti, Ramba Village, Sulawesi Tengah • Ilmiatun, Bangga Village, Sulawesi Tengah
Other	
Early and unintended pregnancies	• Alina Soares and Mega Selvia Yuliana Lalay, Manusak Village, NTT

Individual and social transformation

In general, the FPAR initiative has provided insightful knowledge to the co-researchers, particularly in enhancing their research action skills and their understanding of structural issues within the feminist landscape. These concepts were relatively new to most co-researchers, making the project a critical starting point for their transformation, which involves a shift in perspectives.

The FPAR initiative engaged 29 co-researchers, resulting in 25 distinct research and advocacy initiatives. These projects were distributed across three main thematic areas: nine explored the intersection between disasters and social conflict; five focused on disaster-related challenges; nine addressed social conflict; one examined violent extremism; and one tackled early and unintended pregnancies. However, not all co-researchers experienced a seamless transition from research to advocacy. While several co-researchers successfully implemented their advocacy projects, others encountered significant obstacles that required adaptive strategies.

To evaluate the effectiveness of this advocacy, the co-researchers conducted self-assessments. Those who reported successful implementation highlighted their ability to integrate FPAR principles into existing community structures and leverage partnerships with local stakeholders. Conversely, those who faced difficulties identified key barriers such as limited community engagement, resistance from local authorities, and logistical constraints, including time and financial limitations.

Individual changes

As shown previously, stories from co-researchers indicate a significant shift in their perspectives – particularly in understanding social issues that disproportionately affect women. It is hoped that this transformation will impact the co-researchers and extend to their communities. Therefore, **the FPAR initiative has encouraged two key outcomes among the co-researchers**. First, it has motivated them to adopt inclusive data collection methods involving community participation during fieldwork and data gathering. Second, it emphasizes the importance of co-researchers engaging in collective action with local communities to address the structural problems they have observed and analysed, thereby ensuring that their voices are meaningfully included in the process.

For example, Reashly Mokola from Mata Air Village, NTT, stated that the training and handbook guidance were relevant to the village context. She explained that the materials helped identify existing and potential problems and provided advice on finding solutions. The evidence demonstrates that the project has stimulated reflective thinking, encouraging the anticipation of possible issues by considering existing public policies, cultural norms, and the socioeconomic landscape. Similarly, Sukmawati from Paruga Ward, Kota Bima, NTB, noted that the FPAR initiative taught her that gender is not merely about biological differences but also about achieving just and inclusive gender-based access in society. While in Sigi, Sulawesi Tengah, Ahadiyanza, from Kaleke Village, one of the two male co-researchers in the training, stated that the FPAR training made him realize how men have underestimated the potential of women's participation in disaster emergencies and conflict resolution.

Social change

Social change at the community level was also facilitated by the FPAR initiative, in addition to individual transformation. During the data collection process, co-researchers shared numerous insightful stories with the facilitators. Throughout the process, local communities were welcoming and open to discussing the issues faced by women in their villages. For instance, Penina Sabuna, a co-researcher from Spaha Village, Timor Tengah Selatan, NTT, highlighted the issue of drought, particularly its impact on food security and economic capacity. To understand the root causes, Penina engaged with *mama-mama* (adult women in NTT), who responded positively by sharing their thoughts and experiences regarding the issue.

One of Penina's most interesting findings was the community's initiative to address food and economic challenges caused by drought through small-scale economic empowerment activities, such as selling homemade cakes. However, this effort often led to unintended consequences, such as increased competition when others in the village began selling the same product. Through these conversations, various interconnected problems were exposed, paving the way for actionable solutions. This process not only shed light on the structural issues affecting women but also demonstrated the value of inclusive engagement in uncovering potential strategies for collective empowerment.

Penina's story exemplifies a successful engagement process with the local community, mainly through the mutual understanding of how drought intersects with food security and economic capacity. This scenario ultimately positions women as a vulnerable group. However, the data collection process also revealed specific nuances. For example, Tesalonika Tanu, a co-researcher from Camplong 2 Village, NTT, shared that the interview process faced several challenges, particularly with interviewees who had difficulty finding time to participate. Often, follow-up confirmation was needed to ensure availability, as many local community members prioritized their work over discussing matters they did not perceive as immediately beneficial. Responding to such challenges is an important part of the FPAR approach, as is learning how to engage and capture the attention of local communities on issues that may not seem directly impactful to them.

In Bima village, co-researcher Nurlaela engaged with a community of wives of ex-terrorists in Penatoi to enquire about their difficulties in becoming economically independent through several FGDs. Nurlaela's skillfulness in deepening the research question while performing her duty of care to the community led the community to ask her whether they could be involved in any other way, either by helping her data collection process or becoming co-researchers themselves.

In Sigi, Ilmiatun from Bangga Village shared the challenges of conducting regular health checkups for girls with early pregnancies and children suffering from stunting. Most girls who married young in her village came from secluded mountain communities. These girls and their spouses often receive only elementary-level education. In some extreme cases, girls as young as 11 years old are already married, either to boys around their age or to older men. These practices are driven by the need to alleviate economic pressures caused by living in an area frequently affected by natural disasters such as earthquakes and flooding. Spiritual leaders also taught most mountain children and women to steer clear of city people. These rules barred the local government and social community from providing aid and health checkups.

Opportunities Going Forward

Penina Sabuna from Spaha Village, Timor Tengah Selatan, NTT, has integrated the VSLA –based on the WE NEXUS project in collaboration with Save the Children – into her advocacy action plan. This demonstrates how various feminist-based initiatives can apply FPAR principles to address gender-related issues.

In Bima village, co-researchers from Paruga and Dara advocacy projects on waste management align with LP2DER's focus on climate change and disaster resilience. As a result, both co-researchers and the RPs collaborated to advocate the issue to the Ministry of Environment and the Maritime Ministry. Their advocacy was well-received and garnered broader support from *Forum Perempuan* (Women's Forum), a local women's organization in Bima.

In Sigi, Naswa from Rarampadende Village teamed up with Karmilla from Pesaku Village to identify the root causes of conflicts between their villages. Their partnership provided an intriguing intergenerational dynamic, as Naswa was only 21 years old while Karmilla was already 51. Both are actively engaged in their communities. Naswa is an assistant at her village's health centre and Karmilla is a member of a task force dedicated to addressing cases of violence against women. Their research and advocacy plan became an extension of the peacekeeping efforts carried out by CARE Indonesia and the Karsa Institute, making their FPAR initiative a promising tool for future humanitarian efforts.

In conclusion, the FPAR is essential in creating a sustainable, impactful transformation. By embedding it within broader initiatives, co-researchers can continue to expand their influence, driving systemic changes that address gender inequality and empower local communities. The support of RPs within the WE NEXUS project will be crucial to maintaining momentum and ensuring the long-term success of these transformative efforts.

Factors influencing FPAR implementation

The execution of FPAR by co-researchers was influenced by multiple structural and contextual elements that either impeded or enhanced their advocacy efforts. Although FPAR established a framework for improving women's voices and addressing gender-specific vulnerabilities, co-researchers encountered substantial challenges necessitating adaptive techniques and collaborative assistance.

Enabling factors

Notwithstanding these limitations, the variables that follow were crucial in facilitating the co-researchers' successful execution of their advocacy initiatives.

- Access and availability of technical resources and support: Co-researchers were provided with guidelines that included fundamental definitions, objectives, and tools to help them identify problems, collect data, formulate advocacy strategies, and conduct evaluations. In addition to these guidelines, most co-researchers had access to the research team (IIS-UGM) through WhatsApp Groups. They were encouraged to seek more information, share their learning and experiences, and connect socially as a means of collective support.
- Flexible learning: Some co-researchers found writing reports challenging and responded better to oral learning methods, highlighting the need for adaptive approaches. To ensure that the training remained accessible and effective for all participants, facilitators employed diverse methods, requiring additional informal meetings and flexibility.
- Assistance from RPs: The engagement of the WE NEXUS project and other entities offered crucial technical and financial aid. These collaborations enabled co-researchers to obtain resources, training, and mentorship, thereby augmenting the overall efficacy of their activities.
- Community engagement strategies: Co-researchers who actively collaborated with local stakeholders at the beginning of the advocacy process faced fewer barriers to mobilization. They effectively fostered greater participation and reduced opposition by building trust, encouraging dialogue, and aligning advocacy goals with community issues.
- Intersectoral collaboration: Partnerships with organizations dedicated to disaster resilience, women's empowerment, and environmental sustainability enhance advocacy results. These cross-sector collaborations afforded co-researchers supplementary expertise and broadened their networks, enhancing the effectiveness of their activities.

Challenges

- <u>Time-related challenges</u> were reported frequently by co-researchers as well as facilitators. Many co-researchers faced difficulties balancing their participation in FPAR activities with personal and professional commitments. The competing demands of work, household duties, and community obligations led to delays in project execution, limiting their ability to sustain advocacy efforts.

- Many co-researchers found it <u>challenging to introduce feminist perspectives and participatory action research</u>, as they had limited prior exposure to these concepts. The brief training period further restricted their ability to internalize and fully apply these methodologies. To ensure meaningful engagement, ongoing support and follow-up were vital, allowing co-researchers to incorporate feminist research methods more gradually into their advocacy endeavours.

- Some co-researchers faced numerous obstacles in implementing FPAR inside their communities. These impediments frequently originated from <u>entrenched societal conventions, pragmatic restrictions and structural constraints</u>.

- In certain areas, local leaders and members treated FPAR-driven lobbying with skepticism. This <u>community resistance</u> was especially evident in regions where patriarchal norms governed gender roles and decision-making frameworks. Advocacy initiatives to contest these standards were occasionally greeted with resistance or outright antagonism.

- <u>Insufficient financial and logistical assistance</u> significantly impeded effective programmes or the ability of organizations to ensure ongoing effectiveness and sustainability.

Certain co-researchers have successfully incorporated their advocacy efforts into community programmes, ensuring sustained influence. For example, Penina Sabuna integrated the VSLA model into her campaign, equipping women with financial resources for economic development. Likewise, efforts in Bima and Sigi have established a foundation for community-driven policy participation, illustrating the capacity of FPAR to impact local governance.

Advancing the institutionalization of FPAR through initiatives such as the WE NEXUS project will be essential. This can be accomplished via enduring collaborations, capacity enhancement initiatives, acquisition of supplementary resources, and increasing the number and network of 'champions' in villages and regions. By promoting continuous engagement and broadening the scope of advocacy efforts, FPAR can remain a transformative instrument for enhancing the representation of women and marginalized groups in decision-making processes.

CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The WE NEXUS project represents a significant step in advancing feminist participatory action research (FPAR) as a tool for social transformation in disaster-affected and conflict-prone areas. By embedding FPAR principles into community-led research and advocacy, the project empowered women to actively engage in addressing structural inequalities and promoting gender justice. This chapter reflects on the project's outcomes, highlighting both the achievements and challenges encountered throughout the process. Drawing on insights from co-researchers' experiences, the following sections outline how FPAR fostered individual empowerment, strengthened community advocacy, and contributed to meaningful social change. The reflections shared here not only emphasize the transformative potential of FPAR but also offer practical lessons and recommendations for sustaining it through future initiatives.

Conclusions

- The WE NEXUS project laid the groundwork for implementing FPAR in disaster-affected and conflict-prone areas. It aimed to amplify women's voices by addressing structural inequalities and equipping co-researchers with research and advocacy tools to drive meaningful change.

- FPAR is both a method and a process that actively engages co-researchers – women from affected communities – who shape research questions, collect data, and develop advocacy strategies. Unlike traditional research, this participatory approach ensures that women are active agents rather than passive subjects.

- Disasters, conflicts, and violent extremism intensify gendered vulnerabilities, leading to economic hardship, gender-based violence (GBV), and restricted access to essential resources. FPAR employs storytelling, community dialogues, and mapping exercises to help women critically analyse and address these interconnected challenges.

- Unlike top-down interventions, FPAR prioritizes local ownership of advocacy efforts by focusing on the lived experiences of co-researchers. This approach strengthens women's leadership, ensuring that solutions emerge from within communities rather than being externally imposed.

- FPAR positions co-researchers as knowledge producers, fostering transformative advocacy that extends beyond external metrics. By integrating feminist perspectives into local action, it promotes long-term, sustainable change that strengthens resilience and advances gender justice.

- While disasters such as droughts, floods, and landslides are central concerns in all three locations – Kupang, Bima, and Sigi – their impact on women varies based on local sociopolitical contexts. Kupang and Sigi exhibit a strong link between disasters and social vulnerabilities, while Bima presents an additional dimension of violent extremism affecting women.

- The FPAR initiative has demonstrated its effectiveness in fostering both individual and social transformation through participatory research and advocacy.

  » 29 co-researchers have successfully initiated diverse projects tackling disaster-related challenges, social conflict, and gender-based issues. However, while some co-researchers smoothly transitioned from research to advocacy, others faced significant barriers, including resistance from local authorities and logistical constraints.

  » Beyond individual growth, the project has also facilitated social change by encouraging community engagement and uncovering structural inequalities. Case studies from various regions highlight how co-researchers empowered communities to address pressing social issues, such as food security, gender inequality, and access to healthcare.

- The initiative's integration into the WE NEXUS project ensures its sustainability, aligning with broader advocacy and humanitarian initiatives. This collaborative approach strengthens the long-term impact of FPAR, positioning it as a valuable tool for systemic change and policy recommendations grounded in gender-sensitive perspectives.

- In terms of advocacy implementation, the co-researchers identified key local issues. Policy changes are difficult to assess due to time constraints, but shifting perspectives and behaviours are evident in their narratives. Community acceptance remains a challenge, however, and underscores the need for safe, supportive spaces where individuals feel empowered to discuss sensitive issues without fear of judgement or repercussions.

- The sustainability of FPAR advocacy depends on institutional support, integration with existing community programmes, and building alliances at the grassroots level. While short-term efforts show impact, long-term success requires embedding FPAR within initiatives like Women's Empowerment programmes, capacity-building endeavours, and local advocacy networks. This process ensures that FPAR remains a transformative tool for amplifying the voices of women and marginalized groups in decision-making.

Lessons learned

Foundational aspects – context, learning and engagement

- Experiential learning plays a vital role in capacity-building. Methods such as storytelling, mapping, and transect walks help co-researchers internalize FPAR concepts by making learning interactive and grounded in their own experiences.
- Training materials must be accessible and engaging to ensure effective learning. Academic readings should be simplified without losing their depth, and oral communications should be prioritized in communities where reading-intensive materials may not be ideal.
- Advocacy skills can be strengthened through structured approaches. The use of frameworks like SMART ensures that advocacy strategies are clear, evidence-based, and goal-orientated, leading to more effective outcomes.
- Confidence and strategic communication are key to impactful advocacy. Training on public speaking, opposition mapping, and message dissemination enhances the abilities of co-researchers to navigate advocacy challenges and engage with stakeholders.
- Thematic mapping is an effective tool for structuring advocacy efforts. By classifying issues into clear themes, such as GBV, disasters, and extremism, co-researchers can collaborate more effectively and maintain focus.
- Visual and media-based advocacy enhances impact; the use of videos, images, and creative storytelling strengthens advocacy efforts by making issues more visible, thereby fostering empathy and engaging a wider audience.
- A contextual approach is necessary to make training materials and methodologies more relevant. Tailoring content to local realities enhances accessibility and ensures that women can fully engage with, and apply, FPAR principles.

Overcoming barriers to women's participation

- Women's participation is often hindered by confidence issues, limited public speaking experience, and social restrictions. Intentional support is needed to empower women to take active roles in advocacy and research.

- Gender inequality tends to intensify during crises. Conflicts and disasters heighten vulnerabilities, increasing risks such as domestic violence and early marriage, making gender-sensitive approaches crucial in emergency response.

- Localized approaches are essential because women's challenges vary across regions. Context-specific advocacy ensures that interventions are relevant and responsive to the lived realities of women in different settings.

- Crisis impacts are context-specific, meaning disasters, conflicts, and violent extremism do not affect all communities in the same way. Understanding these variations is key to developing effective advocacy strategies.

Strengthening advocacy for change

- Engaging both government and communities is crucial for advocacy success. Building alliances with local authorities and ensuring community involvement increases the likelihood of tangible policy commitments and action.

- Time constraints must be carefully navigated. Women and village officials often have demanding schedules, requiring advocacy plans to be strategically designed for consistent engagement despite limited availability.

- Strengthening collective action is key to sustaining advocacy efforts. Advocacy should not rely on individuals alone but should be embedded within communities to ensure long-term impact.
- Building networks and solidarity enhances advocacy. Connecting co-researchers across different locations fosters mutual support, shared learning, and collective action, strengthening advocacy at both local and regional levels.
- Recognizing shared challenges strengthens solidarity among advocacy groups. Despite differences in geography, common experiences in disaster response and gender-based advocacy reinforce the need for collective efforts.
- Local ownership enhances advocacy effectiveness. When communities define their own vulnerabilities and resilience strategies, advocacy becomes more meaningful and sustainable, ensuring that solutions are rooted in lived experiences.

Interconnection with broader issues

- Environmental and social issues are interconnected. Disasters are often linked to deeper structural inequalities, which means advocacy must address both immediate concerns and long-term systemic issues.
- Climate change is a hidden yet critical factor affecting women's resilience. Droughts, extreme weather and disrupted livelihoods exacerbate vulnerabilities, making it necessary to integrate a climate-aware gender perspective into advocacy efforts.

Long-term commitments and institutionalizing FPAR

- Sustaining advocacy efforts requires a long-term commitment. Advocacy should not be considered a one-time intervention but an ongoing process that continuously adapts to changing circumstances.
- Empowering local researchers strengthens knowledge production. FPAR positions co-researchers as active knowledge producers who challenge dominant narratives and create alternative perspectives based on lived experiences.
- Sustained engagement is necessary for lasting impact. Continuous support through mentorship, training, and networking ensures that advocacy efforts remain strong and resilient over time.
- FPAR fosters both individual and social transformation. Through critical reflection and collective action, co-researchers develop new perspectives and advocacy tools that contribute to meaningful change.
- Aligning with other programmes enhances the impact of FPAR. Integrating advocacy efforts within broader initiatives – such as WE NEXUS, Save the Children, and CARE – strengthens outreach and effectiveness.
- Sustaining FPAR for long-term impact requires institutional support. Strengthening mentorship, securing policy engagement, and embedding FPAR within established networks ensure its longevity and continued relevance.

Key recommendations for strengthening future FPAR initiatives

After completing the project and evaluating perspectives from both co-researchers and facilitators, we have mapped key recommendations for strengthening the FPAR initiative in the future. Their suggestions involve technical aspects, criteria for choosing co-researchers, potential ways for the village community to use FPAR results more effectively, and possible ways for villages to grow.

Technical aspects
Extend the training duration for deeper learning and practical skill development.   One of the most consistent pieces of feedback from co-researchers was the need for an extended training period. The current three- to four-month structure allowed for a foundational understanding of FPAR concepts and advocacy tools. However, additional time would enable a more profound engagement with feminist methodologies, research techniques, and real-world applications. Expanding the training would allow co-researchers to practise and refine their skills in data collection, fieldwork ethics, and participatory advocacy, ensuring they are more confident in implementing their initiatives post-training.
Integrate practical (in-field) implementation into training sessions.   While the training provided a strong theoretical foundation, many co-researchers needed structured, hands-on advocacy exercises during the sessions. Such exercises could include real-world simulations, guided field visits, role-playing advocacy scenarios, or pilot community interventions. By integrating practical and field-based activities, co-researchers would gain direct experience navigating local power structures, engaging with government representatives, mobilizing communities, and reducing uncertainty when implementing their projects after training. Immediate feedback from trainers and peers also helps improve strategies and messaging before full-scale advocacy begins.
Increase co-researcher representation per village for greater community engagement.   Expanding the number of co-researchers per village would enhance collective advocacy efforts and reduce the risk of project disruption due to individual time constraints or unforeseen circumstances. For instance, in Kupang, a co-researcher from Raknamo Village could not submit her advocacy plan by the agreed-upon deadline due to her traditional obligation to assist a neighbour with rice field preparations. There was no way to delay this customary practice. Similarly, in Sigi, a co-researcher missed a crucial training session, affecting their ability to execute planned activities. Increasing the number of trained co-researchers per village ensures that knowledge and advocacy efforts are distributed among multiple participants, making the project more resilient to personal obligations, emergencies, or social constraints.

Technical aspects

Provide greater flexibility in advocacy action plan timelines.

A more flexible implementation schedule would account for local traditions, seasonal agricultural cycles, and unexpected disruptions that may prevent co-researchers from executing their plans immediately after training completion. In some villages, such as Raknamo, cultural expectations precede advocacy timelines, affecting project execution. Allowing co-researchers more time and autonomy in structuring their action plans – while still ensuring accountability – could improve execution rates and deepen community involvement in the long run.

Co-researcher selection criteria

Understand gender equality and intersectionalism.

A moderate to strong understanding of the nature of gendered power relations and social inequalities is necessary. This foundational knowledge enables co-researchers to maintain a focused approach to their research and advocacy efforts, prioritizing women and other vulnerable groups instead of diverting attention to broader structural issues.

Enhance inclusivity and sensitivity.

Each co-researcher brings unique gender-related experiences that may influence the openness and dynamics of discussion. To foster an environment conducive to honest and meaningful dialogue, we recommend that, whenever possible, the selection criteria prioritize co-researchers with comparable experiences and perspectives.

For instance, if most women in a research group have experienced domestic violence, wherever possible the selection criteria will prioritize those who have not had similar experiences. Ensuring a degree of shared background among co-researchers can help mitigate power imbalances and facilitate more equitable and productive discussions.

Align goals, expectations and age criteria in co-researcher selection.

The goals, expectations, and age criteria for participant selection should be aligned and proportional to ensure the effectiveness of FPAR training. If the objective is to drive policy change at various levels, prioritize participants who have experience working with policymakers. Conversely, if the focus is on public awareness and fostering discourse, engaging younger participants may be more appropriate, as they are often at the forefront of social movements and advocacy efforts.

Further, managing expectations based on the age and experience of participants is essential. Different age groups bring distinct strengths and capacities and ensuring that training objectives are tailored to their roles and expertise will enhance both engagement and impact. By aligning selection criteria with the intended goals, FPAR initiatives can be more strategically designed to achieve sustainable and meaningful outcomes.

Leveraging the use of FPAR results by the village community

Integrate the co-researchers' initiative into the workplan of RPs.
Securing the sustainability of the co-researchers' initiative is one of the fundamental next steps to ensuring the project's outcome can be used in the long term. Even though the project has concluded, the research and advocacy initiative should continue to grow. This goal can be achieved by integrating the co-researchers' initiative into the workplan of RPs, if possible, as its focus on disaster, conflict, and extremism aligns with the programme of RPs. By doing so, the efforts of co-researchers will not halt simply because the project has ended but will continue to grow with the support of UN Women and RPs.

Document baseline research and advocacy in an in-depth policy brief.
Given the short timeframe of the research and advocacy (November 2024 to February 2025), it is recommended to document the baseline data and experiences gained from co-researchers in a detailed policy brief. This policy brief can be submitted to relevant stakeholders involved in decision-making. Additionally, it is suggested that co-researchers and women from the village should be actively engaged in the process with support from the RPs in their respective areas. This approach ensures community engagement and strengthens advocacy efforts. The more real-life experiences that are documented, the greater the document's validity, increasing the urgency for local government or related stakeholders to address the issues highlighted.

Foster a culture of solidarity through alliances/community groups.
The FPAR approach fosters movement-building and nurtures hope for a just society. By actively involving women in the community rather than merely researching them, the project strengthens their engagement and ensures sustainability. Building alliances is key to fostering collectivism and maintaining advocacy momentum, especially as impacts may take time to emerge. Sustained solidarity through these alliances is crucial to achieving long-term solutions.

Moreover, linking the alliances to the role of RPs is crucial in ensuring their sustainability. RPs provide vital support and continuity, helping to institutionalize the progress made. Without this structure, there is a risk that the momentum generated may diminish over time. Strengthening these connections will enhance the resilience of the movement, ensuring that the advocacy efforts remain effective and enduring.

Potential pathways for development

Training of trainers (ToT) model
A Training of Trainers (ToT) programme should be implemented to expand the impact of FPAR and develop next-generation FPAR trainers within communities. This approach would enable trained co-researchers to transfer their knowledge and skills to other local activists, strengthening grassroots leadership and ensuring the continuity of advocacy initiatives. By institutionalizing peer-to-peer training models, the project can establish a self-sustaining network of trained women's advocates who can continue mobilizing their communities beyond the initial training period.

Additionally, integrating the 25 research and advocacy projects into existing local development programmes, government initiatives, or NGO partnerships would enhance long-term viability. Connecting these projects to village planning discussions, disaster management initiatives, women's cooperatives, or local governance programmes would embed FPAR principles into formal decision-making structures and broaden its reach beyond initial participants.

Develop a reflection book: "One Year After FPAR".
Documenting the experiences, challenges, and achievements of co-researchers one year after the training would provide valuable insights for future FPAR initiatives. A collaborative reflection book, developed with input from RPs, trainers, UN Women, and co-researchers, could serve as:

- A learning resource for new FPAR practitioners.
- A knowledge-sharing platform to track progress, challenges, and innovations.
- An advocacy tool to engage policymakers, donors, and institutional stakeholders in scaling up gender-inclusive participatory research.

This publication could also highlight success stories, demonstrating the real-world impact of FPAR in disaster-prone and conflict-affected communities.

FPAR documentary
A video documentary project will highlight the experiences of co-researchers conducting participatory research and advocacy with FPAR tools. This documentary will use storytelling techniques and interviews to showcase the real-world impact of FPAR methodologies, developed with input from RPs, UN Women, and co-researchers. To maximize its impact, the documentary will be distributed on various social media platforms, in community meetings, and at a gender and sustainability development forum.

Deep dive into climate change risks and mitigation with FPAR
A gap in this FPAR initiative is the lack of a direct correlation between how women in communities are personally impacted by climate change and resource scarcity. While several findings indicate that women face limited access to water resources or public facilities due to natural disasters, they do not explicitly link climate change to the cause of these disasters.

Therefore, a deeper exploration of how climate change poses risks to women in communities and possible strategies to build a resilient society with women at the forefront of change, using FPAR concepts, could provide valuable insights into this issue.

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