



Gender in Forestry and REDD+ in Indonesia

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Background

Indonesia is one of several countries in the world leading the way in the design and implementation of REDD+ (Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation). It is currently in the second phase of implementing policy reforms and REDD+ pilots and transitioning towards the third phase of performance-based payments. During this third phase, REDD+ policies and activities will be fully implemented, carbon stocks will be measured and verified and payments will be distributed based on performance at different levels. REDD+

implementation is closely observed by multiple stakeholders; and guidelines for REDD+ safeguards are now available. Yet there continues to be a growing concern globally that if REDD+ is not implemented in a socially sensitive manner, it may risk reinforcing the societal and institutional structures that are already marginalizing women. Indonesia, like many other countries, is prone to these gendered risks given the historically entrenched male-dominated nature of the forestry sector coupled with growing commercial pressures on forest land, embedded social and cultural norms and religious interpretations that may exacerbate

gender inequalities in rural communities. The growing calls for “mainstreaming gender in REDD+” in Indonesia are for activities to “do no harm” to women, and to benefit both women and men in an equitable manner. This policy brief, prepared jointly by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, provides considerations for mainstreaming gender concerns into REDD+ and the forestry sector in Indonesia.

Current status

The Government of Indonesia has used gender-mainstreaming strategies at the national level since 2000 in order to distribute development benefits more equally and to empower women to participate in the development process. The promotion of gender equitable initiatives are included in the *National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN)* of 2015–2019 (Ministry of National Development and Planning 2010). Institutional support for gender mainstreaming efforts is available through the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection and National Commission for Women. The ministry is the lead government agency¹ with a mandate for mainstreaming gender across sectors and at multiple levels.

In the forestry sector, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF) incorporates gender into its activities; it revitalized its Gender Working Group in 2012, began gender responsive budgeting and implemented gender awareness and gender analysis training courses for its staff. The Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection supports MoEF with their gender mainstreaming efforts, including support for developing gender sensitive indicators for REDD+.

In REDD+, the national REDD+ strategy (STRANAS) includes several references to gender/women, which reflects the increasing awareness and commitment to integrate gender into REDD+ policies and implementation. STRANAS encourages implementing agencies to conduct capacity-building activities for women and other vulnerable groups to enable them to access and understand information and meaningfully participate in decision-making processes as well as integrating gender considerations in benefit-sharing mechanisms. However, the legal binding is weak and is unable to guarantee implementation at the local level (WOCAN 2012).

As part of REDD+, the (former) national REDD+ agency developed locally determined safeguards

known as PRISAI (principles, criteria, indicators of REDD+ safeguards Indonesia). PRISAI has integrated gender perspectives to its Principle No. 5 requiring the “full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders with attention to gender” (Setyowati et al. 2012). While PRISAI is yet to be implemented, this principle is arguably too general in its articulation and there is no proper system in place for monitoring and evaluation.

In addition to the government’s efforts, there are other NGO-led initiatives (e.g. *Solidaritas Perempuan, Perempuan AMAN*) and international organizations (e.g. UN-REDD) to support gender-mainstreaming efforts in REDD+ in Indonesia. These initiatives focus mainly on mainstreaming gender into REDD+ safeguards, since it is considered the most significant area in the REDD+ architecture to mitigate gender inequalities in REDD+. But these mainstreaming efforts often take place only at the national level and do not recognize gender-based gaps in forest governance at the local level (Larson et al. 2015).

Why gender matters

Research from across countries where CIFOR has worked highlights why gender equity is important for people and forests. Eight key reasons on why gender matters and how this can be relevant for the Indonesian context, are outlined below.

1. Livelihoods

Research by the CIFOR Poverty Environment Network (PEN) found that forest activities made up about one-fifth of the total income of rural households living in or near to forests. Findings highlight gender differentiations in the collection and use of forest products; men generated more income and specialized in cash products (particularly in Asia and Latin America), whilst women were more involved in collecting products for household subsistence needs (Sunderland et al. 2015). Gurung et al. (2011) research also supports women can have key responsibilities for meeting family needs in terms of food, fuel or fodder. In East Kalimantan, a study shows that Dayak women typically performed a wider range of tasks than men in forest garden systems, but much of their work, interests and knowledge were unknown to those outside the community (Mulyoutami et al. 2009). Their knowledge and skills in agricultural reproduction (e.g. seed selection and propagation key to forest garden development. Overall, although women’s non-monetary contributions might be difficult to capture numerically, it can play a critical role in determining household well-being and in shaping forest systems.

2. Tenure

Indonesia encompasses a huge variety of social norms, traditions, and cultures across its regions

¹ Based on Presidential Instruction No. 9/2000

with varying implications for the position of women and their entitlements in relation to land. Some communities, such as the Dayak Kenyah in East Kalimantan or the Minangkabau in West Sumatra, have retained gender equitable practices for land tenure. Yet such arrangements at the local level contradict State regulation at a macro level; which may risk undermining the rights of women in these communities (Colfer et al. 1988).

3. Governance

Women tend to participate less than men in institutions that govern forest management (Manfre and Rubin 2012). Research in Sulawesi suggests that although there is gender parity in decision-making and resource allocation processes at the household level, women's participation at the communal and broader levels tend to be marginal (Colfer et al. 2015). Yet, evidence illustrates that the participation of women can enhance forest management, resource allocation and the sustainability of forest resources (Agarwal 2009, 2010; Mukasa et al. 2012). A common indicator to improve the gender balance in participation has commonly been to set a minimum number of female participants; however presence on decision-making bodies does not always correspond with influence in decisions taken (Larson et al. 2015; Pham and Brockhaus 2015). Global comparative studies show that empowering women in mixed-gender groups results in more efficient and equitable management of forest resources (Mwangi and Mai 2011), but finding spaces where women can exercise greater voice and agency can also be critical (Arora-Jonsson 2013). An example of such an institution in rural Indonesia is the *arisan*, a social gathering for women who meet regularly (usually once a month), which can work to encourage and strengthen collective action among women (Shackleton et al. 2012).

4. Migration

Government resettlement programs coupled with voluntary migration due to job and investment prospects in land-based investments (e.g. plantations, production forests) have added to the social and cultural heterogeneity of Indonesian forested landscapes. The opportunities and burdens of migration have differentiated gender implications. For example, a CIFOR study in West Kalimantan, Indonesia, illustrates that opportunities to profit from oil palm as smallholders and workers are limited for women (Li 2015). Research in Lampung shows that resettlement policies further heighten gender divisions in labor and gender inequality with regard to resource access as only the husbands' names are typically on the

formal land titles. While in the "home area", the women that were left behind in the transmigration movements have the added burden of managing both domestic and agricultural duties in the absence of other household members (Resurreccion and Elmhirst 2008).

5. Conservation

A study by McDougall et al. (2001) in East Kalimantan found that Uma' Jalan Dayak women tended to be more knowledgeable than men about plants growing in earlier stages of secondary regrowth, more engaged in low-intensity silvicultural management of selected trees and other forest plants, and were more likely to organize cooperative work parties (*senguyun*) for forestry related activities. Understanding how forest related activities are allocated at the household level and the knowledge that different genders possess can help in engaging the community equitably and effectively in conservation programs. Forest regeneration and protection activities require both time and labor, which can hinder women (who have to find a balance between their multiple responsibilities) from participating in them (Mwangi et al. 2011).

6. Climate change adaptation strategies

Gender has been explicitly linked to vulnerability to climate change, with often highly diverse impacts on men and women (Djouidi and Brockhaus 2011). A case study on rural livelihood and adaptation pathways in Nusa Tenggara Barat, Indonesia showcased different risk coping strategies between men and women when dealing with crop failure due to climatic variability (Butler et al. 2014). To ensure gender sensitive adaptation policies and programs, gender analyses need to be incorporated in policy processes and vulnerability assessments. Understanding gender, its relationship with race, ethnicity, culture, class, age, disability and/or other statuses and the different patterns of involvement, behavior and activities that women and men have in economic, social and legal structures is crucial when assessing vulnerability and identifying responses for these. Hence, to support effective, efficient and equitable adaptation, the options for and risks of different adaptation strategies and plans need to be well understood to manage the trade-offs on society as a whole when adapting to a changing climate.

7. Climate change mitigation strategies

At every stage of REDD+, from policy design to implementation there are risks that may undermine gender equity in terms of the process and outcomes of REDD+. Benefit- and

burden-sharing of REDD+ is an area where gender inequality may come to the forefront if not considered from the early design stage. These risks need to be safeguarded. Initiatives from the Government of Indonesia, NGOs and donors have proposed actions to mitigate these risks. However, most of them focus mainly on policy/regulation design and indicators of success are usually narrowed down to a quota of women's participation (WOCAN 2012). Less attention is provided for implementation, whereas gender inequity will be perpetuated if it is overlooked at any of the policy stages.

8. Land investments

A wide range of studies have documented that women often lack *de-jure* and *de-facto* access to land or forest resources which limits their opportunities to benefit from other kinds of land investments, such as through REDD+ (Manfre and Rubin 2012). However those advocating for women's rights often base their advocacy on the view that women "depend" on natural resources by virtue of their gender and act as "forest stewards" (Sijapati 2008). The assumption is that investing in women is akin to investing in sustainable management of forests. Contrary to these two expectations, a study based in Jambi, Indonesia found that the women were not only more inclined to invest in land-use change but also would invest in activities that drive deforestation and forest degradation (Villamor et al. 2014). Such findings serve to illustrate that ultimately men and women's roles and interests differ considerably from one context to another; these can be both distinct and overlapping. Hence, policies and measures aiming to tackle effectively and efficiently deforestation and degradation while realizing equitable REDD+ outcomes will need to think beyond simplified assumptions of roles and contributions of the different genders to REDD+.

Challenges

The overall progress of integrating gender perspectives and awareness into some forest policies and strategies in Indonesia's forestry sector could be considered "moderately progressive" (RECOFTC 2015). However, these efforts have not been translated into specific forestry regulations or laws. The main policy gaps to gender mainstreaming in the forestry sector are outlined below (Arwida et al. In press).

- a lack of recognition of gender-based gaps in forest governance at the local level limits opportunities for improvement (Markelova and Mwangi 2012)

- inadequate understanding and lack of clarity on the concepts of gender and gender mainstreaming have generated confusion among government officials (both at national and subnational level) and hampered gender policy implementation.
- limited attention by policy makers to the heterogeneity of communities, including gender, class, ethnicity and other socio-cultural aspects, so different subgroups are often overlooked despite their unique contributions and characteristics
- different levels of capacities, skills, expertise and motivations for mainstreaming gender among members of gender working groups limits their ability to fulfill their assigned duties and responsibilities.
- the absence of gender-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation systems in forestry inhibits better understanding of how women can contribute to sustainable forest management objectives.

Recommendations

- Gender analyses need to be prioritized in REDD+ design and implementation to better understand gender and socially differentiated interests, behavior, involvement, constraints and opportunities. To support a gender-mainstreaming program across sectors and at multiple levels, gender analyses need to be listed as one of key performance indicators of ministries and government institutions at national level. While at subnational level, gender analyses must be a mandatory requirement of the district regional development planning forum (*musrenbang*). Gender analyses need to feed into measures to: ensure that women and men have an equal voice and influence in decision-making and resource-allocation processes; identify and mitigate against gendered risks related to REDD+; and develop gender equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms.
- Forestry policies are being determined without adequate gender disaggregated data (RECOFTC 2015). Therefore, the collection of gender disaggregated data should be a mandatory contribution to available national and local-level databases. For example, as the Indonesia Domestic Household Survey, gender disaggregated data should aim to capture women's non-monetary contributions towards the household and family.
- Gender concerns need to be adequately mainstreamed in order to ensure that gender perspectives and the goal of gender equity are central to all REDD+ related activities. However,

political commitment to gender mainstreaming should not be measured against just the existence of gender budgets. Gender mainstreaming requires incentive/disincentive mechanisms to foster financial accountability and to ensure that policies are implemented effectively, efficiently and equitably. This requires a widespread and high level of political commitment toward gender mainstreaming and adequately training and resourcing of gender support units at multiple levels.

- As Indonesia has a decentralized system of governance, it is imperative to work closely with relevant stakeholders at the subnational level to ensure that gender equitable policies are implemented at the local level and make a positive difference to the lives of women and men. This requires that we are cognizant of local-level realities and avoid simple assumptions that women are uniformly marginalized and/or face the same challenges across the country. It also requires the identification of local actors or champions who advocate gender equity and can enforce and monitor (individually and in combination with government and NGOs) the implementation of gender equitable policies.

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Photo: A woman in Jambi, Sumatra, showing a man how she prepares forest fibers for weaving. Carol Colfer/CIFOR

This info brief is part of a series of reviews on existing literature and practices to derive relevant lessons for the design of REDD+ benefit sharing mechanisms. The reviews aim to stimulate debate on balancing effectiveness and efficiency, while ensuring equity in ongoing policy processes in the development of REDD+ as a performance-based mechanism.



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