

## **Gender Perspective of Planners as a Gender Focal Point in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi**

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### **Abstract**

This study examines the gender perspective of planners in regional apparatus organizations (OPD) within the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government, focusing on their roles as gender focal points in development planning. Using Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's (1966) Social Construction Theory—comprising externalization, objectification, and internalization—this qualitative research, conducted from September 2024 to February 2025, employs purposive sampling to select informants from key OPDs involved in gender-based planning, including the Regional Development Planning Agency, the Inspectorate, the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office, the Education Office, the Population Control and Family Planning Office, and the Central Sulawesi Social Service. Primary data will be collected through in-depth interviews and direct observations of gender mainstreaming (PUG) activities, while secondary data will be sourced from government policies, academic articles, official websites, and books. Data analysis follows the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which includes data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that OPD planners generally exhibit biases in their approach to gender mainstreaming (PUG), where the externalization stage shows varied understandings of PUG alongside efforts to promote gender-responsive development planning, the objectification stage reflects critical perspectives on gender-responsive policies in infrastructure, education, and health, and the internalization stage highlights challenges in fully integrating gender considerations into regional development planning. This study emphasizes the need for capacity-building programs to strengthen planners' gender perspectives and recommends greater institutional support for sustainable gender mainstreaming in regional governance.

Keywords: Gender Perspective, Gender Mainstreaming, Social Construction, Regional Development Planning, Policy Implementation, Central Sulawesi, Gender Focal Point, Public Sector Planning.

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini mengkaji perspektif gender para perencana pada organisasi perangkat daerah (OPD) di lingkungan Pemerintah Provinsi Sulawesi Tengah, dengan fokus pada peran mereka sebagai focal point gender dalam perencanaan pembangunan. Dengan menggunakan Teori Konstruksi Sosial milik Peter Berger dan Thomas Luckmann (1966) yang meliputi eksternalisasi, objektifikasi, dan internalisasi, penelitian kualitatif yang dilaksanakan pada September 2024 hingga Februari 2025 ini menggunakan purposive sampling untuk memilih informan dari OPD utama yang terlibat dalam perencanaan berbasis gender, meliputi Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah, Inspektorat, Dinas Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak, Dinas Pendidikan, Dinas Pengendalian Penduduk dan Keluarga Berencana, dan Dinas Sosial Sulawesi Tengah. Data primer akan dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan pengamatan langsung terhadap kegiatan pengarusutamaan gender (PUG), sedangkan data sekunder akan bersumber dari kebijakan pemerintah, artikel akademis, situs web resmi, dan buku. Analisis data mengikuti model interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldana (2014), yang meliputi pengumpulan data, kondensasi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Temuan penelitian ini mengungkap bahwa perencana OPD umumnya menunjukkan bias dalam pendekatan mereka terhadap pengarusutamaan gender (PUG), di mana tahap eksternalisasi menunjukkan pemahaman yang bervariasi tentang PUG di samping upaya untuk mempromosikan perencanaan pembangunan yang responsif gender, tahap objektifikasi mencerminkan perspektif kritis tentang kebijakan yang responsif gender dalam infrastruktur, pendidikan, dan kesehatan, dan tahap internalisasi menyoroti tantangan dalam mengintegrasikan pertimbangan gender secara penuh ke dalam perencanaan pembangunan daerah. Studi ini menekankan perlunya program pengembangan kapasitas untuk memperkuat perspektif gender

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perencana dan merekomendasikan dukungan kelembagaan yang lebih besar untuk pengarusutamaan gender yang berkelanjutan dalam tata kelola daerah.

Kata Kunci: Perspektif Gender, Pengarusutamaan Gender, Konstruksi Sosial, Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah, Implementasi Kebijakan, Sulawesi Tengah, Focal Point Gender, Perencanaan Sektor Publik.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Gender issues have become an important issue in the development of a country. In this context, the position between men and women has an equal position and role in planning, implementing, and evaluating development results. Indonesia is one of the countries that is committed to upholding women's rights through various laws and regulations and shows it by signing a number of commitments and international conventions related to gender equality. The basic constitution of Indonesia also guarantees the participation of every citizen, including women.

Interaction marks the life of an individual in a unitary society. In this process, each individual will place himself in a certain social position that has been conceptualized by the norms that govern all actions taken. The social position that has been conceptualized in each individual is a social status that must be carried out through the roles he has. Status or position is the rank or position of a person in a group, or the position of a group in relation to other groups. The role is the behavior expected of a person who has a status (Horton & Hunt, 1996).

In the structure of Indonesian society's life that still relies on dominant cultural values and norms, the division of roles based on gender between men and women illustrates a clear difference. The patriarchal social structure that is characterized by paternalism, for example, will place the status and position of men higher than women. In a society characterized like this, men have the main rights, authority, and power in regulating all social relationships and processes that have direct implications for the situation that is detrimental to women (Safitri, 2023). This reality is built because the elements of cultural values owned by the community have legitimized the difference in roles based on gender. Between men and women, there are differences in terms of rights and responsibilities in carrying out their social roles in society, especially in improving and maintaining family economic assets. In general, the cultural values of society will provide greater opportunities for men because of their productive functions, while women are more oriented to their reproductive roles (Allolayuk, 2021). At the same time, women are still equipped with cultural attributes that often limit women's movements in the public sector, causing women to lag behind in development (Israpil, 2017).

Juridically, equality between women and men is guaranteed to be equal in various fields of life as stated in the 1945 Constitution. In addition, Indonesia has also ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which was ratified through Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Article 4 paragraph 1 of this Law obliges the state to draft special regulations to accelerate gender equality between women and men. In this regard, Presidential Instruction Number 9 of 2000 concerning the Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming (PUG) was born. PUG is one of the development strategies carried out to achieve gender equality and justice, through integrating the experiences, aspirations, needs, and problems of women and men into the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies, programs, projects and activities in various fields of life and development. Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs Number 67 of 2011 concerning Amendments to the Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs Number 15 of 2008 mandates guidelines for the implementation of PUG in the regions. This regulation states that the acceleration of PUG

is carried out through Gender Responsive Planning (PRG). PRG is carried out to ensure justice and equality for men and women in terms of access, participation, control, and development benefits. This planning is made by taking into account the aspirations, needs, problems and experiences of women and men, both in the process of preparing it and in the implementation of activities. The PRG is expected to produce a Gender Responsive Budget (ARG), in which budget allocation policies are structured to accommodate the different needs of women and men.

Policies in the form of Presidential Instruction No. 9/2000, Permendagri No. 15/2008 and No. 67/2011, as well as Law No. 17/2007 on the National Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPN) 2005-2025, mandate ministers and government agencies to integrate gender into all development plans and programs. In 2012, a Joint Circular Letter was issued by 4 ministries, namely the Ministry of National Development Planning (PPN)/Bappenas, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPP and PA) Number 270/M.PPN/11/2012; Number SE-33/MK.02/2012; Number 050/4379A/SJ and SE 46/MPP-PA/11/2012 concerning the National Strategy for the Acceleration of Gender Mainstreaming (PUG) through Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting (PPRG).

Although it has become an important agenda in national policy, the implementation of PUG at the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government level still faces various obstacles. Among them are the lack of understanding of the importance of PUG among bureaucrats, the limited number of human resources trained in the field of gender, and the existence of cultural and social barriers that lead to gender stereotypes in policymaking. In addition, it is still necessary to add support from parties who have the authority to accelerate the implementation of PUG. This results in low gender mainstreaming in regional development policies and programs, which ultimately has an impact on the gap in access and participation between men and women in government.

Based on data from the Central Sulawesi Regional Civil Service Agency, gender inequality in the structure of echelon positions in the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government is still striking. At the Echelon 1 and 2 levels, about 70% of positions are held by men, while women only occupy about 30%. At the Echelon 3 level, although the percentage of women occupying this position is slightly higher, the figure is still very far from the same number, which reflects structural and cultural barriers that may limit women's access to strategic positions in local government (menpan.go.id, 2023). In terms of political participation in parliament for the 2019-2024 period, the percentage of female legislators in Central Sulawesi has only reached 28.89% (national 21%). The highest participation rate was in the Banggai Regency DPRD (31.41%) and the lowest was in the Palu City DPRD and Tojo Una-Una Regency (4%). However, in certain contexts, gender has no effect on a person's leadership. There are women who rely on transformational leadership because they have masculinity but are able to produce several programs that are beneficial for all fields (Balkis, 2020).

In general, the Human Development Index (HDI) of Central Sulawesi is also still below the national level, which is 70.28% (2022), while the national HDI is 72.91%. If separated by gender, the HDI of men in Central Sulawesi is 74.48, while that of women is 68.99. However, this figure is better than the HDI of Central Sulawesi in 2021, which is 69.79 (BPS, 2023). HDI is a measure of the success of developing the quality of human life through the measurement of life expectancy, education, and decent living standards. Efforts to increase HDI are interventions on the focus of policies, programs and activities, on OPDs that handle education, health, and the economy.

The Central Sulawesi Gender Inequality Index (IKG) is also still high, at 0.477 (2022), below the national average (0.459). IKG is Measure of gender inequality Based on dimensions, namely health,

reproduction, gender empowerment in politics, education, and the labor market. The positive thing is that Central Sulawesi is in 12th place with the 2022 Gender Development Index (IPG) reaching 92.24%. The Indonesian IPG is 91.63. There are 19 provinces with IPG below the national (BPS, 2023). IPG is indicators that describe the comparison (ratio) of achievements between Women's HDI and Men's HDI. The calculation of IPG refers to the methodology used by UNDP in calculating Gender Development Index (GDI) and Human Development Index (HDI) in 2010. Efforts to increase IPG are interventions on the focus of policies, programs and activities, on OPDs that handle education, health, and the economy.

Meanwhile, in the 2022 Gender Empowerment Index (IDG), Central Sulawesi is also above (77.52%) from the national average (76.59%). The IDG is a measure used to assess the extent to which women and men have equal access to economic and political opportunities and participation in decision-making in various areas of life. Interventions to increase the IDG are the basis of policies, programs and activities in OPDs that handle politics, decision-making/leadership and the economy.

So far, studies related to the implementation of PUG in the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government are still limited. This study aims to fill this gap by reviewing the gender perspective of planners in the implementation of their duties and functions as a focus of gender points in regional apparatus organizations (OPD) within the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government. The results of the study are expected to be useful for policy makers and interested parties in strengthening strategies to increase access, role and participation of women in development.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a qualitative research to describe sociological studies on the gender perspective of planners in carrying out their duties and functions as a focal point for gender points in Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD) in Central Sulawesi Province. This research was conducted on OPDs that act as institutions that carry out Gender Mainstreaming (PUG) with a preparation time until the research lasts for 6 months, from September 2024 to February 2025. The informant is determined by *purposive*, namely the informant according to the research background and is a person who really knows the problem to be researched (Moleong, 2017). To avoid the subjectivity of researchers as well as in the hold the principles of relevance, objectivity, quality and validity, then the determination of informants is carried out with the following criteria: *first*, individuals are State Civil Apparatus (ASN) at least 35 years old. *Second*, have experience or knowledge relevant to gender and development issues in Central Sulawesi. *Third*, planning officials and policy makers in the Regional Apparatus Organization (OPD) within the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government. Based on these criteria, the research informants are presented in table 1. The research data is primary and secondary. Primary data was obtained from the results of in-depth interviews with informants and observations on OPDs within the scope of the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government which became Pilot Project or have gender-based planning and programs, namely the Central Sulawesi Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda), the Central Sulawesi Inspectorate, the Central Sulawesi Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office (DP3A), the Central Sulawesi Education Office, the Population Control and Family Planning Office (P2KB) and the Central Sulawesi Social Service. In this observation, Researchers are directly involved in activities relevant to gender mainstreaming issues (PUG) through development planning meetings and discussions, and interact with the social environment to obtain initial and follow-up data for research. Secondary data were obtained from policies and programs of PUG by the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government, scientific articles and books. Data analysis utilizes the interactive model of Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014), namely data

collection, *Condensations data display* (Presentation) data, and conclusions/verification or drawing conclusions (Miles et al., 2014)

**Table 1 Research Informants**

It	Initials	Gender	Age (years)	Position	Agency
1	Mj	Woman	47	Young Auditor	Central Sulawesi Inspectorate
2	ML	Woman	52	Head of UPT Social and Children's Homes	Central Sulawesi Social Service
3	NM	Woman	55	Coordinator of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection	DP3A Central Sulawesi
4	IS	Woman	38	Planner Section	DP3A Central Sulawesi
5	HK	Woman	52	Young Expert Planner	DP3A Central Sulawesi
6	IB	Man	44	Young Expert Functional	Central Sulawesi Bappeda
7	ID	Man	54	Head of Family Planning, Resilience, and Family Welfare	Central Sulawesi P2KB Office
8	Nf	Woman	47	Head of Planning and Programs	Central Sulawesi Education Office

Source: Primary Research Data

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The existence of the PUG focal point as an implementation of Permendagri No. 67 of 2011 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of PUG in the Regions, is an important component as a pioneer in efforts to prioritize gender mainstreaming (PUG) in programs and development planning in each OPD, consisting of officials and/or staff in charge of program planning and other fields in each OPD and have an understanding of the gender-responsive budget framework. The focal point of PUG as mandated in Permendagri No. 67 of 2011 has the following duties:

1. Promote gender mainstreaming in work units;
2. Facilitating the preparation of gender-responsive OPD Work Plans;
3. Carry out training, socialization, and advocacy on gender mainstreaming to all officials and staff within OPD;
4. Encourage gender analysis of policies, programs, and activities in work units;
5. Facilitating the preparation of gender profiles in each OPD;
6. Coordinating the preparation of gender-responsive budgeting planning (PPRG) in several priority activities in OPDs sourced from the APBD.

In addition to the tasks and functions above, the PUG focal point is expected to be able to synergize and coordinate OPD programs to the community and women's observer organizations in the implementation of PUG. The existence of focal points is also supported by Central Sulawesi Provincial Regulation Number 9 of 2014 concerning Gender Mainstreaming in Regional Development.

In planning gender-responsive programs and budgets, program planners in Central Sulawesi Province OPD generally do not only have one stimulus that can build a perception of the individual. The existing stimulus can come from within the individual itself based on his experience and knowledge, but there is also a stimulus that comes from outside the individual that is generated by the surrounding environment, it refers to the 3 dialectical processes of social construction according to the theories of Peter L. Berger and Luckman, namely externalization, objectification, and internalization. This theory provides the view that social reality is not given, but the result of the construction process carried out by humans through social interaction.

First, externalization. Externalization is the initial process by which individuals express their subjective ideas, ideas, or experiences into the social world. This process involves human action to create a social world through interaction and communication. Externalization includes not only physical actions, but also symbols, values, and norms articulated into social contexts. For example, humans create institutions, languages, or technologies as an expression of their needs or values. This process is active and creative, where individuals shape their social environment based on their experiences and interpretations of the world.

Second, objectivity. Objectification is the stage at which the result of externalization becomes something that is considered real, regardless of its creator. In this process, the social constructs produced by humans are institutionalized and widely accepted as objective facts. Objectification often involves social institutions, symbols, or norms that give legitimacy to what was previously only a subjective idea. For example, institutions such as law, religion or education are the result of objectification, in which the structures created by humans are considered to have an independent existence and independent of the individual who created them. Objectification allows social reality to be maintained for a long period of time, even beyond the generation of its creators.

Third, internalization. Internalization is the stage in which individuals accept and integrate the social reality that has been objectified into their consciousness. This process makes social reality part of the way individuals understand the world and their role in it. Internalization usually occurs through socialization, both in the context of family, education, and other social interactions. In the process of internalization, individuals not only accept social reality as something real, but also use it as a guideline for action. For example, social values, norms, and rules are internalized by individuals so that they become a frame of reference in daily life.

Externalization, objectification, and internalization do not work separately but are interrelated in the dialectical process. Human beings create social reality through externalization, which is then institutionalized through objectification, and finally re-internalized by the individual. This process is constantly repeated, allowing for changes and updates in social reality. This dialectic shows how individuals and societies influence each other. Society provides a structure for individual actions, while individuals have the capacity to change or update that structure. This process confirms that social reality is dynamic, depending on the interactions that take place in it. Berger and Luckmann emphasized the importance of legitimacy in the process of social construction. Legitimacy is a mechanism that provides justification for the social reality that has been institutionalized, so that it can be widely accepted by the community. In this context, the media, education, and religious institutions often serve as the main agents of strengthening the legitimacy of social reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Dharma, 2018; Sulaiman, 2016).

Legitimacy includes not only passive acceptance by individuals, but also involves active reproduction through everyday actions. For example, gender-responsive policies implemented in

development planning are not only the result of externalization of gender equality values, but also part of objectification and legitimacy through legal instruments and public policies. In relation to Gender Mainstreaming (PUG) program planners, social construction theory provides important insights into how gender norms are formed and accepted in society. This process of social construction in the context of PUG shows that the social reality of gender is not only shaped by individuals, but is also influenced by policies and programs designed to change existing social structures and gender norms. Therefore, PUG program planners must understand that PUG is not only about formulating policies, but also about building social awareness and changing existing norms.

Thus, social construction theory provides a strong theoretical basis for understanding how PUG programs can affect gender-related social change. The process of externalization, objectification, and internalization that occurs in society will strengthen more inclusive gender equality norms, thereby creating an environment that supports the active participation of women and men in equal and equitable development.

### **Externalization Stage: Understanding PUG and Efforts to Encourage Gender-Responsive Development Planning**

In the externalization stage, individuals and community groups begin to interact and engage in discussions on gender issues. They adapt to the values of gender equality introduced through PUG programs, as well as contribute to the formation of a more gender-equal social reality. Here, individuals are not only accepting existing gender roles, but are beginning to view gender equality as part of a broader social norm. The results of the study show that planners in the Regional Apparatus Organization (OPD) agree that PUG is an important part of development planning and policies that must be implemented by OPD. They also acknowledged that despite policies in favor of PUG, its implementation on the ground still faces various obstacles, such as limited understanding, lack of effective training, or still considered an administrative obligation. All opinions suggest increased understanding and further implementation, either through training, periodic refreshments, strategy simplification, or stricter supervision. However, there is a difference of understanding about the relationship between PUG and gender-responsive development planning at the Central Sulawesi Provincial level, including the staff of the Central Sulawesi Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office (DP3A). DP3A Central Sulawesi Young Expert Planner, HK highlighted the challenges due to employee mutations that cause training to be less effective, as well as the importance of periodic refreshments so that knowledge about gender remains relevant in each OPD. The Planning Section of DP3A Central Sulawesi, IS focuses on the importance of integrating a gender perspective in every stage of development planning to ensure equal policies and budgets for women and men. As for the Central Sulawesi DP3A Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Management Manager, NM emphasized that the implementation of PUG in districts/cities has not been optimal, considers it an administrative obligation, and assesses the need for stricter supervision and increased understanding of OPDs.

Outside of DP3A Central Sulawesi, the Head of the UPT Social Institution and Children of the Central Sulawesi Social Service, ML argued that the PUG strategy needs to be simplified so that it is easier to understand and implement by OPDs, so that its implementation is more effective and inclusive. As for the Functional Young Expert of Bappeda Central Sulawesi, IB highlighted that gender must be part of the overall OPD program planning, not just women's affairs, and the importance of improving human resource indicators and strengthening gender understanding at the operational level. ID from the Central Sulawesi

Population Control and Family Planning Office (P2KB) stated that his party relies on the evaluation of the activities that have been carried out, in the context of renewal. Before the activity is carried out, an assessment is also carried out to find out what needs are needed by the community. NF from the Head of Program Subdivision at the Central Sulawesi Education Office said that before preparing gender-responsive budget planning, planners must have a good understanding of gender perspectives. For planners, it is important to view gender as an integral part of the planning process. The main focus is not only physical differences, but how men and women get equal opportunities in various aspects of life, such as in the world of work, in the household, or in making decisions.

The Coordinator of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Management of DP3A Central Sulawesi, NM assessed that the success of PUG was influenced by the active role of both parties, namely OPD as a planner and policy implementer, and DP3A which provided understanding and evaluation. However, according to the existing view, the role of regional heads is considered the most important because it strategically provides political direction and decisions regarding the importance of PUG. Without strong commitment and supervision from regional leaders, PUG is not expected to develop properly. One of these commitments is a regulation that encourages the implementation of PUG in the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government.

### ***Objective Stage: Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming (PUG)***

In the objective stage, the concept of gender equality that has been built together begins to be considered objective and accepted by the wider community. Policies and programs that support PUGs are beginning to be institutionalized, and more inclusive gender norms are beginning to be accepted as legitimate and cannot be ignored. This is reflected in regulations, policies, and actions that support gender equality in important sectors, such as education, health, and the economy.

The informants acknowledged that there are regulations or policies that support gender mainstreaming (PUG), such as Central Sulawesi Provincial Regulation Number 9 of 2014 concerning Gender Mainstreaming in Regional Development. The main challenge faced is the implementation of PUG which is still not fully effective or comprehensive at the OPD level. NF, Head of Program Subdivision at the Central Sulawesi Education Office, said that to encourage PUG, adequate budget support is needed. Local governments must also be more active in implementing policies that support gender equality in all fields, including education, health, and infrastructure. In addition, public awareness must also continue to be increased through socialization and education, so that all parties understand that women and men have equal rights in all aspects of life.

### ***Application of PUG in the Infrastructure Sector***

The results of the study show that planning informants assess that there are positive developments in the infrastructure sector that have begun to consider the needs of women, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups, such as disability-friendly facilities and the separation of public facilities. They also acknowledged that despite the changes, there is still much that needs to be improved, especially in terms of accessibility and more inclusive facilities for all groups, especially women and people with disabilities. DP3A Central Sulawesi Young Expert Planner, HK said there have been positive changes in the infrastructure sector, such as the construction of sloping stairs and the separation of public facilities between women and men, as well as increased awareness of gender-responsive facilities. The Central Sulawesi DP3A Planning Section, IS also acknowledged positive developments, such as facilities for people



with disabilities and the separation of public toilets, but highlighted that there are still many aspects of public facilities that need to be improved, such as sidewalks that do not meet accessibility standards. The Coordinator of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection DP3A Central Sulawesi, NM also assessed that there are still many roads and public facilities that are not friendly to people with disabilities and mothers and children. Meanwhile, the Head of the Social and Children's Home Unit of the Central Sulawesi Social Service, ML gave an example that gender-based planning has been well implemented in other sectors such as agriculture and social services, where women have been involved in farmer groups and economic enterprises, which shows equal empowerment for women and people with disabilities. However, data from the Central Sulawesi Provincial Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office (DP3A) in 2023 still shows job inequality. In terms of labor force participation rate, men in Central Sulawesi reached 85.42% (84 nationally) compared to 53.4% (54 nationally). Male per capita expenditure in Central Sulawesi is Rp. 14.034 million, while women are smaller, Rp. 8.889 million.

### ***Implementation of PUG in the Education Sector***

The results of the study show that OPD planners have the same opinion recognizing the importance of gender equality in the education sector, both in terms of facilities (such as separate toilets) and access to education for women. However, there are differences among the informants. DP3A Central Sulawesi Young Expert Planner, HK and the Central Sulawesi DP3A Planning Section, IS highlighted that although there are facilities that support gender equality, the big challenge lies in the violence and sexual harassment that still often occur in schools, both public and private, so the protection of women and children needs to be paid more attention. This opinion confirms previous research that bullying, discrimination, and dominating relationships in education, must be addressed immediately (Aditya, 2016; Fitriliana et al., 2023; Hendrik et al., 2024; Wartoyo & Ginting, 2023). Education is the earliest solution to overcome these problems (Allolayuk, 2021).

The Coordinator of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of DP3A Central Sulawesi, NM, said that there are still schools that do not have gender-responsive facilities, such as separate toilets and lactation rooms for breastfeeding teachers, as well as a lack of support in the curriculum and activities that support gender equality. The Head of the Central Sulawesi Social and Children's Social Service UPT, ML highlighted that scholarships are given to underprivileged women, who show concern for gender equality in access to education. Functional Young Expert of Bappeda Central Sulawesi, Ilham Bisno explained that gender-related indicators have been listed in the Regional Government Work Plan (RKPD), but the implementation of gender equality in education is constrained by a lack of understanding of how to analyze and integrate gender data in education planning. ID from the Central Sulawesi P2KB Office said that one way to encourage gender equality is to provide education and training to women through the Job Training Center (BLK) or related agencies, so that it can provide opportunities for women to improve their skills. As for Nf, the Head of the Program Subdivision of the Central Sulawesi Education Office assessed that one of the major challenges faced in this sector is how to overcome inequality in the distribution of the education budget. In this case, the government needs to ensure that the education provided does not only focus on one gender, but provides equal opportunities for all. In some areas, efforts have been made to facilitate education for women and children with special needs, such as children with disabilities. Schools are starting to be more responsive to the needs of women and other marginalized groups, although there is still a lot of homework to be done. Data from the Central Sulawesi Provincial Women's Empowerment

and Child Protection Office (DP3A) in 2023 shows that the average length of schooling for boys is 9.15 years (national 8.99), while women in Central Sulawesi are 8.84 years old (national 8.39).

### ***Application of PUG in the Health Sector***

The results of the study stated that the informants agreed that the health sector has made progress that supports gender equality, such as breastfeeding spaces and accessibility for people with disabilities in health care facilities. However, there is a major problem that still exists, namely inequality in access to quality health services, especially for women, with problems such as high maternal mortality rates and stunting. Therefore, improvements are needed in the equitable distribution of access to quality health services for women. The Central Sulawesi DP3A Planning Section, IS emphasized the importance of synergy between the Central Sulawesi DP3A and the Central Sulawesi Health Office to ensure more inclusive policies and provide better access for women, especially in areas with limited facilities. Data from the Central Sulawesi Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office (DP3A) states that the life expectancy of Central Sulawesi men is 67.2 years lower (national 70) and female 71.2 years (national 74). In realizing gender mainstreaming in the health sector in the regions, initiatives or concepts in the form of policies from regional heads as authorized actors in carrying out policies to reduce the Maternal Mortality Rate (AKI) and Infant Mortality Rate (AKB). Regional heads even benefit from active bureaucratic work and innovation, the support of the DPRD, and NGOs that provide input, communication and active contributions to maternal and child health (Rahmatunnisa et al., 2022)

### **Internalization Stage: Challenges of Integrating Gender in Development Planning**

At the internalization stage, individuals begin to identify with socially accepted gender equality values, making them an integral part of their identity. This is reflected in everyday behaviors that support a more gender-equal social reality. However, in the context of development planning, there are several challenges in integrating gender perspectives.

One of the main challenges is the lack of understanding and awareness of the concept of gender among government officials. Many still consider gender issues to be related only to women, thus ignoring the broader spectrum of gender equality. Studies show that this limited understanding can result in the implementation of superficial gender mainstreaming strategies, where policies are implemented only to meet administrative requirements without a real commitment to transformative change (Madsen & Andrade, 2022).

In addition, cultural norms and traditional mindsets are significant barriers. Deep-rooted beliefs about gender roles can hinder the adoption of gender-responsive policies. For example, in many societies, patriarchal structures dominate, leading to resistance to initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality. Research shows that these cultural challenges often result in a tokenistic approach to gender integration, where attempts are made to appear inclusive without addressing the root causes of inequalities (Stratigaki, 2005).

Another challenge is limited capacity and commitment to implementing gender-responsive budgeting. Although frameworks such as the Gender Analysis Pathway (GAP) and the Gender Budget Statement (GBS) exist, their implementation is often ineffective. A review found that without adequate training and understanding, implementation of gender-responsive budgeting remains superficial, failing to address the systemic issues that perpetuate gender disparities (Mukhopadhyay & Eyben, 2021).

Furthermore, the lack of robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms exacerbates these challenges. Without proper oversight, it is difficult to assess the impact of gender mainstreaming initiatives, leading to a lack of accountability. These gaps often result in the continuation of ineffective practices and the persistence of gender inequalities in development outcomes (True & Parisi, 2023).

Opportunities for women to take on leadership roles in government and other sectors also remain limited. Despite women's capacity to hold key positions, there is still a gender gap in leadership appointments across government sectors. The underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions affects the extent to which gender policies are prioritized. In Central Sulawesi, while some progress has been made in the education and health sectors, achieving true gender equality in governance and policy-making requires stronger policy interventions and institutional reforms (Nazneen & Hickey, 2023).

Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach. Scaling up education and awareness programs to deepen understanding of gender concepts, challenging and changing cultural norms that hinder progress, building capacity for gender-responsive budgeting implementation, and establishing robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are important steps towards meaningful gender integration in development planning.

## CONCLUSION

The gender perspective of planners in regional apparatus organizations (OPD) in the implementation of their duties and functions as a focal point of gender points within the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government is identified at the stage of externalization, objectification, and internalization. The process of externalization, objectification, and internalization understood by OPD planners will strengthen more inclusive gender equality norms in society, thereby creating an environment that supports the active participation of women and men in equal and equitable development. In general, OPD planners within the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government have been aligned with gender mainstreaming (PUG).

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