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## Role of Gender in Forest and Land Fire Mitigation in the City of Palangkaraya

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### ABSTRACT

The minimal involvement of women in preventing forest and land fire resulted in women being the most affected by the disaster. The impact of the forest and land fire has caused a thick haze that disrupted social, economic and public health activities, including the women's health. The main objective of this research is to examine aspect of gender roles in the forest an land fire mitigation, so that they can prepare themselves and their families to face forest and land fires. The research analysis was conducted descriptively by combining social, economic data and literature studies. Based on the result of the research, it showed that gender in Palangka Raya city has participated to work out of the house all day to meet the needs of their household. This condition makes women very vulnerable to the effect of forest and land fires. In addition, poverty and lack of knowledge on disaster mitigation greatly influence this condition. The role and participation of women in dealing with forest and land fires is very much needed, and the involvement of the government and related institutions is needed as mitigation and prevention efforts. Collaboration between government agencies and involvement of women in forest and land fires mitigation is expected to minimize the risk of exposing women and their families to adverse effect caused after the fires.

### 1. Introduction

Forest and land fires are one of the serious problems that have yet to be properly resolved. In Palangka Raya City, forest and land fire incidents are occurring almost every year during the dry season. This condition will cause damage and losses in economic, social and environmental which will hinder the pace of development and development of the Palangka Raya City area so that efforts to control forest and land fires are needed (Mapilata et al., 2013). According to Data on the Sipongi Karhutla Monotoring System, the land fires that occurred in Central Kalimantan during 2019 amounted to 134 thousand ha of burned land, one of the

cities worst hit by land fires is Palangkaraya City which is the capital of the province of Central Kalimantan.

The impact of the land fires has caused a thick haze of smoke which disrupted social, economic and public health activities. One of the recipients of the impact of the disaster is women. Several studies have identified that the level of impact of disasters on women differs based on their understanding of their perceptions and preparedness. Mulyasari and Shaw (2013) state that women are at risk of being exposed to disasters, social class, their obligation to take care of their families and children. The difference between men and women in dealing with disasters lies in their tendency to have a more vulnerable perspective, have limited control. Even so, women have a tendency to better prepare themselves and their families for disasters than men Takeuchi and Shaw, (2008).

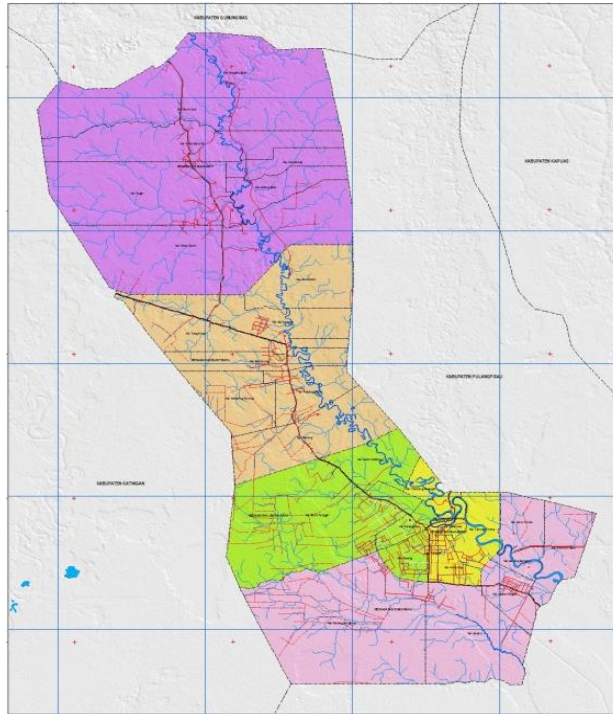
Post-disaster impacts felt by women tend to have the potential for further risks, such as increased loss of livelihoods, gender-based violence, and even loss of life during and after natural disasters (UNISDR, 2015). It is recorded that sixty to seventy percent of disaster victims in Indonesia are women and children (Setiawan, 2019). There are four factors that cause women to become a vulnerable group during disasters, including: physical, socio-cultural, services and assistance, and information (Lisna, Safrida, Siti, and Syarifah, 2011). Demographic aspects, such as age, education, occupation, income and marital status also increase women's vulnerability to disasters (E. Enarson and Chakrabarti, 2009).

After the land and forest fires in Palangkaraya City, it shows that women are still rarely considered for their conditions, always thinking that women and men have the same conditions. In fact, women and men have different conditions, not only related to differences in biological aspects, but also differences in needs and roles. The existence of these differences will ultimately have an impact on rights, obligations, experience and access, particularly in relation to rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. Based on these problems, the main objective of this study is to examine the role of gender in dealing with land and forest fires in Palangkaraya City.

## **2. Research Method**

### **Research Location**

This research was conducted in Palangkaraya City (Figure 1). Administratively, the area of Palangka Raya City reaches 2,853.12 km<sup>2</sup> which includes five sub-districts and 30 villages. The location selection was based on the consideration that this district was one of the districts most affected by the land fires in Central Kalimantan Province.



**Figure 1. Map of Palangka Raya City Administration**

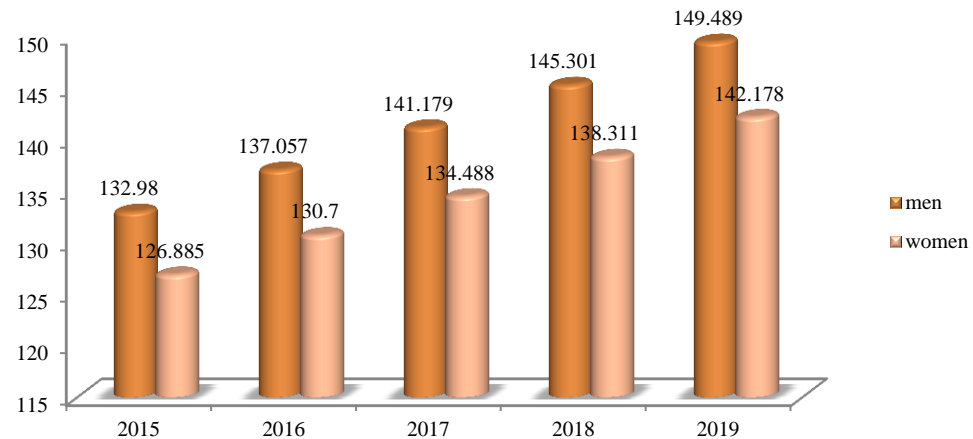
### **Data Collection and Data Analysis Techniques**

Data collection was done with Desk Study, which is collecting data and information through study and analysis of data and information using secondary data, either in the form of reports, references or maps (Hadi et al., 2002). The data used in this study are secondary data and literature studies. Secondary data related to forest and land fires as well as socio-economic data for the City of Palangkaraya. Quantitative data is displayed in tables as supporting material for the analysis carried out. The analysis was carried out descriptively by relying on the criticality of thinking on the data and information collected.

## **3. Result And Discussion**

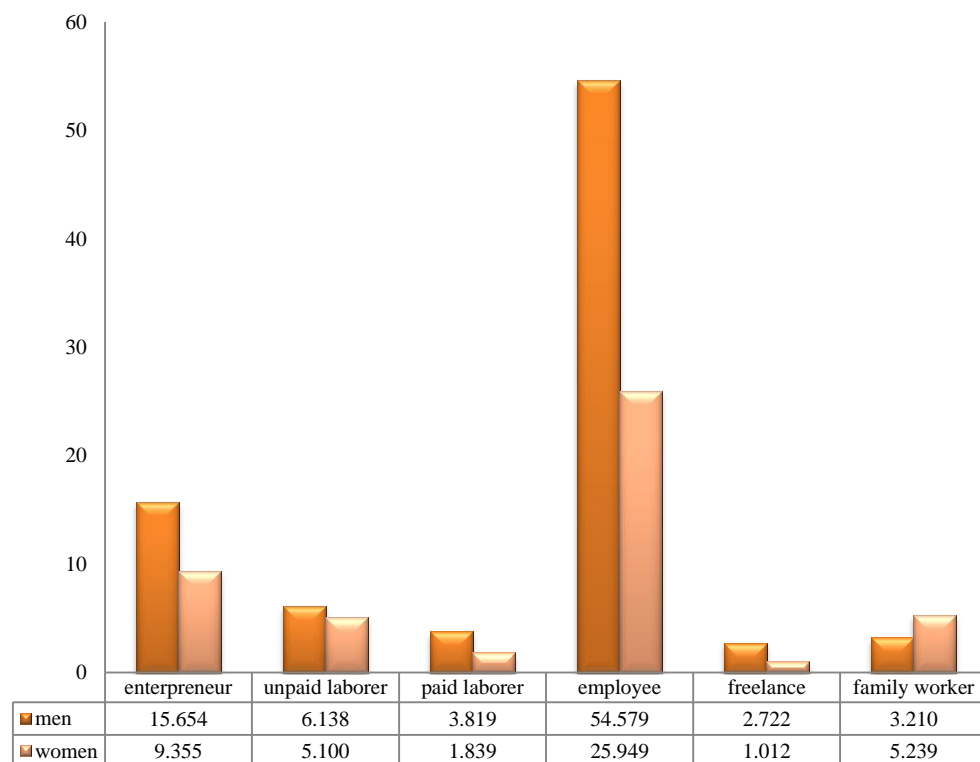
### **Social and Economic Overview**

Based on the age composition, Palangkaraya City is dominated by people of productive age (15-64 years). The composition of the population of productive age continues to increase and reaches 72.70 percent in 2019. The population represents the rate of population growth each year based on gender. The population growth in Palangkaraya City continues to increase every year. The population is both the subject and the object of development. As the subject of development, the population must be nurtured and increased in capacity so that it can become a driving force for development. The increase in the population of an area must of course be followed by everything related to population issues such as social, economic, security and environmental issues (Sari et al., 2016). For more details, the population growth rate in Palangkaraya City can be seen. in Figure 2.

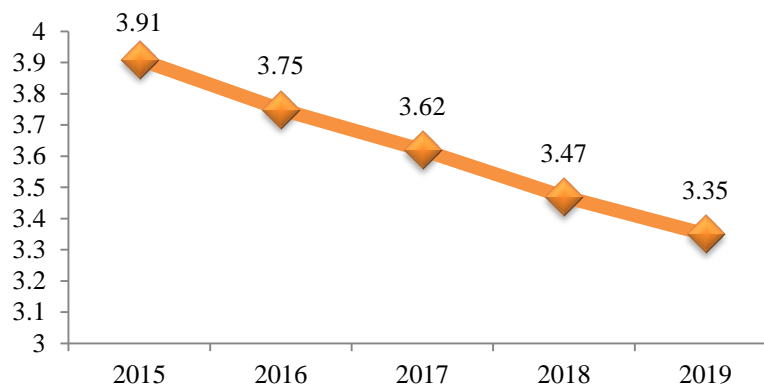


**Figure 2. Graph of the population of Palangkaraya City**

The livelihoods of the people of Palangkaraya City consist of 7 categories and in terms of the percentage of poverty there is a decreasing trend, which is presented in Figure 4. The distribution of community livelihoods by sex is presented in Figure 3. In Figure 3 it can be seen that women in Palangkaraya City have an important role in fulfilling their and family's needs. So far, the role of the breadwinner is identical to that of men, while women are synonymous with domestic roles (Block, Croft, Souza, & Schmader, 2019; Wahid and Lancia, 2018).



**Figure 3. Graph of distribution of the main employment status of the people of Palangkaraya City in 2019**



**Figure 4. Graph of poverty trend in Palangkaraya City in 2020**

Figure 4 shows the percentage level of poverty in Palangkaraya City that some people are still trying to live properly. This poverty level greatly affects the obligation of men and women to leave in any condition to meet their daily needs. This is in line with what Ulya and Yunardy (2006) stated that socially, households are the institutions most affected by land and forest fires. From a social and economic perspective, women in Palangkaraya City are at great risk of being affected by land and forest fires, especially women who are still living below the poverty line and also in rural areas, this is exacerbated by a lack of income to meet their needs.

### **Gender Roles in Facing Land and Forest Fire Disasters**

The Government of the Republic of Indonesia issued Presidential Instruction Number 9 of 2000 concerning Gender Mainstreaming in National Development. Mainstreaming (mainstream) gender strategy includes gender in planning to evaluation of national development policies and programs. Women are often recognized as a vulnerable group in the emergency response and recovery phases (Ginige et al., 2014) however, women have a lot of capacities and abilities for disaster management that must be identified and used to build more resilient communities (Enarson, 2012). as part of the community it is also entitled to provide advice and input as well as actions in disaster situations. The role and participation of women is very useful because gender issues are often difficult problems to overcome in times of disaster.

The role women is the involvement and participation of women in an activity actively and voluntarily. The role in this research is the involvement of women in land fire activities which include technical aspects of prevention, counseling and training. In Palangkaraya City, women's involvement in efforts to prevent and make decisions on land fire disasters is minimal, this is due to the perception that women lack knowledge due to limited information and technology in preventing land and forest fires. Based on the RPJMD of Palangkaraya City for 2018-2023, the program and prevention of land and forest fire in Palangkaraya City has only reached the target of around 40% and it is estimated that in 2023 it will only reach 70%, this showed that the Palangkaraya City government continues to make prevention efforts by increasing the capacity of the community in increasing knowledge about prevention and mitigation of land and forest fires. The land and

forest fires that occurred in Palangkaraya City in 2019 reached 1,950 ha, which is one of the areas worst hit by land fires that occurred in Central Kalimantan Province. The impact of the land and forest fires has resulted in various economic, social and public health losses and some of the communities affected by the disaster are women.

Women have an important role when land and forest fires occur, because in addition to continuing to carry out their duties and functions in the family, they also often act as the family and the main breadwinners. Ebaar and Meilitina (2020) in their research state that the role of women is important for the environment. This is also supported by the opinion of Astuti (2012) that women's awareness of natural exploitation makes them rise to save the environment. It is hoped that the involvement of women and men in forest and land management can increase knowledge, both directly and indirectly. This can occur through the distribution of roles in forest management activities (Rahmawati and Sunito, 2013). Women have a significant share in forest preservation, food security, sustainability of biological resources and various other activities related to forests with local wisdom, so that forests remain sustainable. The involvement of women in natural resource management and giving them an equal role in solving environmental problems is one of the wise strategies in this development. Not only that, giving women a clear understanding of what deforestation and forest degradation is, will broaden their knowledge of environmental management (Scorviana and Setiadi, 2018).

Increasing the capacity of women in disaster risk reduction is the key to the effective role of women in disaster risk reduction efforts. In general, the strategy that can be carried out is to build coordination and cooperation among women's organizations in carrying out disaster risk reduction efforts for women. In addition, the government must involve and accommodate the interests of women in all phases of disasters (pre, during and post-disaster). The resilience of women in disasters includes increasing women's abilities in leadership in the community from social, political and economic aspects (Moreno and Shaw, 2018). Providing education on the capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters can influence behavior (Manganas et al., 2018) providing knowledge regarding disaster risk and management will reduce vulnerability to women and in the long run will build resilience in the community. It is hoped that the role of women in preventing forest and land fires can change the habits of the community to be more active in participating in preventing fires, especially on land which is used as a place for planting crops. To support the success of forest and land fire mitigation, the participation of men and women around them is needed because success is not only the role of the government but very much depends on the community itself.

#### **4. Conclusion**

1. Land and forest fires that occurred in Palangkaraya City greatly affected the social and economic life as well as the health of women.
2. The role of women is very important when it is realized that it can reduce the risk of disasters and strengthen women's resilience when they have to face land and forest fires. Involving women in the form of mitigation and decision-making as well as increasing knowledge is an important instrument in reducing victims from land and forest fires disasters.

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