

Bali Sruti Strategy in Addressing Gender Inequality in Bali

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INDEXING	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Keyword 1: Gender inequality Keyword 2: Bali Sruti Keyword 3: Women's empowerment Keyword 4: Women's School Keyword 5: Political participation	This article examines the strategies implemented by Bali Sruti as a civil society organization focused on women's empowerment and gender equality in Bali. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to explore Bali Sruti's strategies for addressing gender inequality in Bali. Data collection techniques are carried out through literature studies, interviews, and participatory observations of activities organized by Bali Sruti, such as training, public campaigns, and policy advocacy. This study uses a qualitative method to explore how Bali Sruti uses local cultural values to fight gender inequality through advocacy, education, community support, and partnerships at national and international levels. The results showed that the Bali Sruti strategies have a positive contribution to increasing the awareness and participation of Balinese women. The efforts were carried out through legal campaigns and the establishment of female schools where vulnerable women, such as female heads of family, women with disabilities, women with low income, and victims of sexual violence, were given a forum to share and provide an understanding that they have the right to speak. The results of this study provide valuable insights for civil society organizations and policymakers, encouraging the adoption of community-based strategies to promote gender equality within culturally traditional communities.

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INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality remains a complex and multidimensional issue across various parts of the world, including Indonesia. Inequality is not only reflected in the limited participation of women in the public sector but also embedded in social, cultural, legal, and economic structures that tend to place women in the position of subordinates. Bali, as one of the provinces that is rich in culture and traditions, faces challenges in the issue of gender equality. Despite being renowned for its strong artistic values, the social reality reveals the persistent dominance of patriarchal structures in everyday Balinese life. Within the context of Balinese customary and cultural systems, gender disparities are often evident in the division of roles, inheritance rights, participation in traditional ceremonies, and decision-making processes within families and communities (Dwipayana, Tantri, & Sudiana, 2024).

The prevailing patrilineal tradition in Bali positions men as the primary heirs and custodians of customary responsibilities, while women are often regarded as "guests" in their parental homes, as they are expected to join their husbands' households after marriage. Women are typically burdened with domestic duties, including household chores and participation in ceremonial obligations, whereas men retain greater authority in decision-making and property ownership (Widayani & Hartati, 2014). Consequently, most Balinese

families seek to have at least one son to carry on the family lineage, often placing less emphasis on the education of daughters. Instead, girls are expected to acquire domestic skills to prepare them for serving their husbands upon marriage. This deeply entrenched cultural norm significantly limits women's access to economic and social resources and further constrains their participation in public life (Dewi & Tobing, 2025).

Numerous studies reveal that gender-based discrimination in Bali manifests not only within households and customary legal systems but also through public policies that frequently lack gender sensitivity. The persistence of patriarchal cultural norms further inhibits women's political participation, as evidenced by their underrepresentation in political offices, including legislative bodies (Wayan & Subanda, 2020). While Indonesia has ratified several national regulations in support of gender equality—most notably Law No. 7 of 1984 on the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)—the implementation of such policies at the local level often faces cultural resistance and limited public awareness regarding the significance of gender equality (Rahayu, 2012).

Amidst these challenges, several civil society organizations in Bali have emerged as agents of change, striving to foster social transformation toward a more gender-equitable society. Bali Sruti is a non-governmental organization dedicated to women's empowerment and the advocacy of women's rights in Bali. Founded by a collective of female activists, Bali Sruti is committed to advancing gender justice through participatory methods, critical education, capacity building, and dialogues that integrate cultural values with human rights principles. The organization maintains that sustainable social change requires a profound understanding of local cultural contexts and grassroots community organizing. As such, its strategies are not limited to confronting discriminatory cultural norms but also aim to find common ground between Balinese cultural traditions and the principles of gender equality and justice. In practice, Bali Sruti carries out programs focused on increasing public awareness, enhancing women's economic capacities, delivering gender education, training rural women in leadership, and advocating for more inclusive policy frameworks. These efforts are exemplified by initiatives such as the Sekolah Perempuan Srikandi (Village Women's School) (Bali Sruti, 2025).

The strategies implemented by Bali Sruti have not only contributed to transforming public perceptions of women's roles but have also expanded opportunities for Balinese women to engage more actively in decision-making processes—both within communities and in local governance structures. In recent years, an increasing number of Balinese women have assumed leadership roles as community organizers, entrepreneurs, activists, and even members of local legislative bodies, largely due to the support and training provided by organizations such as Bali Sruti. Nevertheless, the pursuit of gender equality in Bali continues to encounter substantial obstacles, including limited resources, cultural resistance, conservative opposition, and inadequate legal protections for women affected by violence. Within this context, it is essential to analyze and document Bali Sruti's strategies as a potential model for other organizations working toward gender justice at both local and national levels (Bali Sruti, 2025).

Based on this background, this study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the strategies developed and implemented by Bali Sruti to address gender inequality in Bali. The analysis focuses on the cultural approaches utilized, the empowerment programs conducted, and the challenges and opportunities encountered during implementation. The findings of

this study are expected to contribute to the theoretical and practical development of gender equality in Indonesia and serve as a reference for policymakers and social development practitioners in designing gender-sensitive and culturally grounded programs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To understand Bali Sruti's strategies in addressing gender inequality, a conceptual framework is needed that encompasses theories of gender, equality, local culture, and the role of civil society organizations in social development. Several key literatures serve as the foundation for this study, including:

The Concept of Gender Equality in Intersectional Feminism

Intersectional feminism posits that gender inequality cannot be fully understood through a single lens; rather, it must be examined as the intersection of multiple social identities and power structures, including race, class, religion, culture, ethnicity, gender, and geographic location. Gender refers to the social and cultural construction of roles, responsibilities, rights, and behaviors attributed to men and women. In contrast to biological sex, which is considered fixed, gender is dynamic, fluid, and shaped by societal structures and cultural norms. Gender inequality emerges when these structures and norms systematically place one gender—primarily women—in a position of disadvantage (Fakih, 2008).

From the perspective of intersectional feminism, gender equality is not merely about granting equal rights to men and women but involves dismantling intersecting systems of injustice that mutually reinforce the oppression of specific groups. This concept was first introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) within the context of American legal studies to explain how Black women experience multiple layers of discrimination due to the intersection of race and gender. In the broader framework of global feminism, intersectionality has evolved into an analytical tool that acknowledges women's diverse experiences shaped by additional social identities such as class, ethnicity, religion, and geographic location (Crenshaw, 1991; Collins, 2000).

Intersectional feminism rejects the homogeneous and universal assumptions often present in Western feminist discourses, as critiqued by Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2003), which frequently overlook the lived realities of women in the Global South. Accordingly, gender equality, as conceptualized through intersectional feminism, pertains to structural justice—specifically, the establishment of social, economic, and political systems that recognize differences in identity and dismantle oppressive hierarchies. This approach is especially pertinent for analyzing gender inequality in complex societies such as Bali, where patriarchal culture, customary law, and globalization intersect to produce unique forms of injustice for Balinese women.

Gender inequality experienced by Balinese women cannot be understood merely as a matter of differing roles between men and women, but rather as the result of intersecting power structures, including patriarchal customs, social class, and global economic forces. In Balinese customary systems, for instance, the Purusa principle places men as the carriers of lineage and inheritors of customary rights, while women are considered to have "left" their families upon marriage—thus losing inheritance rights and participation in customary forums (Robinson, 2009). This view is further legitimized by cultural and religious norms that reinforce women's subordinate position in both social and spiritual life. Additionally, in

Bali's tourism-dominated economy, women are often employed in informal, low-wage, and unprotected roles—such as in restaurants, hotels, or domestic work—which exacerbates their economic vulnerability. Intersectional feminism helps to reveal how these multiple structures are interwoven and mutually reinforcing in sustaining systemic injustice (Suacana, 2016).

Civil Society Organizations and Transnational Advocacy Networks

In an increasingly multipolar world, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are no longer regarded as merely supplementary actors but as significant transnational agents capable of influencing normative change, policy advocacy, and exerting pressure on states and international institutions. Civil society actors—including NGOs, advocacy groups, religious communities, women's organizations, and grassroots networks—play a crucial role in shaping both global dynamics and domestic policies. As non-state actors, CSOs engage in normative advocacy, conflict mediation, oversight of power, and the empowerment of civil society (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

CSOs operate not only at the local level but also establish transnational connections to address global issues such as human rights, gender equality, climate change, and economic justice. This framework recognizes that CSOs possess the capacity to shape international norms, hold governments accountable to global commitments (such as CEDAW and the SDGs), and bridge the gap between civil society and formal institutions. Through transnational networks, CSOs form cross-border alliances advocating for specific issues—such as women's rights, social justice, and gender equality—employing strategies including information dissemination, public opinion mobilization, and political pressure on policymakers (Risse, Ropp, & Sikkink, 1999). Furthermore, CSOs act as “norm entrepreneurs,” agents of change who introduce new values into the international system. Consequently, the Role of CSO Theory broadens the understanding of international relations as a complex arena shaped not only by military power and state interests but also by the voices of civil society advocating universal values across borders.

To effectively fulfill these roles, CSOs adopt diverse strategies encompassing advocacy, policy influence, and social mobilization across local to transnational levels. According to Keck and Sikkink (1998), these strategies form what they define as Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs), which leverage the power of information, symbols, and solidarity to drive change. In the context of gender equality, CSOs play a vital role in advocating for women's rights, particularly in regions where formal institutions have yet to secure equality. Edwards (2009) highlights that CSOs serve as intermediaries between society and the state and are key actors in community empowerment and public policy advocacy. They enhance public awareness, offer alternative educational resources, and build networks to strengthen social movements.

Within community empowerment and participation strategies, CSOs work directly with grassroots communities to enhance their capacity to advocate for just rights and policies. The informational strategy involves gathering, producing, and disseminating information that government institutions may withhold or that is inaccessible to the public. This information is often used to expose rights violations, injustices, or public policy failures. The leverage strategy (external pressure) involves limited direct access to policymakers, prompting CSOs to build international alliances to pressure states via media, donor agencies, or international organizations (the boomerang pattern). Symbolic strategies employ symbols, narratives, or visual representations to evoke public emotions and build empathy for vulnerable groups—for instance, social media campaigns featuring testimonies of violence survivors,

documentaries about Indigenous women, or cultural rituals used in gender advocacy. Finally, accountability strategies see CSOs as public watchdogs who demand the fulfillment of state promises and commitments to international agreements such as CEDAW, the SDGs, or human rights conventions.

In the context of Bali, the presence of CSOs such as Bali Sruti highlights the importance of local initiatives in addressing gender disparities heavily influenced by customary and religious norms. CSO strategies often involve cross-sector collaboration, with customary leaders, religious figures, academics, and local governments, to achieve simultaneous structural and cultural transformation. A crucial approach to gender transformation within traditional societies is the use of local culture-based strategies. According to Abidin et al. (2023), culturally grounded social change strategies tend to be more effective as they respect local contexts and value systems. In this regard, local narratives and cultural symbols are not seen as obstacles but as mediums for social transformation. Therefore, advocacy strategies that adopt local cultural narratives have greater potential for acceptance and sustainability compared to confrontational approaches or those imposing external values.

RESEARCH METHOD

To gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies employed by Bali Sruti in addressing gender inequality in Bali, this study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach, with a case study design as its primary method. The case study approach was selected because the research centers on a single organization—Bali Sruti—which possesses distinctive characteristics and is highly relevant to the issue under investigation. This approach facilitates a comprehensive analysis of the organization's strategies, internal dynamics, and the social and cultural contexts that shape Bali Sruti's advocacy efforts (Dawson, 2007).

The study was conducted in Bali Province, with a primary focus on Bali Sruti's operational areas, including Denpasar, Gianyar, and Karangasem, where the organization actively implements women's empowerment programs. Research participants comprised activists and staff members of Bali Sruti, women beneficiaries from the communities, customary and community leaders collaborating with Bali Sruti, as well as representatives from local government involved in joint programs.

Data collection was conducted through interviews with key informants, including the founders of Bali Sruti, program staff, and women beneficiaries. In addition, participatory observation was employed, with the researcher attending several Bali Sruti activities, such as seminars and focus group discussions. To further complement and enrich the primary data obtained from interviews and observations, organizational documents, activity reports, training modules, internal publications, and relevant media archives were also collected.

The collected data were then reduced, categorized, and filtered to extract information relevant to the research focus. Subsequently, patterns, relationships among variables, and interpretations of the underlying meanings within the data were analyzed. The findings are presented in the form of narratives and thematic matrices. To ensure the validity of the data, the researcher employed source triangulation by cross-verifying information from multiple sources (interviews, observations, and documents) and conducted member checking with informants to confirm the accuracy and interpretation of the data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Gender Inequality in Balinese Patriarchal Culture

The patriarchal culture in Bali, reflected in the patrilineal system (*purusa*) and the dominance of customary religious structures, is a primary cause of gender inequality across various aspects of Balinese women's lives. The *purusa* system affirms male dominance as the primary heir and controller of family assets, while women are regarded as entities who "leave" the lineage after marriage. This paradigm is reinforced by customary norms that grant only male children roles in ritual ceremonies, inheritance, and decision-making within customary villages, resulting in women losing access to social power symbols and economic structures (Ayu et al., 2023). For instance, in some communities, women who marry outside their village often lose land rights and lack voting rights in customary meetings. Furthermore, women frequently become victims of gender-based violence, which is often concealed to protect the reputation of the family or village.

This inequality stems not only from customary structures but is also reinforced by social and religious norms that emphasize women's obedience to men, whether as husbands or customary leaders. Consequently, women are often reluctant to speak out or participate in decision-making spaces. As a result, Balinese women face a double burden—or, as identified by Suyadnya (2009) and Nakatani (2003), a triple role: they are responsible not only for domestic work and customary rituals but also for economic tasks in the tourism or informal agricultural sectors, without structural recognition or adequate compensation (Shantika, 2024). For example, within the *subak* system, although women play important roles in rituals and environmental maintenance (ecofeminism), they remain marginalized from decision-making processes, illustrating a contradiction between symbolic appreciation and actual power.

In Bali's tourism sector, the backbone of the local economy, women dominate the workforce but are often confined to informal, vulnerable jobs with low wages and minimal legal and social protections (Shantika, 2024). Adnyani (2023) also notes the absence of gender mainstreaming policies in the tourism industry, which reinforces women's subordinate position and perpetuates stereotypes that women are suited only for roles as servers or visual entertainers. Meanwhile, Wardani and Yunanto (2022) reveal a paradox in Hindu teachings, which doctrinally emphasize balance (*purusha-pradana*) yet are frequently ignored in patriarchal customary practices. This results in structural inconsistencies, where increased educational access for women is not matched by opportunities for formal representation, particularly in customary and local political spheres.

Inequality in women's rights is also evident in local politics. Wayan and Nyoman (2020) highlight that patriarchal culture remains the main obstacle to women's representation in the Gianyar regional parliament. While factors such as education and resources are relevant, they are not the primary causes. Similarly, Parmiti (2023) shows that customary forums and women's political education are still dominated by patriarchal norms, which limit women's practical participation. Regarding bodily autonomy and reproduction, Balinese women face subordination. Chandra and Susanti's (2020) study on premarital pregnancy highlights how stigma and patriarchal power structures result in women being doubly victimized—both morally and socially—while men face no comparable penalties.

Despite these challenges, signs of change and resistance have begun to emerge. Some Balinese women are starting to demand change, both culturally and economically. A study by Widayani and Hartati (2022) shows that Balinese women's perceptions of gender justice

are greatly influenced by their level of education, family upbringing, and social support. Those who are active as activists and have access to information tend to view patriarchal culture as irrelevant and call for change. In the cultural sphere, feminist artists like Citra Sasmita practice resistance through their work by reclaiming female symbols in traditional art and exploring alternative narratives that empower women (Rusmalia, 2024).

Bali Sruti's Strategy to Address Gender Inequality

Bali Sruti is a civil society organization established in November 2003, before Indonesia's 2004 general elections. This non-governmental organization was founded by three prominent Balinese women: Luh Riniti Rahayu, Sita Thamar van Bemmelen, and Kusumawati. Bali Sruti was the first women's organization to emerge in Bali after the reform era, driven by concerns over the low representation of women in politics. Most of its members come from professional and intellectual backgrounds, including lawyers, academics, journalists, doctors, and election organizers. Membership in the organization is flexible and non-binding (Bali Sruti, 2023).

Their main strategies revolve around four pillars: political advocacy, legal socialization, community-based empowerment, and coalition-building and networking. Bali Sruti views political empowerment as the foundational step toward structural change. The organization's initial flagship programs focused on empowering women in politics, addressing the historically low participation of women in Bali's political arena. The founders argued that women's participation is essential to transforming the existing system into a more gender-just one. Aware of the barriers posed by patriarchal culture to women's representation, they consistently trained and mentored female legislative candidates. Training included helping women understand the electoral system, connecting them with election organizers, and supporting their campaigns. Additionally, Bali Sruti encourages women to take on roles as election organizers. Collaborations with political parties and electoral bodies have enabled women to better grasp the nomination process, campaigning, and legislative oversight. Thanks to these efforts, women's representation in Bali's legislature increased to 15% in the 2019 elections (Amirah, 2024). However, Bali Sruti acknowledges that obstacles remain; although the percentage of female candidates increased, not all were elected, highlighting the ongoing need to strengthen affirmative political actions.

Furthermore, to dismantle legal barriers, Bali Sruti actively conducts campaigns and legal education on women's rights, focusing on inheritance rights, domestic violence laws (KDRT), and sexual violence (Law No. 12 of 2022 on the Elimination of Sexual Violence Crimes). A key initiative involves raising awareness about inheritance laws that restore women's rights, which had been stripped away during the Dutch colonial era. Through formal training sessions for customary leaders (Majelis Desa Pakraman), mass media outreach, and public engagement, Bali Sruti has reached hundreds of villages and thousands of community members. For example, the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign (November 25–December 10, 2023) featured public discussions with law enforcement officials and related agencies, as well as dissemination of information about the Sexual Violence Law through broadcast and social media, significantly increasing public awareness of available legal protections (Bali Sruti & Fishum UNR, 2023).

Bali Sruti also draws on local wisdom, such as *Tat Twam Asi* and *Rwa Bhineda*, to frame gender equality within the values of harmony and balance in Balinese culture. This approach fosters a grassroots women's movement through empowerment. The strategy was

developed by establishing the *Srikandi Women's School* as a platform to strengthen women's critical awareness, skills, and leadership. This community-based inclusion program began in 2021 in suburban villages of Denpasar, including Dauh Puri Kangin and Dauh Puri Kaja (Sari, 2022). Its goal is to build networks of solidarity, self-empowerment, and rights awareness among low-income women, female heads of households, survivors of sexual violence, and women with disabilities. The program encourages them to voice their opinions in village deliberations, manage identity documents (ID cards, marriage certificates), access social security, BPJS (social health insurance), and healthcare services, and establish Complaint Posts addressing violence and child marriage (KemenPPPA, 2025). Consequently, marginalized women are not only beneficiaries but also active participants in community development (Bali Sruti, 2023). Furthermore, the Complaint Posts established by the Women's School provide services to survivors of violence and child marriage and assist women and other marginalized groups in obtaining legal identity documents needed to access basic government services (Tribun Bali, 2025).

Furthermore, Bali Sruti facilitates both national and international collaborations. In partnership with the KAPAL Women's Institute and the Australian Embassy, Bali Sruti promotes the INCLUSION program (Australia–Indonesia Partnership Towards an Inclusive Society). This program serves as a strategic platform to strengthen cross-sectoral synergy and ensure that program implementation aligns with national policy directions. INCLUSION is organized into four technical working groups that function as coordination and communication forums among INCLUSION partners and government ministries/agencies. Working Group I focuses on access to services; Working Group II on protection from violence; Working Group III on economic recovery and livelihoods; and Working Group IV on inclusive participation in development. Through these technical coordination meetings, all stakeholders are expected to develop a shared understanding of priority strategies to enhance the implementation of the INCLUSION program. Their input serves as a vital foundation to build stronger synergy, broaden the program's impact, and ensure that no group is left behind in Indonesia's development process (Inklusi, 2025).

Additional support was evident in December 2024 when Stephanie Copus Campbell, the Australian Ambassador for Gender Equality, visited the Women's School in Bali. She praised the transformation experienced by Balinese women, highlighting their increased confidence, organizational skills, and local advocacy efforts aimed at ending harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and child marriage. Foreign funding has also been used to develop women's micro-enterprises and strengthen their economic independence (KemenPPPA, 2025).

Bali Sruti's strategy addresses the roots of patriarchal culture through cross-sector dialogues involving customary leaders, legal authorities, religious figures, and the media. These discussion forums engage the Majelis Desa Pakraman (Customary Village Council), judges, and Legal Aid Institutions, with a focus on harmonizing customary law and national law concerning women's rights—particularly in matters of inheritance, marriage, and divorce. This approach underscores that the values of equality are already embedded in the Manawa Dharmasastra scripture, which states, “Where women are respected, the gods are pleased,” and that current inequalities stem from cultural practices rather than religious doctrine (Inklusi, 2025; KemenPPPA, 2025).

Overall, Bali Sruti's strategy is holistic, integrating systemic advocacy (both political and legal), public education, inclusive community support, cultural advocacy, and multi-level

cooperation at national and international levels. This comprehensive approach engages not only policymakers and officials but also women at the grassroots, facilitating gradual and far-reaching change. From increased political representation and legal reforms to the strengthening of women's solidarity in villages, Bali Sruti has successfully established a sustainable network of empowerment. As a result, the organization addresses gender inequality not only at the institutional level but also fosters a transformative shift in societal mindsets, bringing Bali closer to the realization of genuine gender equality.

The impact of Bali Sruti's strategy is evident in the increased involvement of women in community activities, greater public awareness of gender issues, and the development of more gender-responsive village policies. Interviews with several community leaders indicate a notable shift in attitudes toward women, who are increasingly recognized as capable leaders and decision-makers. For instance, in the villages of Dauh Puri Kangin and Dauh Puri Kaja, following several years of Bali Sruti's programs, women have begun participating in customary village meetings, with some even assuming leadership roles within the banjar (community association). This illustrates that strategies integrating empowerment with cultural sensitivity can foster sustainable change.

Despite these positive outcomes, Bali Sruti continues to face significant challenges, notably cultural resistance. Certain customary leaders and conservative community members still oppose changes in gender roles, often citing "violations of tradition." Such resistance frequently obstructs structural reforms at the village level. Moreover, formal support remains limited; although progress has been made, local government policies still fall short in effectively supporting women, particularly regarding customary law.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that gender inequality in Bali arises not only from structural factors but is also deeply shaped by patriarchal social and cultural norms. In a society where tradition and customary law are highly revered, efforts to promote gender equality face complex and multi-layered challenges. Bali Sruti, a civil society organization dedicated to women's empowerment, has developed and implemented strategies that are both advocative and culturally grounded at the community level. Their approach combines gender awareness education rooted in local cultural values, women's economic empowerment, policy advocacy through dialogue with customary and governmental leaders, and the cultivation of national and international coalitions and networks.

Bali Sruti's success lies in its ability to position gender equality not as an external or foreign concept, but as an intrinsic component of Balinese philosophical values such as *Tat Twam Asi*, *Tri Hita Karana*, and *Rwa Bhineda*. By anchoring its advocacy in these cultural principles, the organization fosters broader societal acceptance of change, as the message aligns with deeply held local beliefs rather than challenging cultural identity. Nonetheless, Bali Sruti continues to face considerable challenges, including cultural resistance, limited resources, and inadequate policy support. Despite these constraints, its programs have yielded tangible outcomes, most notably in enhancing gender awareness and increasing women's participation at the grassroots level. Overall, Bali Sruti's approach presents a promising model for advancing gender equality through culturally grounded strategies in other regions with similar socio-cultural contexts.

SUGGESTION

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, several recommendations can be proposed. For civil society organizations, the culturally grounded approach implemented by Bali Sruti should be considered for replication, with necessary adaptations to suit the specific cultural contexts of other regions. Additionally, there is a need to strengthen internal capacities in areas such as program documentation and impact monitoring, so that outcomes can be systematically measured and used as a foundation for future program development. For local governments, explicit policies are needed to recognize and protect women's rights within customary systems, including inheritance rights and participation in village decision-making processes. Furthermore, collaboration between local authorities and civil society organizations must be enhanced, particularly in the planning and implementation of gender-responsive development initiatives.

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