

Gender Equality in Islamic Perspectives on North Luwu Regional Policy

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Abstract: Gender-based social justice and Islamic values are important foundations for inclusive and equitable regional development. This study aims to analyze the policies of the North Luwu Regency Government, South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia, under the leadership of Regent Andi Abdullah Rahim in promoting gender-based social justice through the Women and Child-Friendly Village (Desa Ramah Perempuan dan Peduli Anak - DRPPA) program in Malimbu Village, Sabbang District. Using a qualitative approach and case study methodology, data were collected through interviews, field observations, and analysis of local policy documents. The findings indicate that the DRPPA policy integrates Rawlsian social justice (specifically the principle of difference) with Islamic values such as *'adl* (justice), *musawah* (equality), and *rahmah* (compassion). This program has improved women's access to economic empowerment, social participation, and decision-making. Its effectiveness is supported by trans-formational leadership, collaboration, and policy commitment. This study shows that the DRPPA model can serve as a practical guide for gender-responsive and inclusive regional development policies.

Keywords: gender; Islamic values; social justice

Abstrak: Keadilan sosial berbasis gender dan nilai-nilai Islam merupakan landasan penting bagi pembangunan daerah yang inklusif dan adil. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kebijakan Pemerintah Kabupaten Luwu Utara, Provinsi Sulawesi Selatan, Indonesia, di bawah kepemimpinan Bupati Andi Abdullah Rahim dalam mempromosikan keadilan sosial berbasis gender melalui program Desa Ramah Perempuan dan Peduli Anak (DRPPA) di Desa Malimbu, Kecamatan Sabbang. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan studi kasus, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi lapangan, dan analisis dokumen kebijakan lokal. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kebijakan DRPPA mengintegrasikan keadilan sosial ala Rawls (khususnya prinsip perbedaan) dengan nilai-nilai Islam seperti *'adl* (keadilan), *musawah* (kesetaraan), dan *rahmah* (belas kasih). Program ini telah meningkatkan akses perempuan terhadap pemberdayaan ekonomi, partisipasi sosial, dan pengambilan keputusan. Efektivitasnya didukung oleh kepemimpinan transformasional, kolaborasi, dan komitmen kebijakan. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa model DRPPA dapat berfungsi sebagai acuan praktis bagi kebijakan pembangunan daerah yang responsif gender dan inklusif.

Kata Kunci: gender; nilai-nilai Islami; keadilan sosial

A. Introduction

Social justice is a fundamental ideal of Indonesia's national development as enshrined in Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, which includes economic, gender, and religious values. In North Luwu Regency, South Sulawesi, efforts to realize social justice face complexity due to the influence of social structures, local culture, and the dominance of Islamic values in people's lives.¹ The issue of gender justice is still a major challenge in Indonesia, including in areas with strong traditional and religious values, where discrimination against women in access to education, health, and economic opportunities is still common. Islam as the majority religion in North Luwu teaches the principles of justice and equality of rights, but its application is often hampered by diverse interpretations and deep-rooted patriarchal culture, as seen in the heritage practices of the Bugis-Luwu community which tend to harm women even though Islamic law normatively guarantees their inheritance rights. This creates a gap between normative law and social practice that requires responsive public policy intervention.²

The Regent as a regional leader has the authority to formulate and implement policies that support social justice, and the leadership of the Regent of North Luwu has encouraged various innovative programs such as women's economic empowerment, increased access to education, gender-based anti-violence campaigns, and collaborations with religious organizations such as Muslimat and Fatayat NU. However, the biggest challenge remains in the deep-seated change in patriarchal mindset and culture, as well as resistance from conservative groups. Therefore, this study is important to understand in depth how regional policies in North Luwu integrate gender equality in an Islamic perspective, as well as the extent to which these policies are able to address gender inequality without ignoring the local religious and cultural values embraced by the community. Therefore, the research problem raised in this study is about how gender equality in an Islamic perspective is implemented in

¹ Huswatun Hasanah and Taufik Hidayatulloh, "Keadilan Sosial di Indonesia Ditinjau dalam Perspektif Nurcholish Madjid," *Jurnal Ilmiah Falsafah: Jurnal Kajian Filsafat, Teologi dan Humaniora* 10, no. 2 (2024): 76–94, <https://doi.org/10.37567/jif.v10i2.2819>.

² Ashya Ravika et al., "Pengaruh Kesetaraan Gender terhadap Pertumbuhan Ekonomi Studi Kasus Implementasi SDGs Kelima di Indonesia," *Parahyangan Economic Development Review* 3, no. 2 (2025): 164–83, <https://doi.org/10.26593/gqxpvt62>.

the regional policy of North Luwu Regency, and what are the supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of the policy.

In addition, there are several previous studies that have examined the issue of gender equality in the perspective of Islam and public policy, which is the basis for this research. First, Anita Marwing's research discusses the relationship between Islamic legal texts and the concept of gender equality, showing that the basic principles of sharia in the Qur'an and hadith provide broad opportunities for women to obtain socially, economically, and politically just rights, emphasizing that gender inequality in Muslim society does not originate from Islam itself but from the process of interpretation influenced by patriarchal culture. Marwing highlighted the importance of the *maqashid al-sharia* approach, especially the protection of human dignity (*hifz al-nafs*), justice (*al-'adl*), and the public interest (*maslahah*) to reinterpret laws related to women.³

Second, Helmi Kamal researched how gender inequality is reproduced through Arabic textbooks in Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, finding that gender representation is highly unbalanced and biased, with women portrayed in domestic roles while men are portrayed as public figures, so curriculum reform and teacher training are essential.⁴

This study uses a theoretical framework that integrates three main approaches. First, the theory of gender equality in an Islamic perspective, which refers to Anita Marwing's thought⁵ that Islam fundamentally supports gender equality as reflected in Qur'anic verses such as QS. al-Nisā: 1 and QS. al-Ḥujurāt: 13, as well as the *maqashid al-sharia* approach that emphasizes the protection of human dignity (*hifz al-nafs*), justice (*al-'adl*), and the public interest (*maṣlahah*) as the basis for gender-responsive legal interpretation. This theory asserts that gender inequality in Muslim societies stems from interpretations influenced by patriarchal culture, not from the Islamic text itself, so critical ijtihad and methodological reform are needed.⁶

³ Anita Marwing and Yunus Yunus, *Perempuan Islam dalam Berbagai Perspektif Politik, Pendidikan, Psikologi, Ekonomi, Sosial, Budaya* (Yogyakarta: Bintang Surya Madani, 2021), 60.

⁴ Helmi Kamal et al., "Women's Political Representation in Feminist Perspectives: Case Study in the Bone Regency People's Representative Council," *Sawwa: Jurnal Studi Gender* 18, no. 1 (2023): 121–46, <https://doi.org/10.21580/sa.v18i1.17967>.

⁵ Marwing and Yunus, *Perempuan Islam dalam Berbagai Perspektif Politik, Pendidikan, Psikologi, Ekonomi, Sosial, Budaya*, 60.

⁶ Jasser Auda, *Maqasid al-Shari'ah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach* (Herndon: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2010), 91.

Second, Gender and Development Theory (GAD), developed by Caroline Moser, emphasizes that gender inequality arises from unequal social constructions and power relations in the structure of society, thus requiring comprehensive structural interventions, rather than just legal or economic approaches. This theory emphasizes the importance of women's empowerment as a subject of development and active participation in decision-making, as well as recognizes that women are not a homogeneous group but have different practical and strategic needs based on class, ethnicity, and other social factors. In the context of regional policies, the GAD approach requires gender analysis at every stage of policy planning, implementation, and evaluation.⁷ Third, the thought that the principles of good governance such as accountability, transparency, rule of law, effectiveness, public participation, and public-oriented financial management are very much in accordance with the values of *al-fiqh*, namely *al-maslahah al-'ammah* (public interest), *istiqamah* (consistency), *amanah* (trust), *shura* (consultation), and *al-'adl* (justice).⁸

This theory shows that Islam and modern governance are not in conflict; on the contrary, Islamic values can strengthen moral legitimacy in public administration and increase public acceptance of policies deemed to be in line with their beliefs. The integration of these three theories results in a comprehensive analytical framework for researching regional policies in North Luwu, where gender-responsive policies are judged by their conformity with Islamic justice values (first theory), their effectiveness in overcoming structural inequalities (second theory), and the quality of public governance (third theory). This framework allows analysis not only of the content of the policy but also of the implementation process and its impact on social justice for women in North Luwu.

B. Method

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of gender equality from an

⁷ Caroline O. N. Moser, Annika Tornqvist, and Van Bron, *Mainstreaming Gender and Development in the World Bank: Progress and Recommendations* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1999), 70.

⁸ Ibnu Rusydi, "Good Governance according to Islamic Perspective," *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 4 (2023): 1001-7, <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v4i4.727>.

Islamic perspective in the regional policy of North Luwu Regency. The qualitative method was chosen because it allows the researcher to describe complex social realities holistically. In contrast, the case study approach allows an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon in a real context in North Luwu Regency, which has unique characteristics, with a long history of integration of Islamic values in the system of government through the *Pangngadereng* system, as well as an important achievement with the election of the first female regent in South Sulawesi. The research was carried out in North Luwu Regency, South Sulawesi Province, with a focus on several sub-districts such as Sabbang as the center of government and Malangke, which has become a research location related to the leadership of female village heads, as well as other sub-districts that have excellent programs related to women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming. The data sources in this study consist of primary data obtained through in-depth interviews with purposively selected informants including local government officials (Regent, Head of the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office, Head of Bappeda), administrators of women's religious organizations (Muslimat NU and Fatayat NU), community leaders and traditional leaders of Bugis-Luwu, religious leaders, and community beneficiaries of the program, and secondary data obtained from official documents such as Regional Regulation Number 11 of 2018 and Regent Regulation Number 41 of 2019 concerning the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming (Pengarusutamaan Gender or PUG), regional development planning documents, annual reports of local governments, statistical data on women's participation, as well as the results of previous research and relevant media reports. The data collection technique uses three main methods, namely semi-structured in-depth interviews with flexible interview guidelines to explore informants' understanding and experiences in depth, participatory observation where researchers are directly involved in activities related to gender equality policies such as coordination meetings, socialization of the Women-Friendly Village program, studies, and community social interactions, and documentation studies to collect and analyze Relevant policy documents, reports, and statistical data. The researcher acts as the main instrument, supported by supporting instruments in the form of interview guidelines, observation guidelines, field notes, audio recording devices, and cameras to document activities in the field. Data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman interactive model which consists of four main components, namely data collection carried out continuously during the research, data reduction through

the selection process, concentration, simplification, and transformation of rough data to identify relevant information, presentation of data in the form of a descriptive narrative structured based on the themes that emerge from the analysis, and conclusion, drawing and verification, in which Preliminary conclusions that are provisional will be verified through further data collection to ensure the validity of the findings. Data validity tests are carried out through triangulation of sources by comparing information from various sources such as government officials, religious organizations, and communities, triangulation methods by collecting data through interviews, observations, and documentation, observation diligence by conducting careful and continuous observations, extension of participation in the field to ensure data accuracy and build trust with informants, and peer checking through discussions with peers and supervisors to test the validity of interpretation and avoid subjectivity bias. With this method, it is hoped that the research can produce valid, credible, and comprehensive findings on how regional policies in North Luwu integrate gender equality with Islamic values, as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors of its implementation in the typical Bugis-Luwu socio-cultural context.

C. Results and Discussion

Policies Implemented by Bupal North Luwu in Improving Gender-Based Social Justice and Islamic Values in Sabbang District, North Luwu

Sabbang District, North Luwu Regency, South Sulawesi, is known as a religious area where the majority of the population is Muslim. This community upholds the values of social justice and cooperation (*gotong royong*) in their daily lives. According to BPS (Statistics Indonesia) data in 2023, most of the population works in agriculture, plantations, and small-scale trade, so this region is agrarian and dependent on natural resources.⁹

One of the villages that is the focus of this study is Malimbu Village. Geographically, Malimbu is located in hilly terrain with limited road access. Nevertheless, the village has great economic potential, especially in agriculture and plantations such as durian, palm oil, and cocoa, as well as local handicrafts.

⁹ BPS Kabupaten Luwu Utara, "Kecamatan Sabbang dalam Angka 2023," 2023, <https://luwuutarakab.bps.go.id/id/publication/2023/09/26/1241f49f8b5d5f5149489f8f/kecamatan-sabbang-dalam-angka-2023.html>.

Economic activities in communities are strongly influenced by seasonal conditions, highlighting the importance of climate stability and infrastructure in supporting economic sustainability.¹⁰

In addition to the economic sector, the social life of the Malimbu population is characterized by strong solidarity and religious activities. Religious study groups, community service (gotong royong), and participation in religious events are integral aspects of daily life. Strong religious values are an important foundation for the success of government programs, especially those that integrate Islamic values into social policies.¹¹

In this context, Malimbu has been officially designated as a Women and Child Friendly Village (DRPPA). This designation demonstrates the region's commitment to creating safe spaces for women and children while promoting equality in social and economic roles. The Mayor of North Luwu, Andi Abdullah Rahim, stated that Malimbu was chosen not only because of its geographical conditions but also because of the openness of its community to social change. The DRPPA program is seen as a concrete step to ensure that women receive equal roles and that children are protected and supported.¹²

Government data shows that the number of women in North Luwu exceeds 165,000, and the number of children exceeds 100,000. It shows the urgent need for gender-based policies and child protection. In Malimbu Village, many women work as economic farmers, artisans, and small traders. Through the establishment of the DRPPA, women are expected to become more economically and socially empowered.¹³

The implementation of the DRPPA involves all elements of society, from local government agencies (OPDs) to community groups, to realize protection

¹⁰ T. Benita et al., *Executive Summary - Sustainable Cacao Roadmap of North Luwu* (Bogor: World Agroforestry, 2023).

¹¹ Rahmadani Rahmadani and Suci Rahmadani Artika, "Infografis Potensi Sumber Daya Alam dan Budaya di Desa Malimbu, Kecamatan Sabbang, Kabupaten Luwu Utara," *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Bangsa* 3, no. 7 (2025): 3695–3700, <https://doi.org/10.59837/jpmbav3i7.3115>.

¹² Agus Dwi Darmawan, "Statistik Penduduk Beragama Islam di Kabupaten Luwu Utara 2015-2023," *Katadata Media Network*, December 4, 2024, <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/demografi/statistik/ce7abc06c3125a7/81-8-penduduk-di-kabupaten-luwu-utara-beragama-islam>.

¹³ BPS Kabupaten Luwu Utara, "Jumlah Penduduk Menurut Kelompok Umur dan Jenis Kelamin di Kabupaten Luwu Utara, 2024," February 24, 2024, <https://luwuutarakab.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/3/WVc0MGEyMXBkVFUxY25KeE9HdDZkbTQzWkVkb1p6MDkjMw==/jumlah-penduduk-menurut-kelompok-umur-dan-jenis-kelamin--ribu-jiwa--di-kabupaten-luwu-utara--2024.html>.

and empowerment for women and children. Currently, Malimbu Village has begun to integrate a gender perspective into village development planning. Women's economic empowerment programs, children's play areas, and village women's communication forums are being developed as part of the ongoing social transformation.¹⁴

This initiative places Malimbu Village as an inspirational model for other villages in North Luwu and South Sulawesi, showing that development based on religious values and equality can coexist to create an inclusive and just society.

The Regent of North Luwu, A.A.R. as a leader who advocates for gender equality stated that:

"The policy arises from the government's awareness of the importance of protecting women, increasing the economic independence of women who are the heads of families, and strengthening moral and religious values. The government emphasized that Islamic values are inclusive, can be applied by anyone, and are the foundation for creating a quality, progressive, and prosperous North Luwu. In addition, various programs such as social welfare (Kesra), assistance for religious teachers, community education, and DRPPA (Women and Children-Friendly Village) are concrete forms of this policy."

This statement shows that the policies he adopts are not only based on trends, but rather appear in response to the social realities that he observes firsthand. As a native son of North Luwu who grew up among the community, Andi Abdullah Rahim understands that women, especially women, heads of households, often bear a double burden. Therefore, women's empowerment policies implemented through social welfare programs, skills training, business group support, and economic access initiatives make a tangible contribution to destroying the structural injustices that have long hindered women's progress.

His background as an entrepreneur also strengthens his pragmatic approach to policymaking. Accustomed to mapping economic opportunities, the Regent understands that women's independence is not only about equality but also a social asset to improve family welfare and village economic stability. Thus, business training and facilitation programs are not just charitable

¹⁴ Humas Setkab RI, "Menteri PPPA Dorong Percepatan Implementasi Desa Ramah Perempuan dan Peduli Anak," *Sekretaris Kabinet Republik Indonesia*, April 23, 2022, <https://setkab.go.id/menteri-pppa-dorong-percepatan-implementasi-desa-ramah-perempuan-dan-peduli-anak/>.

interventions, but long-term empowerment strategies that are in line with the principles of local economic development.

In addition to emphasizing the gender aspect, A.A.R. emphasizes the importance of interreligious harmony, stating:

“North Luwu is home to various religious communities. Therefore, we want to maintain harmony. We provide space for all religious institutions to strengthen our good values, allowing our communities to live in peace and mutual respect.”

This narrative reinforces the inclusive leadership character that defines it. With extensive political experience and social networks, A.A.R. understands that social cohesion in North Luwu can only be maintained through harmonious interreligious relations. Therefore, providing space for all religious institutions in community development is part of its broad vision to ensure that moral, ethical and social solidarity values continue to flourish.

This approach demonstrates its ability to combine technocratic expertise with the social demands of a pluralistic society. His leadership is not only oriented towards physical and economic development, but also towards strengthening family values, morality, and community solidarity. Thus, women's empowerment and interfaith harmony initiatives are not isolated policies, but integral components of the leadership vision that aims to build North Luwu to be more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable.

With the existence of government programs, it has gained moral legitimacy from religious authorities. Their support is not limited to verbal agreements but is also manifested through concrete actions such as leading religious study groups, supporting community business groups, and conducting education-based activities through *pesantren*. It shows that the implementation of public policies based on Islamic values will not be effective without the support of social actors such as religious scholars. Their presence helps bridge government policies with public understanding, ensuring that programs such as Women and Child Friendly Villages are not only formally accepted but also practiced in everyday life.

From the analysis of expectations, it is clear that the success of this program requires continuity and strengthened facilities. Religious leaders hope that the government will not only issue policies but also increase women's access to economic training, safe spaces for children, and empowerment forums. This expectation reflects the community's need for social infrastructure that supports policy sustainability. In addition, the emphasis on consistency in

promoting justice and gender equality according to Islamic teachings suggests that the community wants these policies to maintain a clear moral direction, rather than relying solely on an administrative approach.

Overall, government policy on the role of women and Islamic values. Regent's policies are understood not only as formal mechanisms but as transformative social measures that combine economic empowerment, protection of women and children, and moral strengthening in communities. The support of religious leaders expands the legitimacy of the program, while their hopes lead to the development of more inclusive and sustainable policies that prioritize the well-being of families and communities.

In addition, Mrs. I.T., as a PKK cadre, stated that:

"It shows that the policies of the North Luwu Regency Government have been understood and felt at the village level, especially through the Women and Children-Friendly Village (DRPPA) program. Her explanation shows that this program is not only oriented towards women's empowerment and child protection, but also integrates Islamic values as the moral basis for its implementation."

An analysis of her statement shows that government policies have succeeded in building a new paradigm in society that views women not only as complementary figures in social life, but as important actors with equal rights and capacities with others. In addition, its references to Islamic values such as justice, compassion, and mutual respect show that the program is well received because it is in harmony with the religious values that are deeply embedded in the daily lives of the people of North Luwu.

His statement also highlights the strong relationship between government policies, social practices, and local culture. The integration of Islamic values ensures that these policies are not only structural but also cultural. In other words, the success of the DRPPA program lies not only in its formal design but also in the government's ability to present it as part of daily religious and social practices. It reinforces the idea that public acceptance of gender policies is strongly influenced by their alignment with local beliefs and norms. Mr. J.L's statement also stated that:

"The implementation of government policies related to improving gender-based social justice in North Luwu is carried out through strong collaboration between local governments, community leaders, and residents. This synergy shows that the government does not work unilaterally, but builds cooperation that allows policies to be accepted and understood well by the public."

Analysis of these findings shows that the support of community leaders plays an important role in strengthening the legitimacy of the program, while resident engagement shows that these policies go beyond regulation and are practiced in everyday life. This collaboration reflects the collective awareness of the importance of creating a safe and equitable social environment for women and children. Thus, Mr. Jamal's statement emphasized that the success of programs such as the Women and Children-Friendly Village is highly dependent on the active participation of all levels of society, not just government officials.

Based on official documents (North Luwu Regency Regulation No. 25 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Development), the North Luwu Regency Government's policy in promoting gender-based social justice and Islamic values is embraced in Government Regulation No. 25/2018. This regulation serves as a legal basis for local government agencies (OPDs) and village administrations to integrate gender perspectives into all stages of development: planning, implementation, budgeting, and evaluation.¹⁵

The Regent of North Luwu emphasized that this policy not only responds to the practical needs of the community, but is also rooted in Islamic values such as 'adl (justice), *rahmah* (mercy), and *musawah* (equality). As he states:

"We see that many issues of gender injustice still exist. There are women who are the backbone of their families and must be supported. Islam teaches us to be fair and protect vulnerable groups."

This statement shows that gender policy in North Luwu is not only administrative but also based on a strong moral and religious foundation. It is in line with the theory used in this study.¹⁶

Gender Integration through RPJMD and DRPPA

One of Regent's key policies is gender integration into the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD 2022–2026). This integration is implemented through: a) the obligation of OPD to implement gender

¹⁵ Tulus Suryanto, Pertiwi Utami, and Roslizawati Ahmad, "Aligning Sharia-Based Empowerment with SDGs: Addressing Poverty and Inequality in Coastal Regions," *Economica: Jurnal Ekonomi Islam* 15, no. 1 (2024): 53–71, <https://doi.org/10.21580/economica.2024.15.1.22935>.

¹⁶ Muhammad Tajul 'Arifin, "Gender Justice in Islamic Community Empowerment Programs," *Journal of Islamic Social Innovation and Empowerment* 1, no. 1 (2025): 5–7, <https://doi.org/10.65803/pjes3h56>.

mainstreaming; b) preparation of data disaggregated by gender; c) the establishment of a Women and Children-Friendly Village (DRPPA), including Malimbu Village as a pilot.

In the interview, Regent explained that the DRPPA was established to ensure that women are not just objects but subjects of development. Malimbu Village was chosen because of the character of its religious community and its openness to social transformation.

This integration demonstrates Regent's commitment to ensuring that all policies consider the needs and experiences of both men and women fairly. It also reflects Rawls's principle of fairness, which requires governments to provide equal access and opportunities to the most disadvantaged in this case, rural women. By integrating gender into the RPJMD and village-level structures, the government has implemented what Rawls calls an institutional design for justice.¹⁷

Women's Economic Empowerment Based on Local Potential

The policy of women's economic empowerment in Malimbu Village, which is implemented through palm sugar processing training, strengthening farmer groups, and developing women's micro businesses, is a concrete step by the government to improve household welfare and reduce structural inequality.

Regent stated that these programs are designed so that women can have their own source of income. It is reflected in the testimonies of communities who reported increased income and better household stability after joining the program. Empirically, these interventions not only increase direct income but also shift women's economic role from recipients to economic actors, strengthening their bargaining power in household decision-making.¹⁸

From the perspective of Rawls's difference principle, this policy represents affirmative action for disadvantaged groups. By prioritizing training, access to capital, and mentoring for female and vulnerable female heads of households, the government channels resources to those who benefit most.

¹⁷ Hisam Ahyani et al, "Gender Justice in the Sharing of Inheritance and Implementation in Indonesia," *Asy-Syari'ah* 24, no. 2 (2022): 285–304, <https://doi.org/10.15575/as.v24i2.14640>.

¹⁸ Talita Syamanta et al, "Towards Feminist Justice: Reforms and Challenges in Islamic Courts for Gender Equality and Women's Rights," *Syariat: Akhwal Syaksiyah, Jinayah, Siyasah and Muamalah* 1, no. 1 (2024): 36–57, <https://doi.org/10.35335/g9drrx81>.

This policy also promotes equitable equality of opportunity, as women gain skills, organizational experience, and networks that were previously difficult to access. Women's increased participation in village deliberations and program proposals shows that economic empowerment encourages them to take on more active social and political roles.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Rawls's theory of social justice, particularly justice as justice, and the principle of difference, provides a strong analytical framework to understand the implementation of North Luwu's policies through the DRPPA program. According to Rawls, social structures must guarantee basic freedoms while ensuring socio-economic inequality benefits the most disadvantaged.¹⁹ North Luwu's policy is in line with this principle: instead of distributing resources equally, affirmative programs target vulnerable women and children from low-income families.

Implementation can be seen in focused access to specific interventions: sago and palm sugar processing training, support for micro and small enterprises, capital loans, and technical guidance for economically disadvantaged women.²⁰

These measures not only provide material assistance but also strengthen women's economic capacity, improving their status both within the household and in society. In Rawlsian terms, it represents a practical application of the principle of difference, where inequality is allowed as long as it improves the welfare of those most disadvantaged.

Participation in the DRPPA program has also increased women's involvement in public decision-making, fulfilling Rawls' principle of equitable equality of opportunity. Collaborative implementation through village officials, PKK, religious leaders, and volunteers ensures that this policy is internalized and adapted to the local context.

Overall, North Luwu's policy succeeded in translating Rawls's abstract principles into practical instruments that strengthened women's economic capacity, social position, and political participation.²¹

¹⁹ John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1971).

²⁰ St. Rahmawati, "Mainstreaming of Gender Equality in Islamic Family Law: Opportunities and Challenges," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 4, no. 2 (2020): 360–74, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhkv4i2.8110>.

Supporting Factors

1) Visionary leadership and openness to innovation

The main supporting factor in promoting gender-based social justice and Islamic values in North Luwu is the visionary leadership of Regent. Regent acted as a key catalyst behind the policy that integrated Islamic values of *'adl* (justice) and *rahmah* (mercy) into local government. This is in line with the concept of transformational leadership, which emphasizes vision, innovation, and social empowerment.²² Regent's leadership has encouraged DRPPA programs and Islamic-based economic empowerment training involving women as central actors. This innovative leadership approach facilitates cross-sectoral collaboration between government agencies, religious leaders, and civil society.

2) The active role of women's organizations such as PKK

Women's organizations at the village level, including the PKK, play an important role in gender mainstreaming through social and economic activities. They act as intermediaries between government policies and community practices. In Malimbu Village, a group of women farmers actively organized training on agricultural product processing, sakinah family education, and socialization of women's rights in Islam. This activity strengthens social justice and gender equality at the community level.²³

Inhibiting Factors

1) Sustainability of patriarchal culture in rural communities

Patriarchal culture remains a major challenge in achieving gender-based social justice. In traditional communities like North Luwu, women are often expected to focus on domestic roles. As a result, their participation in public decision-making remains limited.

²¹ Sunaryo Sunaryo, "Konsep Fairness John Rawls, Kritik dan Relevansinya," *Jurnal Konstitusi* 19, no. 1 (2022): 001, <https://doi.org/10.31078/jk1911>.

²² Andi Sukmawati Assaad et al., "Gender Equity in Inheritance System: The Collaboration of Islamic and Bugis Luwu Customary Law," *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 17, no. 2 (2022): 458-79, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-lhkam.v17i2.6761>.

²³ Remiswal Remiswal, Suryadi Fajri, and Rahmadina Putri, "Aisyiyah dan Peranannya dalam Meningkatkan Derajat Kaum Perempuan," *Kaganga: Jurnal Pendidikan Sejarah dan Riset Sosial Humaniora* 4, no. 1 (2021): 71-77, <https://doi.org/10.31539/kaganga.v4i1.2341>.

In Malimbu Village, some community members still believe that women should not be actively involved in village deliberations. However, through the reach of moderate religion and Islamic-based education, that perception is gradually changing.²⁴

2) Limited budget allocation for gender-responsive programs

Budget constraints pose structural barriers to sustaining gender-based social justice programs. Many empowerment programs at the village level rely on grants and CSR funds, as regional budgets have not been allocated proportionately. This limited funding reduces the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming. Although local governments allocate a portion of the regional budget for women's training and empowerment, it is not enough to cover all subdistricts.

3) Low capacity of village officials in understanding gender mainstreaming

Many village officials lack understanding of gender mainstreaming, often assuming that gender justice aims to compete with men rather than ensuring fair roles. Capacity-building programs such as workshops and technical assistance are essential to integrate gender perspectives into public policy. In Malimbu Village, capacity building for village officials will only begin in 2023, showing that the learning process is still ongoing.²⁵

4) Implications for social justice

The implementation of gender-based policies and Islamic values in North Luwu has produced significant social, economic, and cultural impacts, especially in Malimbu Village. These policies contribute to the development of an inclusive, participatory, and equitable society.²⁶ The same Rawls principle of basic freedom and the principle of difference is seen in local efforts to prioritize women's

²⁴ Ghazyani Hidzyam Haqqani, "Implementasi Nilai Kewajiban Pemimpin dalam Islam pada Kebijakan Pemerintahan Desa Berdasarkan UU No. 6 Tahun 2014," *Hikmah: Jurnal Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam* 2, no. 1 (2024): 155–67, <https://doi.org/10.61132/hikmah.v2i1.570>.

²⁵ Anwar Sadat, Ipandang Ipandang, and Anita Marwing, *Kesetaraan Gender dalam Hukum Islam: Kajian Komparasi Antara KHI dan Counter Legal Draft KHI (CLD-KHI) Tentang Poligami dan Kawin Kontrak* (Yogyakarta: LKIS, 2020).

²⁶ Andi Sukmawati Assaad et al., "Development Model of Gender Equality Study in Inheritance Distribution of Tanah Luwu Communities," *Jurnal Hukum dan Peradilan* 12, no. 2 (2023): 215–40, <https://doi.org/10.25216/jhp.12.2.2023.215-240>; Eka Purnamasari, "Values of Islam in the Local Wisdom of The Tomakaka Community of North Luwu, South Sulawesi," *Journal of Indonesian Islamic Studies* 4, no. 1 (October 6, 2024): 19–28, <https://doi.org/10.24256/jiis.v4i1.4950>.

empowerment, economic access, and Islamic education that promotes gender equality. Field findings show that the DRPPA program has increased women's participation in village deliberations and economic activities. Prior to this program, women were rarely included in decision-making forums; Now they are actively participating. This indicates a shift towards distributive justice, which is characterized by equitable opportunities and social roles.²⁷ From the perspective of gender justice theory, particularly Nussbaum's capability approach, these policies provide substantive freedoms that allow women to develop their potential, not just formal equality.

Islamic values also increase the moral legitimacy of this policy. The principles of 'adl (justice) and musawah (equality) are in line with community values and strengthen the acceptance of gender-inclusive policies. Religious leaders play a key role in spreading these values, creating strong synergies between the government and religious institutions. Within the framework of Islamic social justice theory, this policy is in line with maqashid al-sharia: protecting life (*hifz al-nafs*), intellect (*hifz al-'aql*), property (*hifz al-mal*), and dignity (*hifz al-'ird*). Women's empowerment and child protection reflect this core goal. Economically, women's participation in productive activities has received some of the benefits of increased household income felt after participating in the program.

Philosophically, integrating Islamic values into social justice serves as a moral foundation for public policy. This approach builds community trust, reduces social conflict, and strengthens solidarity.²⁸ In the end, the North Luwu model shows that Islamic values are compatible with modern gender justice principles. By combining Rawls's theory of social justice with the principles of Islamic 'adl and *musawah*, North Luwu offers a hybrid framework that is appropriate to Indonesia's socio-cultural context so as to provide a model of best practice for other regions.²⁹

²⁷ Nisa'ul Majdah Nurdin, Andi Mutmainnah Assyahrah, and Kurniati Kurniati, "Gender Relations in Female Leadership: An Empirical Study of Female Judges in Religious Courts in South Sulawesi," *Insight: Indonesian Journal of Social, Humanity, and Education* 1, no. 4 (2026): 194–205, <https://journal.abdurraufinstitute.org/index.php/Insight/article/view/551>.

²⁸ Sabri Ciftci, "Islam, Social Justice, and Democracy," *Politics and Religion* 12, no. 4 (2019): 549–76, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755048318000810>.

²⁹ Sunaryo, "Konsep Fairness John Rawls, Kritik dan Relevansinya."

D. Conclusion

Regent North Luwu implements policies to improve social justice based on gender and Islamic values through the integration of gender issues in the 2022–2026 Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD), the establishment of Women and Children-Friendly Villages (DRPPA), women's economic empowerment programs based on local potential, the dissemination of Islamic values on gender justice, and a collaborative approach with educational institutions, women's organizations, and traditional leaders to strengthen legitimacy of policy. In addition, Regent North Luwu implements gender and Islamic-based policies through the DRPPA program and women's economic empowerment initiatives. The success of these programs is supported by visionary leadership, active involvement of women's organizations, and collaboration with religious leaders, while challenges arise from patriarchal cultural norms, limited budget allocations, and low capacity of village apparatus. These policies increase women's participation, strengthen moral legitimacy grounded in Islamic values, and contribute to the development of a fair and religious model of regional governance.[s]

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